

Cemetery Meeting Minutes Monday, January 29, 2024

Attendance:

Michael Bobinsky- Director of Public Works
Neil Larson-Chair
Woody Openo
Mark Richardson
Amy LaBelle
Aly Visser

Minutes of Wednesday October 18, 2023

Mark Richardson moved and Ally Visser seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2023 Trustees meeting.

Director's Report

- a. The cemetery had 1 cremation burial during this reporting period.
- b. JLG Landscaping has concluded regular mowing services in Forest Glade Cemetery for the season.
- c. The development of the FY25 City budget has started. Budgets were due to the City Manager by January 4, 2024 and it will go through an extensive review between January and February, before advancing to the City Council for review and consideration. Staff will be preparing the Cemetery Budget proposal which is one of several Department Division with a budget request. The City's Cemetery Budget for this current year is \$8,770. FY25 Budget is proposed at
- d. Trustees have been asked to help staff locate an appraisal consultant to assess the value of the 12 stained glass window panes in the Furber Chapel. The City's property liability insurance provider (PRIMEX) has requested City staff to obtain current values of the stain glass for policy updates. Trustee Visser located a consultant/contractor in the Boston area who may be able to help obtain a price quote to conduct the appraisal. Trustee Visser sent an update to the Trustees reflecting a price proposal for preparing an appraisal. See Old Business; topic to be discussed further at the January 29 meeting. City officials need the appraisal report by the end of this current fiscal year or by July 1, 2024.
- e. Staff has been in discussions with representatives from the Temple Beth Israel- Portsmouth regarding a family making plans for a pending burial in a family plot in the Jewish section of Forest Glade (Ave I S). Jewish burial practices customarily involve burial within a day or two of death. In this specific case, the party has not passed yet; although we have not closed Forest Glade for the winter yet based on weather conditions, once we do close the Cemetery we cease all burials until spring. (As of January 29, we have closed the cemetery for the winter due to conditions. I alerted the

representative of the Portsmouth Synagogue and they were quite surprised and concerned that the City does not offer winter burials. The Rabbi of the Portsmouth Synagogue may be sending a letter to the City and the Trustees requesting that this practice be reviewed and possibly changed due to future burial requests that may occur in the winter. I recommend that the Trustees discuss this further.

New Business

- a. Woody Openo brought up the Cemetery's leveled budget. How would the Trustees go about asking for a larger budget? M. Bobinsky informed Trustees they could submit a request to the City Manager; the FY25 Budget will be challenged by tax cap requirements. M Bobinsky did discuss how specific purchase orders for a project or supply ordered in the current fiscal year can carry over for approval in the next year.
- b. Woody Openo brought up future grants to fix the North wall of the chapel. M. Bobinsky indicated the City staff plans to work with the Trustees on next round of LCHIP or Moose Plate Grants for remaining rehab needs at Furber Chapel, staff is looking into deadlines for when grants are due.
- c. Aly Visser shared the stained-glass window proposal from Lyn Hovey Studios of Boston. Trustees need a more formal price proposal from the vendor before moving forward. Aly agreed to contact the Boston vendor to obtain a formal price proposal for further review by the Trustees and staff.

Old Business

NONE

Miscellaneous

- a. M. Bobinsky has magazines/periodicals to share with Trustees.
- b. M. Richardson shared that Somersworth's 300th Anniversary is in 2029
- c. M. Bobinsky to obtain historic preservation grant application deadlines for this year's LCHIP and Moose Plate applications

Next meeting: Monday, March 4, 2024 @ 3:30pm at Department of Public Works

Mark Richardson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Woody Openo seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 4:44 pm.

Submitted by: Amy LaBelle