



TOWN of BROOKLINE
Massachusetts
Walnut Hills Cemetery
Old Burying Ground

Trustees

Nina Brown
Robert Cook, Chairman
Gerard Hayes
Peggy Maguire
Joslin Ham Murphy

Director of Parks and Open Space

Erin Chute Gallentine

Walnut Hills Cemetery Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, March 6, 2019
8:30am - 9:30 am

Trustees Present: Robert Cook, Nina Brown, Peggy Maguire and Joslin Ham Murphy

Trustees Absent: Gerard Hayes

Staff Present: Erin Gallentine, Director of Parks and Open Space, Jessica White, Parks and Open Space Assistant

Guests Present:

1. Welcome and Approval of the Minutes

R. Cook opened the meeting. R. Cook moved for approval of the December 12, 2018 minutes. Seconded by N. Brown. All in favor.

2. Sign Deeds

The deeds were passed around and signed by the Trustees.

3. Walnut Hills Cemetery Update

E. Gallentine stated that the Department of Public Works is planning to commence a sewer lining project in the Spring 2019. The project includes lining the sewers that run under the cemetery. Project Manager, Mark Besio, is working with Cemetery Supervisor, John Ronan to ensure that there will be minimal disruption. Mr. Besio estimates that the contractor will only need a few days in the cemetery to complete their work that includes lining a 12-inch sewer and 21-inch sewer line. E. Gallentine and R. Cook discussed where the pipes run. There will be no danger to the landscape.

E. Gallentine provided an update on the roadway reconstruction and drainage assessment project. She stated that all but 2 catch basins have been cleaned and inspected as part of the full inventory and conditions assessment of cemetery drain structures. This will allow for the Town to figure out what is in need of repair. Environmental Partners Group is the engineering

consultant team, but the Town is performing all the cleaning, inspecting and documentation. The Town is planning to put the project out to bid next winter for construction 2020. E. Gallentine stated that at the last meeting the Trustees discussed the need for additional funding to complete the roadwork and drainage repair. She stated that currently there is \$120,000 available from SW01 that has been authorized by Town Meeting , but that it is not sufficient for the work needed on the roadways. The Trustees should consider a request to use additional funds from SW01 in FY21 that could augment the work in the 2020 construction season or utilize some of the funding in TW23 that does not require a Town Meeting vote. This allows for flexibility. E. Gallentine and B. Cook discussed the total amount that the project will cost. The project may be implemented over a period of time.

The Division continues to work on implementation of the planting plan along the perimeter of the cemetery that was presented by Ann Blair. Crews are inventorying what plant material didn't make it this spring, and another section will be chosen to work on for Fall 2019. R. Cook pointed out that one pine didn't look like it made it. E. Gallentine stated that all of the plantings are being completed in-house.

Bill McDermott has extended his lease with the Town for the next 3 years. He will continue in the role of Cemetery Caretaker per this lease through March 31, 2021. E. Gallentine stated that he is very present and always available.

E. Gallentine has secured a golf cart for spring 2019 through the Recreation Department. She stated that, if this works out, she would think about purchasing a small gator utility vehicle that would be useful to patrol the grounds, but also enable the crew to reach some of the harder to reach areas of the cemetery.

Bill McDermott has requested that the Building Department consider adding a deck or patio to the cemetery house. If the Building Department moves forward with a design, they will share that with the Director prior to proceeding.

J. Murphy has mentioned adding signage regarding dogs at the cemetery; E. Gallentine has taken photos and will look into creating signage.

E. Gallentine reviewed engraving for the memorial wall. There is a request for a menorah and she stated that per our guidelines we allow religious icons in nature. She stated that, if anything is unusual, she brings it to the Trustees. She stated that this is very standard for an upright or flat marker and she just wanted to past it on because it will be the first icon on the wall. The sizing and font is all per the specifications. J. Murphy likes the engraving.

The Trustees discussed the Eruv locations within Town.

E. Gallentine discussed the situation of a Town owned pauper grave that had 2 interments and a complicated subsequent history with a Mr. Caminos (one of those interred was the family nanny) purchasing the lot 8 years after the interment. This is a very old transaction and both the legal office and John Ronan have done a tremendous amount of research to determine next steps. Mr. Caminos' family was unaware that someone else had been buried in this lot. E. Gallentine will work with the family and Cemetery Supervisor to develop a suitable resolution and report back to the Trustees.

J. Murphy had held 3 deeds from the last meeting which has raised some questions for her. E. Gallentine listed the residency requirements. These individuals had passports, residency on Beacon Street and property tax cards. J. Ronan is going to get some additional information. E. Gallentine suggested that the Trustee revisit the issue and put more clarity into these residency requirements. J. Murphy stated that the School Department has a matrix for determining residency and she thinks that would help. A Drivers license can provide you with both proof of identity and residency, but with a Passport book or Passport card we need to have some clarity on confirming residency.

4. Old Burying Ground Update

E. Gallentine stated that the Fannins are going to update the Conditions Assessment of the Stones and Markers in the Old Burying Ground. A significant amount of work has been completed, but there are some stones that have fallen into disrepair or are yet to be restored. The Friends of the Old Burying Ground are again paying for \$10,000 worth of restoration services. J. Murphy suggested that the Trustees send a letter showing their appreciation to the Friends.

E. Gallentine stated that a bunch of contract/construction work has been happening at multiple properties along the private way next to the Old Burying Ground. A contractor's vehicle damaged fencing in the rear corner of the cemetery. The Town's fence contractor has been out there and the work will be done this spring.

The Foster Fence was discussed.

5. Other Business

P. Maguire discussed the conversation she had with Cemetery Supervisor, John Ronan regarding Green Burials. She thinks it's something we should think about from an education perspective. She stated more and more people will want Green Burials and will want one in Massachusetts. She stated that there is one Funeral Home in West Roxbury looking into it. The trends are changing and her thought is at some point we should invite a Funeral Director who is educated on this topic to come in and update the Trustees on this matter. P. Maguire thinks we should get ahead of the curve and begin the conversation so the Trustees are thinking ahead into the future. E. Gallentine stated that the Trustees had discussed this over a decade ago. E. Gallentine stated that Green Burials generally allow a natural full body burial with no embalming, a shroud or a biodegradable casket and no liner. When the Trustees last reviewed this the places that offered Green Burials were generally large open areas or conservation land in many cases. She stated that there was a lot of separation between the bodies. She stated that one of our specific challenges is maximizing space. She thinks it would be interesting to see what has changed and how they deal with settling. P. Maguire thinks we should know the facts. J. Murphy thinks it's a great idea. She stated that one of the things we talked about was setting aside a section of the cemetery as a possibility. They were very preliminary conversations, but there was interest near the wall on Allendale as a possible location. E. Gallentine thinks we

should talk about scattering as well. N. Brown asked if there are markers and E. Gallentine stated that they had talked about tags or even more natural stones.

J. Murphy stated that her brother in law texted her two Sundays ago letting her know that there were five deer in her driveway. They passed her house and into the cemetery. R. Cook stated that they had gone through his yard as well.

J. Murphy wanted to point out that deer have been popping up in the neighborhood of the cemetery. J. Murphy stated that we had talked long ago about the salt application in the cemetery. She had taken some pictures and stated that the Trustees had talked about this being a particular vulnerable area in terms of salt. She brought it up with E. Gallentine and E. Gallentine immediately spoke to the General Foreman. J. Murphy stated that we are obligated to keep these roads reasonably safe for travel and she thinks this was too much salt. She wanted to raise a concern of overuse. E. Gallentine did talk with J. Ronan and they are working on it. E. Gallentine stated that we could talk about getting our own supply of sand, but that the Town no longer uses a sand/salt mix. They pre-treat the main streets and use straight salt when they treat the roads and sidewalks. The schools are generally treated with calcium chloride. She stated that we can continue to talk about this, but we can for now minimize over treatment of the roadways because we don't want excess salt melting and impacting vegetation. R. Cook suggested reaching out to the Arboretum for the options they have.

6. Adjourn

R. Cook moved to adjourn. Seconded by N. Brown. All in favor.