



CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

September 7, 2023, 4:00 p.m.

Meeting held in person at City Hall in Conference A
1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth, NH

Members Present: Co-Chair Susan Sterry; Co-Chair Deirdre Forte; Sue Polidura; Michael Griffin; Celeste Brooks; and Peter Splaine

Members Present by Zoom: Eva Boice joined 4:10 p.m.

Staff Present: Suzanne M. Woodland, Deputy City Manager / Regulatory Counsel

1. Call to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call of the Members as noted above.
3. **Motion:** Polidura moved to approve the minutes of the August 3, 2023, meeting. Seconded by Splaine. Approved unanimously.

Sterry shared a slide show at the beginning to facilitate discussion of agenda items. Slides showed recent activities including: cleaning of cotton cemetery wall; a before cleaning and after cleaning of a headstone showing the effectiveness of D2; and potential Catherine Whipple plaque to be paid for by third party.

Slides included samples of plaques that could be used for reinternment of the North Cemetery remains. Discussion of sizing and wording. Takes 4 to 8 weeks to make. Proof of the design for review could be made in a few days. Bronze is preferred. Discussion of a potential granite pedestal cap stone or similar to cover the tubes. Pastor Jen at North Church is prepared to assist City with reinternment.

4. Point of Graves – Repairs and study of options to repair the wall on hold pending coordination with other City projects in the area.
5. Hall Cemetery - Sterry reviewed with the committee the efforts made by Department of Public Works to obtain quotes to remove the trees from Hall Cemetery and path to the cemetery. A contractor has been identified and work to be scheduled.
6. Cotton Cemetery – Washing of the granite walls and doors along South Street was performed and is a marked improvement. Signage is being considered for that

cemetery – Sterry touching base with the Department of Public Works. Estimate has been obtained to clean and care for the remaining doors at Cotton Cemetery. Follow up with Department of Public Works.

7. Pleasant Street Cemetery- General agreement that the trimming of the arborvitaes is an improvement. Cemetery looks good.
8. North and Union Cemeteries update – cleaning of the headstones in the towards the pond is difficult due to the inability to get water easily to that area. With regard to signage, the Department of Public Works has not installed yet, but will get it back on the schedule.
9. Other business - Sterry reported on efforts made with City staff to get more cemetery information out on City social media and newsletter. Sterry also shared that database for locating graves is still stalled and the DCM to follow up.

Discussion of the request by Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence to install, at their cost, signage acknowledging Catherine Whipple, spouse to Declaration of Independence signer William Whipple. No objection from the Committee to such signage and the DCM to follow up with Department of Public Works.

10. Public Comment – No public comment.
11. Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 5, 2023

Motion: Brooks moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Griffin. All concurred. Adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Minutes prepared by:
Suzanne Woodland, Deputy City Manager/Regulatory Counsel

Minutes Approved: October 5, 2023