



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

ADMINISTRATION & ENGINEERING—WATER—SEWER—FACILITIES

Denise A. Slane

Cemetery Administrator

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Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

May 16, 2024 8:48 A.M.

Melrose City Hall, Cassidy Room Conference Room, 562 Main Street, Melrose, MA 02176

Attendance:

Chairman, Daniel O'Neill (DO)

Cemetery Administrator, Denise Slane (DS)

Co-Chair, Eileen Hamblin (EH)

Commission Member, Susan Cann (SC)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:48 a.m. A motion to call the meeting to order was made by DO and was seconded by EH. All in favor.

Review of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of April 18, 2024, were reviewed. A motion by EH was made to accept the minutes. Seconded by SC. All in favor.

Public Comment

A motion to open the meeting for public comment was made by EH and seconded by SC. All in favor. Floor opened at 8:49.

No residents in attendance.

A motion to close the meeting for public comment was made by SC and seconded by EH. All in favor. Floor closed at 8:49.

Financial Report

The financial report for April 2024 prepared by DS was reviewed. A motion to accept the report was made by EH and seconded by SC. All in favor.

Presentation by John Gately from Gately Funeral Home – Green Burials

John Gately gave a brief presentation on green burials and the area cemeteries that currently have them. He described the basket that is used for the interment and requirements. He stated that green burials take up twice the space of a casket burial and need a separate section within the cemetery for them. It was discussed that Wyoming Cemetery does not have the land space to allow this type of burial. John stated that there are a few cemeteries that do have green burials and refers someone interested in this type of burial to them.

Questions were asked by the Board about traditions of different types of burials. John explained the difference between burials by religions and traditions.

EH asked John about cremation burials and if they are becoming more popular. John stated that cremations burials are becoming a lot more common due to land shortages and cost of overall funeral expenses for families. Although he stated there are people and traditions that still want/require casket burials.

SC asked John if someone is being cremated is the family choosing a burial for the remains or something else. John stated that about 75% of cremations are interred into a cemetery and only about 25% are scattered or held onto by a family member.

All board members thanked John for his insight and appreciated him taking the time to discuss green burials and types of traditions.

New Business

Car Accident

DS reported there was a car accident at the cemetery a few weeks ago and a total of six stones received some damage. All the families that were impacted by this were contacted by letter and given the information to file a claim with the insurance company. Everyone was okay and in most cases the damage was minimal.

Memorial Day

It was discussed that there is no parade this year. The board will check with Veteran's Services to see if they have other events planned that will be at the cemetery.

Update on Camera Inspections of Drains/Catch Basins

DS notified the board that these inspections are still taking place and that as they are completed, she and the foreman will follow up with the board.

Old Business

Spring Cleanup

DS gave an update on the status of the spring cleanup. The department is on task to complete the work by Memorial Day (weather pending).

Walkway Repair

DS gave an update on the status of the walkway repair. This work was completed late last month.

New Truck Request

It was discussed that at this time repairs will be made to the dump truck.

Cemetery Digitalization Project

The status report from Jane Pitts, Planning Department, was presented and reviewed.

Columbarium Research

EH provided pictures of columbarium walls in other area cemeteries. It was discussed that if this is done, it is important to find the best location within the cemetery grounds that would not take away from burial spaces. The board discussed that they will continue the research into this.

90/10 Split

DO stated that he will be setting up a time to meet with the City Auditor to discuss the split and what the board is looking into as a proposal for future sales. Further discussion will take place at future meetings.

Items not reasonably anticipated by Chairman at time of posting.**Upcoming Commission Meetings**

It was discussed that due to scheduling conflict the July meeting will not have a quorum. It was decided to cancel the July meeting. It was discussed that there is a schedule conflict with the September meeting. It was discussed to move this meeting up to September 12, 2024. DS will secure a conference room for September 12th.

DO made a motion to adjourn, EH second the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 a.m.
All in favor.