

## Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

- Meeting Date:** March 2, 2016, 4:30 pm
- Commissioners Present:** Rita Church, Allison Curran, Lainey Rappaport, Barry Trutor, Donna Waldron
- Staff Present:** Anne D’Alton, Cemetery Office Assistant
- Public Present:** Nancy Knox, *Branch Out Burlington!*
- Attachments:** Greenmount Cemetery Tree Walk planning, from Donna Waldron  
Letter from Barry Trutor to Bob Rusten dated 12.31.15, with list of questions  
Perpetual Care fund balance and interest for 2013-2015  
Memo from Darlene Bayko to Bob Rusten dated 2.04.16 re Mtg. of 1.29.16

Mtg. was started at 4:30 by Chair Donna Waldron.

### I. Approval of agenda

- A. Item V.B.4 was repositioned to be addressed after Item II.
- B. Report from Barry Trutor on meeting with Bob Rusten was added to III.
- C. Barry Trutor moved to approve, Rita Church seconded; unanimously approved with amendments A&B.

### II. Approval of Minutes from January 14, 2016 Meeting

- A. Donna Waldron moved to approve, Lainey Rappaport seconded; unanimously approved.

### V. B.4. Discussion of Greenmount Cemetery *Branch Out Burlington!* Tree Walk

- A. Nancy Knox shared brochures & described *BOB!*'s activities: seminars, Awesome Tree Contest, Tree Walk, Tree Sale, website, FaceBook, Twitter. Membership includes 10 dedicated people (including Waldron) plus others.
- B. Annual Tree Walks were started about 15 years ago by City Arborist Warren Spinner. An area with many species present is chosen, a route planned, a brochure created, the event advertised via social media and an email list of about 100, collected at *BOB!* events.
- C. Knox investigated Greenmount in September, 2015, made a list of trees, some of which have special significance in the context of cemeteries, and this will be added to the brochure to be created once they plan the route.
- D. Waldron referred to her handout, showing a list of notable people interred at Greenmount, gleaned from the Walking Tour booklet created by Scott McLaughlin's UVM students.
  1. Annie D’Alton suggested adding Mary Martha Fletcher.
  2. Church will check to see if a relative of Ethan Allen lives in Westford, and would like to attend.
  3. At an upcoming meeting, the Commissioners will choose who to focus on for presentation during the walk.
  4. These sites will be marked somehow to make them easier to find.
- E. Knox & Waldron will discuss parking.



- F. Event will take place rain or shine.
- G. Rappaport reported that neighbor Nancy Kirby's granddaughter wants to offer lemonade & cookies to the participants. This could be done near the sign-in table at the entrance.
- H. Knox reported that about 40 people usually attend.
- I. Trutor asked if brass tags will be affixed to the trees, as they have been in Lakeview, to good advantage. Knox didn't know, but will pass Trutor's enthusiasm on to Spinner. Rappaport suggested using temporary markers, if the permanent brass ones aren't chosen.
- J. Waldron feels this is a great way to introduce the City's Cemeteries to the public, and the Commission thanked Knox & *BOB!*

### III. Old Business

- A. Report from Trutor on Perpetual Care Fund management
  - 1. Barry Trutor distributed hand-outs and discussed the meeting he had with Bob Rusten, Rich Goodwin, Darlene Bayko and Jesse Bridges.
  - 2. Not all his questions were answered; Trutor did not want to take up too much of their valuable time.
  - 3. Trutor felt confident that the group at the meeting is interested in fostering a relationship with the Commission, and is in the process of making changes in the management of the Perpetual Care fund so that it will make more interest income, which will be made available for maintaining the cemeteries.
    - ◆ Moving the \$100,000 CD to the investment account should result in obtaining about 5x more interest income.
  - 4. Allison Curran asked if there are written rules for the management of the fund and the income. D'Alton said this is at least in part addressed in the State Statutes, the City Ordinances, and the Bond issued at time of lot sale.
  - 5. Rappaport asked if Trutor asked if the interest reported could be used to paint the house, for example. Trutor had not asked that specifically, but noted that implementation of the Perpetual Care income is the responsibility of the Superintendent, which is Bridges.
  - 6. Waldron asked if any of the interest has been spent & on what. Trutor did not know.
  - 7. Church asked if there are political implications to the discovery and correction of mismanagement. Trutor did not think so.
  - 8. Trutor reported that Bayko is the person in charge of managing the fund.
  - 9. D'Alton reminded the Commission that she has been trying to document the status of the fund, but is not an accountant, and has not been trained to use New World enough to know which reports to use to show use of income, in addition to fund balance growth from revenue & investment income. She would like to do a more complete job, but needs support from the Clerk's Office—perhaps the Commission can advocate for this.
  - 10. Rappaport asked if someone should be hired to prioritize cemetery repairs and spend the interest accordingly; Trutor said that's Bridges' job, and he's confident he will do it.
  - 11. Rusten will attend a Cemetery Commission meeting, and present a written description of the fund management procedure changes & plans.
    - ◆ Waldron asked how this meeting will be run, if the Commissioners should present a list of questions. Trutor suggested letting Rusten present information.
    - ◆ Rappaport suggested that Bridges should attend, so that he's aware of the Commission's ideas about what to spend the interest on.
    - ◆ Waldron suggested holding off on discussing the Tree Walk until May, and dedicate the April meeting to discussion with Rusten. All agreed. Plan on 4.14.16, 4:30 pm.



12. The Commissioners thanked Trutor for his time, interest and efforts. Church felt that if it wasn't for this, nothing would be changing in the management of the fund.

#### **IV. Superintendent's Items – none.**

#### **V. Commissioners' Items**

- A. Waldron suggested not taking action on investigating grant sources, as they have received enough from the Vermont Old Cemetery Association grant to get started with monument repair at Greenmount.
- B. Other items:
  1. Policy for organizations that charge for participation in events held in City Cemeteries.
    - ◆ Waldron suggested that these organizations give 20% of their admission income to the Cemetery Commission for use in repairing monuments at Greenmount.
    - ◆ Curran asked if there's a difference between charging admission and asking for donations. The consensus was to ask for the 20% from admission charges only.
    - ◆ Trutor noted the organizations involved: Queen City Ghostwalk, a for-profit, and Preservation Burlington, a not-for-profit—should there be a distinction?
    - ◆ Curran asked about the Trolley tour—Bridges had mentioned that they already pay Parks, but it was not clear for touring which properties, or how much.
    - ◆ Curran asked if the City Attorney would need to approve. Was the City Attorney involved with setting the Chapel rental fee?
    - ◆ Waldron suggested that the Commission present their discussion notes to Bridges for his feedback.
  2. See V.A.
  3. Preservation Burlington connection—receipt of the 2015 Ray O'Connor Award.
    - ◆ Waldron reported that she and Rappaport attended the Ray O'Connor Award Presentation ceremony, and she displayed the award, which the Commission is allowed to keep for one year. She asked if it could be displayed in the Conference Room; D'Alton offered to hang it, take a photo, and email it to the Commission for advertising purposes—Rappaport will notify the Burlington Free Press, Church will notify the North End News.
    - ◆ Waldron will send a letter of thanks to PB.

#### **VI. Office Report**

- A. Discussion about charging the hospital for the annual Infant Burial.
  1. Trutor feels it's wrong to charge the hospital just because it has money. He considers the infant burial to be in the same category as an indigent burial.
  2. Rappaport suggested finding out what arrangements are made with other cemeteries for hospitals in other cities in Vermont: Middlebury, St. Albans, Rutland.
  3. Church reported that the hospital offers the cremation & burial free of charge to families who do not want to make their own arrangements for disposition, for whatever reason.
  4. Trutor asked what exactly the burial entails, and how many burials per lot: D'Alton responded it's a box containing the commingled cremains of all infants that died in the hospital during the past year, and six could be buried in each grave. The hospital has purchased lots in 2 different areas. The Cemetery also has 2 areas for babies only.
  5. Church suggested asking the hospital to change the time to before 2 pm so it does not cost the Cemetery overtime.



6. D'Alton noted that the hospital had paid for the lot in the past, but not the burial, overtime or tent set-up. Curran suggests the compromise of giving them the lot, but charging for burials.
  7. Waldron noted that the Hospital Auxiliary pays for items like this.
  8. No consensus reached.
- B. Waldron asked D'Alton about her recent email reporting that the last single-grave lots where a monument is allowed have been sold. D'Alton replied that we have been waiting for Parks to allocate funds to hire a surveyor to lay out the lot plan for Section 6, but haven't heard anything about the status of this project. Until then, the only single-grave lots available are restricted to having either slant or flat markers, no monuments or benches.
- C. D'Alton reported that the City Attorney Gregg Meyer has not responded to her email about changing the rules determining residency for lot purchase price. Having waited 3 months, she sent a reminder to Meyer & Bridges today.
- D. D'Alton requested that the Commissioners keep in mind as they meet people interested in the City Cemeteries that we are in urgent need of more volunteers to help place flags for Memorial Day, and to help with any of the many office projects that she has discovered need addressing. Waldron asked that she write a description of what is needed, and she will present it at the Retired Teachers meeting on 3.15.16.

In response to a question about when new signage will be installed in the cemeteries: Waldron reported that Bridges had given the Skateboard Park priority over the Cemeteries for new signage.

**VII. Public Comment – none.**

**VIII. Adjournment**

- A. Church moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:15. Curran seconded this motion. Unanimously approved.