

Cemetery Commission Meeting

October 1, 2019

Present: Diane Meehan, Cyndy Manley, Will Brown, Pat Kennedy. Absent: Mary Orisich

New Business:

1) Purchase of metal military flag pole stands. Pat reports that Peg O'Neil says the town can pay for new metal poles and reimburse itself through the Rolland Fund account as a nonprofit organization. Pat can't find a source for the metal stands that charges less than \$18.00 per stand. She did find a stand for about \$7.00 each (cheaper if purchased in bulk). It has a different design than the current metal or plastic stands. Cyndy tried to get a sample from the company but they refused. Pat has purchased one stand so we can look at it and decide whether to buy in bulk.

2) Ringville plot map: Diane has sold four lots in the new section of Ringville for green burials, but she notes that her plot map is not consistent with the actual plots available. Diane, Cyndy, and Pat will meet at Ringville on 10/12, at 9 a.m. (rain date: 10/13) to replot the cemetery and adjust the map. Cyndy will loan small, plastic flags. Pat will look at receipts of plots sold (located at the town hall) to make sure map matches locations of burials and plots sold but not yet used.

3) Inclusion in Cemetery Guide: We agreed to be listed in the guide but to suggest that inquiries about green burial be directed to one of the cemetery commissioners.

4) Closing of cemeteries for burial during the winter months: We agreed to close the cemeteries for winter burials between 11/1 and 4/30 unless weather permits.

5) Headstones: We agreed to tell anyone purchasing a standard size headstone that the town requires four feet of gravel under the base of the stone to prevent the stone from tipping over.

6) Repair of headstones: It has been the position of the cemetery commission for several years that plots are privately owned by the purchaser and the town has no responsibility for repairing or straightening headstones. However, we will help the owners find individuals who do that work, if possible. We agree that we will attempt to care for stones in need of conservation that are over 100 years old from the Rolland fund.

7) Ringville stone wall repair: Will will order gravel for the driveways at Ringville and North to be paid out of the Rolland fund. Will will get the large top stone on the wall at Ringville put back in place, that work to pay for out of the Rolland fund.

Old Business:

1) Green burials: Although we have allowed green burials in our cemeteries for several years, the first one took place this fall. We agree that the responsible party (family member or funeral home) makes arrangements with the commissioner of the cemetery to complete the burial without manual assistance.

We also discussed restricting sale of cemetery plots to current and former town residents and their immediate families but decided to hold off on that restriction until we find out what other local cemeteries which allow green burial do.

We agreed to notify the Worthington select board about our position on green burials.

We agreed to host a presentation of the nonprofit Green Burial of Massachusetts group (greenburialma.org) this winter, open to the public.

2) Purchase of land for expansion of cemeteries: We agree to approach the owner of land near Center Cemetery to see if there is any interest in selling a lot to the town for cemetery use in the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Kennedy