

NANTUCKET CEMETERY COMMISSION
Posted Meeting of April 10, 2024, at 3:00 pm
DPW Conference Room, 188 Madaket Road, with Zoom Connectivity

FINAL AND APPROVED MINUTES

Attendance: Commissioners: Frances Karttunen (by Zoom), Scott McIver, Allen Reinhard, and Lee Saperstein (by Zoom); TaKyra Netter, DPW, and Charlie Polachi, DPW, Cemetery Administrator.

Absent: Barbara White.

1. Call to Order.

Allen Reinhard called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm and started the recording of the meeting: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCR1APB_1Ec&list=PL49sKqpy7VAhIyX1ozdd1bZ3zV8kXFp8M&index=46.

2. Public and Commissioners Comments.

Although there were no members of the public present, Allen Reinhard said that he had a request from Scott McIver, Commissioner, to approve two monument applications. In that they had not been anticipated on the agenda, Allen Reinhard asked that they be taken up in the comments section of the agenda. All agreed. The memorials were for William Sandole and Scott MacLellan and both were approved unanimously (Frances Karttunen, aye; Scott McIver, aye; Allen Reinhard, aye; and Lee Saperstein, aye.). The applications were reviewed in the meeting and are now on file in the DPW office.

3. Minutes of March 13, 2024, and Roll Call.

Scott McIver's move to approve the minutes of March 13, 2024, was seconded by Frances Karttunen, and approved unanimously by a roll-call vote of all present (Frances Karttunen, aye; Scott McIver, aye; Allen Reinhard, aye; and Lee Saperstein, aye).

4. Approval of Lot Sales since Last Meeting.

Allen Reinhard noted that, while he has fielded inquiries, there were no new lot sales to be approved.

5. Discussion: Cemetery improvements at Newtown and New North Cemeteries from field trip on March 20, and plan to implement recommendations.

Allen Reinhard noted that the field trip on March 20th was very successful but decisions were deferred to this meeting. He also reported that Tracy MacDonald, Real Estate Specialist, was unable to attend today's meeting. He will ask her to seek with urgency the Town's designation of Newtown as an official cemetery so that needed work on grubbing and mowing may commence.

Lee Saperstein said that the field trip notes would be appended to these minutes and Charlie Polachi volunteered to go through the various items in the notes for Commission review and approval.

- First was the observation from Frances Karttunen that the daffodils at the entrance to Newtown that were planted last season had come up but were thin. She believed that they had been mown too soon, thus not allowing the bulbs to gain strength. This led to a discussion on further planting and whether or not the Garden Club grant still had a positive balance. Charlie Polachi will research the grant fund. If there are funds available, the Commission will organize another round of planting later in the fall. [Action: Check on status of daffodil fund; schedule planting in late fall.]
- The straps around the flagpole will be trimmed and the lights prepared for use. Charlie Polachi agreed that this work should be done by Memorial Day.
- The iron rails that have been used to delineate family plots will be removed as part of the monument restoration work at Newtown. When the rails rust, they split the stone uprights that hold them.
- Starting with the observation that Newtown has a large number of Civil War veteran burials, the discussion moved to creating a veterans' burial-index project. It was agreed that the index can be created incrementally, starting with the distinctive Civil War memorial stones in Newtown and, thence, moving to other conflicts and other cemeteries. [Action: Create veterans' burial index; maintain contact with Ralph Hardy on this task.]
- Brush cutting along the southern boundary will begin once there is a work order. [Action: Create work order for brush cutting.]
- Considering that Newtown is the only public cemetery projected to be able to accommodate full-body burials, the Cemetery Regulations need to be amended to have the correct lot size: 4-ft by 8-ft consistent with Prospect Hill Cemetery (see Field Trip notes). [Action. Secretary to draft amended regulation.]
- Moving to New North Cemetery, similar observations were made of the need to cut brush and remove steel rails.
- Separate decorative steel gates were seen to be rusting. The consensus was that they might be removed but that this can wait until they are assessed as part of a monument-restoration project for New North Cemetery.
- Vegetation, both volunteer and planted, in the cemetery should be reviewed by the DPW expert with an eye to removing all but the most important ones. [Action: survey plants in New North Cemetery(shrubs, trees, and perennial flowers) for possible removal.]
- Looking over to Old North Cemetery, the earlier observation about creating a consistency of stone color, led to a suggestion that Ludlow Memorial will apply D-2 Biologic to those not treated previously. [Action. Charlie Polachi to create contract amendment to treat remaining monuments.]
- Allen Reinhard asked how the suggested work would be supported, to which Charlie Polachi said that the DPW will need to decide which projects should be supported by its general budget and which should be supported by funds in the Cemetery budget, which stands now at \$42,858.

6. Newtown Cemetery: Plan for Consolidation update, and future projects to improve the cemetery such as parking, layout of lots, flagpole, brush removal, etc. Progress update.

Many of the needed projects for Newtown are listed above in the section on the field trip observations. The badly needed project is for the Town to establish all of Newtown as an official cemetery. This is needed before any major work can be authorized for Newtown. Allen Reinhard will communicate this need to Tracy MacDonald. [Action. Allen Reinhard to tell Tracy MacDonald of the urgency of this action.]

7. Monument Restoration Project update: Historic Coloured and Quaker Cemeteries.

Charlie Polachi reported that the personnel from Ludlow Memorial will be on Island in the next few weeks to finish up work at the Quaker Cemetery. He reported that he will initiate a request for a bid the remaining cemeteries as soon as we learn about the disposition of the Commission's application to the Community Preservation Act funds.

8. New Map of Polpis Lots.

Charlie Polachi said that he and Ray Sylvia will create a new digital map of Polpis just as soon as the remaining corner markers are installed, which Allen Reinhard and Scott McIver agreed to do. Charlie Polachi asked that they report to him any missing markers so that he could see to their replacement. [Action. Allen Reinhard and Scott McIver to install remaining corners; Charlie Polachi and Ray Sylvia to create digital map of Polpis.]

9. Old, New, Other Business and Final Comments.

Lee Saperstein noted that the directional sign to the Historic Coloured Cemetery on Prospect Street was in need of a cleaning. Allen Reinhard reviewed progress on the Projects List and was pleased at how much had been accomplished

10. Adjournment.

Adjournment was at 3:40 pm by acclamation.

Next regular meeting: Wednesday, May 14, 2024, at 3:00 pm, in the DPW conference room at 188 Madaket Road. For those who wish to attend virtually, a Zoom link will also be sent to Commissioners.

Respectfully submitted: _____; Date: 4/10/24
Lee W. Saperstein, Secretary

Nantucket Cemetery Projects List (as printed on the agenda):

- Consolidation of lots at Newtown Cemetery with recordable ground survey: Awaiting action.
- Begin Monument Restoration at the Historic Coloured and Quaker Cemeteries.

- Ongoing, D-2 treatment of monuments.
- Fencing at the Historic Coloured Cemetery.
- Fencing, and brush removal at New and Old North Cemeteries.
- New map needed for Polpis addition of new lots.
- Installation of new Lot Corner markers at Polpis.

CEMETERY COMMISSION
Field Trip on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 10:00 am.

Five members of the Cemetery Commission (Frances Karttunen, Scott McIver, Allen Reinhard, Lee Saperstein, and Barbara White) assembled at Newtown Cemetery at 10:00 am on Wednesday, March 20, 2024, to observe conditions there and, subsequently at New and Old North Cemeteries. This was an observational field trip during which no decisions were discussed nor voted upon. Consequently, this field trip was not posted as an official Commission meeting. These notes, however, will be discussed at the next official meeting of the Commission and decisions, if needed, will be approved then.

Newtown Cemetery.

Upon entering Newtown at the gate in the middle of the Sparks Avenue fence (northeastern side), Frances Karttunen noted that the daffodils planted last year were just coming up. She suspected that last year's mowing may have weakened them. To be discussed: daffodil planting.

Moving to the back fence, the new flag pole was observed. It was noted that Charlie Polachi had said that the rope needs to be replaced. The various steel straps that hold the lights and the solar array appeared to be untidy. To be discussed: final flagpole installation.

Here, and in the other two cemeteries visited, a number of family plots are marked by corner posts connected by steel pipes. When these pipes rust, they break off the tops of the stone posts. To be discussed: removal of these plot-marker pipes and if their removal may go into a cemetery restoration project request for a bid.

It was noted that one plot by the fence had four corner markers but no memorial stone. To be done: determine if the Lewis map identifies this plot.

Frances Karttunen pointed out a Civil-War memorial, which is a very specific stone that includes details of military service. She said that there are a number of them in Newtown and that a census of them might be a good project. To be discussed: Civil War burials.

Also observed that brush by the back fence was intruding into the cemetery. It was noted that the brush helps to shield the school buses parked on the other side of the fence. To be discussed: trimming the brush back to the boundary.

The Commissioners then moved into the wild area in the cemetery's southern corner close to the site of the Cow Pond and looked at a number of issues that should be discussed in an open meeting: an old fence post suggests that the boundary extends into this area, the area needs to be grubbed and cut so as to find the old boundary and bound marker; the area has been used for parties and should be cleaned up; the town's arborist should be asked if any of the mature trees should be saved; the GPR survey needs to go into this area to see if can be used for additional burials; entering the cemetery from Cow Pond Lane might be preferable to an entrance on Sparks Avenue.

When speaking of full-body burials, Scott McIver said that Prospect Hill was now measuring their plots at 4-ft by 8-ft and, that if we decide to do the same, then we need to amend our regulations. For the future: if additional burials can be accommodated in Newtown, we will need to amend the Cemetery Regulations.

It was agreed that Tracy MacDonald should help us to find answers to these questions/issues. It was noted that defining all of the land as a cemetery is critical to spending any money in Newtown. This has been on the agenda of a number of Commission meetings.

New North Cemetery.

The Commissioners then moved to New North Cemetery where they saw similar maintenance issues. To be discussed: brush cutting on the plot near to the entrance to the cemetery; also brush cutting to expose the back (eastern) boundary right up to the bound on Franklin Street and installing a fence along that boundary; removal of volunteer vegetation growing up into memorials; removal of volunteer trees and shrubs that have invaded the cemetery; removal of rusting piping that causes failure of the upright corner posts. Seek advice from the arborist on mature trees that have established themselves in the cemetery.

Similarly to the use of pipes to mark family plots, several plots had decorative steel gates that are now rusting. To be discussed: the fate of these steel gates.

There were non-native plants in several plots (Chase and Folger). To be discussed: removal of non-native plants.

Old North Cemetery.

Looking across at Old North Cemetery, Frances Karttunen noted that the monuments that had been repaired has also been treated with the D-2 Biologic solution and were noticeably whiter than their neighbors. To be discussed: determining who might be asked to treat the remaining stones in Old North with the biologic solution.