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ADMINISTRATION & ENGINEERING—WATER—SEWER—FACILITIES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

September 12, 2024 8:46 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)

DPW Deputy Director, Jim Troup (JT)

Absent: Commission Member, Susan Cann (SC)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:46 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 June 20, 2024, were reviewed. A motion by EH was made to accept the minutes. Seconded by DO. All in favor. Minutes accepted.

Public Comment

A motion to open the meeting for public comment was made by EH and seconded by DO. All in favor. Floor opened at 8:46.

No residents in attendance.

A motion to close the meeting for public comment was made by EH and seconded by DO. All in favor. Floor closed at 8:47.

Financial Report

The financial report for June, July and August 2024 as prepared by DS were reviewed. A motion to accept the reports was made by EH and seconded by DO. All in favor. Reports accepted.

Fund Account Review

The commission reviewed the cemetery fund accounts.

New Business

Vote and Discussion on Buyback of Lots

DS presented three requests to the commission for the cemetery to buyback lots. All three requests were reviewed and voted on.

Motion: made by EH to accept the requests from the two individuals (total of 3 lots) for the cemetery to purchase back the lots they are no longer going to use.

Motion Second: by DO

Further Discussion: None

Vote: 2 yes - 0 no- 1 absent - VOTE PASSED

DS will submit the paperwork to Audit to have the buybacks processed.

Special Request of Interment of Urns

DS updated the commission on the first request from a family to have cremains interred into an old family grave. The family was able to get in touch with their aunt (last living child of the original lot owners) and the aunt has submitted written permission to the cemetery to allow the interment of the cremains. A vote is no longer needed on this request, due to receiving permission from the current owner.

DS presented the second request from a family that would like to inter the cremains of their mother into an old family lot. The family is requesting the burial take place in an old lot that was owned by a cousin's family. The deceased has never been a resident of Melrose, but the family is stating that her heritage was very important to her and that her family were some of the original settlers in Melrose and Malden. The last burial in this lot was in 1896. There is no current owner on file and the cemetery does not have the authorization to allow the burial without the consent of an heir. DO stated that the commission may not have the authority to overrule this. DO and EH stated that they cannot allow this interment to take place due to the rules and regulations of the cemetery and requested that DS verify this with the city solicitor before they are to change their ruling. DS will contact city solicitor and report back to the commission at the next meeting. DO also stated it would be the family's responsibility to find a current heir to allow the interment to take place.

Motion: made by EH to not allow the interment of cremains at this time as the commission would like to confirm if they are allowed to override the rules and regulations allowing a burial without the permission of an heir for a non-resident.

Motion Second: by DO

Further Discussion: None

Vote: 2 yes - 0 no- 1 absent - VOTE PASSED – interment will not be allowed at this time.

Dogs in the Cemetery

DS presented the new sign layout for the No Dogs sign and the quote to have the signs made. It was discussed to attach the signs at the entrances to both gates. It was also discussed that the MPD has been patrolling the cemetery grounds and notifying violators that dogs are not allowed.

Motion: made by EH to purchase the 4 new signs that will be attached to each gate at the cemetery entrances.

Motion Second: by DO

Further Discussion: None

Vote: 2 yes - 0 no- 1 absent - VOTE PASSED – signs will be ordered and installed on gates.

Rosebay Path

DO stated that this would be the next section of the cemetery that would be filled in to allow for future burials. However, he stated that this is an area that floods, and work would need to be done to prepare the area to accommodate casket burials. DO and JT discussed that the commission should put a plan together of what they would like to do and present it to JT. EH stated that it would be a good idea for the commission to walk the area with the cemetery foreman to see what the needs are to prepare the area and if they can be met. DO also stated that if the area could not be used for burials that perhaps this area could be used for a columbarium wall for cremations/urns. The commission will setup a time to meet with the foreman and will discuss at a future meeting.

Rules and Regulations

DS stated that she and the foreman are reviewing the rules and regulations and may need to update some of the wording and on rules. Any changes/updates that are suggested will be presented to the commission and reviewed with the city solicitor/council if needed. Any updates will be presented at a future meeting for review and vote.

Old Business

Cemetery Digitalization Project

The July and August status reports from Jane Pitts, Planning Department, were presented and reviewed. September had not been received before the meeting; September updates will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Cemetery Office Building Stairs Repair

JT notified the commission that the repairs to the stairway have been completed.

Update on Camera Inspections of Drains/Catch Basins and Paving Project

DS informed the commission that DPW would be at the cemetery today to review what needs to be done for the repairs of the line/drain. JT stated that once the repair is completed paving in the area can continue. JT stated that the cemetery foreman, DPW and paving company have met and reviewed the work that will be completed and the paving company has submitted the quote to DPW. Additional updates will be provided at future meetings.

Columbarium Research

EH stated that more will be presented on this at a future meeting and that after the walk-through of the grounds with the foreman they will have a better understanding of what type of design they could have to help determine the needs and costs.

90/10 Split

DO asked that EH and DS meet with the city auditor to review the split. DS will setup a time for them to meet.

Items not reasonably anticipated by Chairman at time of posting.

New Lawnmower

JT informed the commission that the new lawn mower was received.

EH made a motion to adjourn, DO second the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 a.m.
All in favor.