

Cemetery Commission
Minutes of the Meeting – September 28, 2021

The meeting of the Harwich Cemetery Commission was held at the Harwich Community Center, 100 Oak Street, Harwich and was taped. Commissioners Steve Conner, Cynthia Eldredge, Robert Thompson, and Administrator Robbin Kelley were in attendance.

Meeting Called to Order at 9:00 a.m. by Steven Conner. Cynthia Eldredge made motion to accept the minutes for August 3 and September 7 it was seconded by Robert Thompson and was unanimous.

Email from Ellen Powell with an attached memo from Joe Powers on Community Preservation Committee 2021 Projects Funding Request to be submitted to Administration on Wednesday, September 22. The email requesting that all CPC Articles be submitted was sent on Thursday 16th of September, Administrator was on vacation out of state and returned on September 21st. The administrator was able to get finish the CPC article for the East Harwich Union Gravestone but was unable to finish the one for the Veterans Memorial Circle for the Civil War and Revolutionary War memorials. The administrator went before the Board of Selectmen last night and they unanimously approved moving forward with the East Harwich Union Gravestone project. I did explain that I was away and asked if we could come back if I am able to finish the Veterans Memorial. The administrator is still waiting for the Veterans Agent from the Massachusetts State Archives to get back with a list of Veterans. The administrator did come across information that women served in the wars but enlisted as men. Discussion on making memorial listing for women who served. Six African Americans who served from the Town of Harwich in the Revolutionary War. The administrator will bring the names to the next meeting per request from Cynthia Eldredge. The administrator did send an email to Joe Powers, Town Administrator asking about a Facebook page for the Veterans Memorial. The page would have a link to the Town Website for donations and that we had already requested and received from Carol Coppola a separate account for the donations. Robert Thompson asked about doing a story in the newspaper about the project and that we would be excepting donations and for individuals to participate in the project outside of the cemetery commissioners.

Old Business: Veterans Memorial in Evergreen, Robert Thompson has sent emails to the Gold Star Mothers Association and the Gold Star Families Association, and the Massachusetts Fallen Hero's Gold Star Family, these are all different organizations. Robert has also emailed Representative Xiarhos as he is a gold star father. As soon as he hears back from any of the organizations, he will let the Board know.

Steven Conner looking for an update in reference to the commissioners meeting with the Jones family about her mother's cemetery lot. The administrator received a phone call this morning from Jim Stratton, Cemetery Foreman that he will be going out to the site to remove the shrubs and that there is no way that they will be able to stump grind the roots because the two memorials are too close together and the stump grinder will not be able to fit between the memorials. He also does not want to pull out the shrubs as he feels he would pull of the monument with the shrub. He said he would flush cut the shrubs and he will loam, and seed and it will be finished today. Steven Conner, asked "what is the status of the Bank Street Cemetery?" The letter was never sent by Griffin Ryder before he left, the letter must be sent by Town Administration and not from the Cemetery Commission. The administrator thought that the Town would have hired an Engineer to replace Mr. Ryder but they haven't. The administrator will send another email to Joe and Meggan inquiring who would be sending the letter and will also send all documents for them to review.

Update on the Veterans Memorial, the DPW does not feel like that they can assist us in the digging of the trench. If they dig it, they will have to be on the same schedule as the installer and they don't want to have an open trench in the cemetery. The administrator will still be working with Sean Libby, and he will assist her in the procurement of a vendor for the project. The administrator would like to have Paul Sweetser mark out where

the electrical services will be installed and place metal markers for the installer. That way when the vendor places the services they will already be marked on the ground. This would require hiring a professional to placement. Steve Conner makes a motion to hire Paul Sweetser to mark out where electrical service will be located in the Veterans Circle, it was seconded by Cindy Eldredge and was unanimous. Cindy would like to go back to discuss the possibility of having the Cemetery Department could find the time to get the trench done, ask Link if they could dig the trench for the electrical service when it is not summertime. Robert Thompson agrees after our discussion with Link as the cutting slowdowns they should have time. The administrator will see if Link can come to another meeting to discuss the trench, and I will follow up with Sean about going out for the electrical bid. Discussing having Robert Thompson help the Administrator with timelines and scheduling on the project.

Update on CPC Article for East Harwich Union Gravestone Conservation is moving forward. The administrator went out to the cemetery and found six additional leaning memorials last year was \$102,000 this year it was \$108,000. This year's total requested article will be \$118,800, this includes a 10 percent contingency.

We are still waiting for the Village Green to start the Pine Grove Cemetery Gravestone project and want to see how the work is completed. We were very happy with Cheryl Caputo's work that was done at the Mount Pleasant Cemetery it was exceptional and we received many compliments from the public. This will be the first job done by Mike from Village Green and we are expecting the same standards and it is important that when we receive money from CPC that the job is done correctly. The administrator did meet with him down at the cemetery with one of his workmen. He explained that he had three jobs currently open, and he wanted to finish them before starting our project. I did explain that we wanted before and after photographs that will need to be digitized and will need to be searchable.

We already discussed at the beginning of the meeting Memorials for Civil War and Revolutionary War Veterans. The administrator was not ready to submit the application. Will still have to confirm the names and wait on Tom Blute of Crosby Monuments and another vendor will give us price quotes. We still need to confirm even the spelling of the name Eldredge or Eldridge, just don't want to have any errors. In the Revolutionary Veterans database if they already have a SAR or DAR application Administrator puts in the application number and date of the filing also include their wife's, as most of the time their wives received their pension.

The Lily Pond invasive species removal application was submitted to the Conservation Commission. The administrator has put in two applications with the conservation department to date. The first one proposed trail and parking. This will connect the parking area in the cemetery to the conservation parcel. First to block off the existing graves and we want to meander down the pathway to the left so as not to use the steep incline that has been eroding the hill. The map was included in the packet to where the new pathway would go. It does go within the 100-foot buffer to the wetland, so we need permission. The administrator will be sending out the letters to the abutters today for notification about the meeting. The second application is to remove vegetation from around the lily pond that is now encroaching on the grave spaces around the lily pond. Pictures included in the packet show you can see some of the grave spaces especially ones on the hill are now being completely engulfed in by poison ivy, ivy, sassafras, and buttonbush. The Conservation Commissioner will go down to the site and visit before the meeting. The administrator did discuss with Amy Usowski, Conservation Administrator that we will need to dredge the lily pond at some point. Amy recommends that we go first to clean up overgrowth and then come back to the commission. She asked that we reach out to the conservation commission to remove invasive species and what they recommend what we could do to be able to install the fountain that we have purchased and has not been installed due to the overgrowth. The invasives are not just around the grave spaces but around the entire pond area going up the hill. We do have funds available to us that were gifted in wills by residents for the management of the Lily Pond Area. The pond is filled with leaves and

debris, with the recent storms with large branches. We have found turtles in the pond and fish so we will have to be aware of their protection with projects moving forward. Our new AmeriCorps member Madeline will be sworn in at the Barnstable County complex tomorrow and the Administrator will be attending. She will be working in the Arboretum property and will be meeting her for the first time in person.

Rules and Regulations Review: In the packet, all the new changes are listed in red. We have moved Administration to the beginning of the document. Steve Conner will look at other towns and bring them back to the next meeting. Robert Thompson suggests that Definitions should be an appendix item. We should have a table of content.

Bills: John Canto \$11,500.00 paving, American Red Cross \$32.00, Liberty Metalworks \$600.00 installation of the sign at Union Cemetery.

Robert Thompson make motion to close the meeting at 10:37 it was seconded by Cynthia Eldredge and was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robbin Kelley,
Cemetery Administrator

Approved at November 16, 2021 Meeting