

Princeton Cemetery Commission Meeting – Monday July 17, 2017
Town Hall Meeting Room
Minutes

August 15, 2017

Present: Paul Constantino, Lynne Gerttum, Lou Trostel, Bruce Rollins, Nina Nazarian, Town Administrator and Ron Milenski. Mary Trostel attended the Cemetery Meeting.

Inspection of South Cemetery

An inspection of South Cemetery and West Cemetery took place by the commission members from 6:00 to 7:00 P.M. The members noted these observations, items for regular maintenance and possible future improvements:

- A. The guard rails along Ball Hill Road are in significant disrepair. They are hardly functional safety wise and detract from the appearance of South Cemetery. A suggestion was made to communicate with the Highway Department regarding the replacement of these guardrails with a functioning and better looking guardrail system.
- B. An abandoned eighteen wheel truck has been parked on Ball Hill Road across from South Cemetery for several years. A suggestion was made to investigate how the town could move forward legally to remove this truck.
- C. The Fatheric casket has been relocated so that it is fully on the correct burial lot.
- D. A suggestion was made to designate the area where the “Paupers Graves” are located with some type of memorial.
- E. The Clark Family gravesite is in non compliance with “Princeton Cemetery - Rules and Regulations”.
- F. The poison ivy along the hillside of Brooks Station Road has been controlled. A suggestion was made to improve the appearance of the hillside by planting some type of ground cover or creeping shrub.
- G. The overall maintenance and appearance of South Cemetery is improved compared to last year. Two contributing factors are an improved turf quality due to a fertilizer and lime application in 2016 and significantly higher amount of rainfall in 2017. Bruce Rollins suggested that the string trimming around the memorial stones be completed at the same time of the mowing. Ron Milenski discussed this maintenance practice with foreman, Jamie Deloge. She always performs the string trimming after the completion of mowing, however the string trimmer needed repair. Therefore, she was unable to perform the string trimming as usual.

Inspection of West Cemetery

- A. An illuminated flagpole with flag has been installed at West Cemetery. The installation and appearance improves the overall aesthetics of West Cemetery.

- B. A suggestion was made to investigate a long term solution to improving the center walking entrance of West Cemetery, since it is steep. A prior suggestion was to install attractive and site appropriate stone/granite steps.
- C. The large oak tree along Wheeler Road has dangerous broken branches and requires pruning to insure safety and reduce possible damage to the memorial stones located under the tree. A cost quote needs to be obtained to perform this work.
- D. The pin oak tree at the center of the cemetery is infested with Gypsy Moths. The tree has been severely defoliated and the overall health of the tree is compromised. A suggestion was made to have a tree service company inspect the tree when it is on site to quote the pruning work.
- E. Bruce Rollins noted that the Cemetery Department for numerous years has been depositing organic debris over the stone walls (not on cemetery property) at several cemeteries. He suggested that a more appropriate method be conducted to remove this debris.
- F. The overall landscape appearance of West Cemetery is good. A fall fertilizer and lime application would improve the turf density and vigor at West Cemetery. Two or three memorial stone are broken. These memorial stone require an epoxy repair and reinstallation to their grave sites.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Paul Constantino at 7:08 P.M.

Prior Meeting Minutes Review – June 2017

The meeting minutes from the June 2017 cemetery meeting were reviewed. One spelling error was noted and Secretary, Milenski will correct it.

Member Constantino motioned to accept the June 2017 minutes as written.

Seconded by Member Trostel.

June 2017 - Minutes Accepted: 4 – 0.

New Business

1. Bruce Rollins suggested an alternative to installing a concrete monument base for grave lots that will be re-excavated to accommodate the future burial other of family members. Bruce suggested that a pressure treated wood base be installed instead of a concrete base. Bruce noted that during the re-excavation the original concrete base usually becomes unusable and a new permanent concrete base needs to be installed. His suggestion would save the cost of installing two memorial bases. Members discussed Bruce's suggestion and will review it again at a future meeting. At this time the Cemetery department will continue to install concrete bases for memorials.

2. Chairman, Constantino noted that he met with Princeton Electric Light General Manager, Brian Allen regarding removing the stabilizing/support utility pole in front of North Cemetery. Allen noted that the stabilizing/support pole could be removed pending the installation of some type of stabilizing support on the Milton property across the street from North Cemetery. A meeting needs to be scheduled with Mr. Milton and Brian Allen to resolve the issue. The issue was tabled for another meeting.
3. Ron Milenski noted that he meet with foreman, Jamie Deloge in June at North Cemetery. The meeting and cemetery maintenance review was very positive. Jamie was open and interested in improving the quality and maintenance of the Princeton cemeteries. Milenski noted that Jamie is still learning the details of her position but is interested in obtaining a “Massachusetts Pesticide License” and a “CDL” and improve her skills related to her job requirements.

Discussion with Town Administrator

Town Administrator, Nina Nazarian noted that she received information from the Petersham and Shrewsbury Cemetery Departments regarding their contracted service agreements. Shrewsbury separates the contracted services into two contracts: “Lawn Mowing & Grounds Keeping” and “Cemetery Grave Excavation & Burial Services”. Petersham awards one contract for both services. A significant amount of “Due Diligence” is required before any determination is made to change Princeton’s Cemetery Business model to a privatization/contracted service operation. Paul Constantino and Ron Milenski mentioned that they would meet with the Petersham and Shrewsbury Cemetery Departments to review the successes and problem areas of their operations.

Nina noted that Hollie Lutch, the Parks & Recreation, Director would be open to performing dual management roles for Princeton. She would continue to function in her present position and could possibly become the “Business Manager” for the Princeton Cemetery Department. Hollie works 19 hours for Parks & Recreation and has open time within her schedule to work for the Princeton Cemetery Department.

Member, Gerttum mentioned that she is willing to contact towns such as Westminster and Hubbardston to determine if “Regionalization” of cemetery services is a possibility with Princeton.

Nina also mentioned that with the loss of Cemetery Department laborer, Chris Foley sometime in August or September, that a replacement will need to be hired for the fall leaf clean up. The committee members agreed that Nina should proceed without committee input to hire a replacement for Chris Foley.

Nina also noted that during her weekly meetings with Jamie Deloge that she requested that her hourly wage be increased to reflect the added responsibility related to Cemetery Department maintenance. Since the resignation of the Cemetery Superintendent, she has become responsible for handling issues that were previously outside the scope of her work. Her present foreman wage is \$17.00/hour. Nina mentioned that Jamie’s wages could be temporary adjusted to reflect the added work responsibility. Nina also mentioned that she would meet with Jamie and develop an updated job description.

Cemetery Inspections – August 21, 2017

Parker II Cemetery – 6:00 PM

Meeting House Cemetery – 6:30 PM

A motion was made to adjourn by Member Milenski.

Seconded by Member Gerttum.

Motion Passed: 4 – 0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Submitted by Ron Milenski, Secretary

PCCminutes 7.17.2017