



## CEMETERY COMMITTEE

### Meeting Notes No Quorum of Members Present in Person

Thursday, February 2, 2023, 4:00 p.m.  
City Hall – Conference Room A  
1 Junkins Avenue  
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Members Present: **Susan Sterry, Co-Chair; Sue Polidura; Michael Griffin, Kerry Rubinstein; Donald Margeson; and Celeste Brooks**

Eva Boice and Deirdre Forte, Co-Chair on Zoom.

Staff Present: Suzanne M. Woodland, Deputy City Manager/Deputy City Attorney (DCM)

1. Call to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call of the Members as noted above. No quorum being physically present, no action was taken.
3. Of Counsel Robert P. Sullivan joined meeting at 4:05 p.m.
4. The rack cards are in. Eva Boice suggested placing cards initially in Library and providing to the Chamber of Commerce. Celeste Brooks will deliver some to the library. Kerry Rubinstein will take some to the Chamber. Eva Boice will distribute others later.
5. The State required sign or plaque for Union Cemetery can be purchased for \$50.00 and attached to a piece of granite that is at cemetery. DCM will follow up.
6. Signs for dog control and dusk to dawn signs: DCM showed mock up of signs. Continued discussion and some objection to limiting access to cemetery at night.
7. City IT has completed a new database for cemetery locations and people buried in them. In the near term, the public will be able to access these databases from the City website and through the Library. It is projected that these projects will be completed in a few months.

8. Hall Cemetery: Companies have been contacted for estimates to clean up the fallen and diseased trees. Estimates came in at \$3k/day or \$3,200 w/ a three day timeframe. Department of Public Works representative Corin Hallowell has suggested contacting a couple larger companies that have stump grinders as some of that would have to take place to make accessible. Susan will be going in front of Trees and Greenry Committee to discuss taking down the trees.
9. Co-Chair Susan Sterry discussed her reach out to the City Manager regarding potential funding for tree removal for Hall Cemetery.
10. Department of Public Works is working on engaging a contractor to repair green door on the vault at Cotton Cemetery.
11. Discussion on Capital Improvement Plan, hearing and adoptin process.
12. Committee members present discussed potential change to the Cemetery Committee ordinance to change membership so that quorum could be met more frequently and to introduce a stagger. Attorney Sullivan summarized his draft of possible changes to the ordinance to accomplish the goals of quorum and stagger.
13. Cemetery Committee will continue to include the African Burying Ground Memorial Park in communications regarding the City's historic cemeteries as was done with rack card.
14. Portsmouth has been recognized as a host community and sailors from the USS Cheyenne may now be able to assist with historic cemetery committee projects as community service. Co-Chair Sterry will follow up.
15. Co-Chair asked committee members if anyone is interested in applying for new round of grants. Would also like to submit applications for Point-of-Graves and Pleasant Street cemeteries to be put on the NH Historic Registry. Co-Chair will approach DAR, Sons of Liberty and sailors from Cheyenne to help with headstone cleanings.
16. Other agenda items deferred to future meeting.

Adjournment at 5:00 p.m.

Notes prepared by: Donna Splaine, Administrative Assistant and Suzanne Woodland, Deputy City Manager/Deputy City Attorney  
Approved on May 4, 2023