

TOWN OF STOCKBRIDGE  
Minutes of Meeting

Board or Commission: **Stockbridge Cemetery Commission**

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, **September 26, 2023**

Time of meeting: 10:00am

Place of Meeting: Town Offices and Zoom

50 Main Street

Stockbridge, MA 01262

Present:

Karen Marshall, Chair

Candace Currie, Vice-Chair

Pat Flinn, LHA representative

Peter Williams, at-large

Attendees:

Hugh Page, Highway Superintendent

Meeting Called to Order at 10:08am

1. Welcome newest member, Peter Chase Williams – The commission is thrilled to have Peter Williams join the commission ‘at the table.’ Thank you, Peter.
2. Approval of Minutes,
  - a. Motion by Williams to approve August minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Flinn, APPROVED.
  - b. Motion by Marshall to approve July minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Williams, APPROVED.
3. ‘Open’ Signs for Cemetery
  - a. Currie reported that the Select Board (SB) approved the ‘Cemetery Open’ sign, and while the SB was in favor of the sign, they suggested something more ‘of Stockbridge’ than a metal sign with black letters on white.
  - b. Currie met with [Ironsmith, Bob Bartle](#) to talk about design ideas.
  - c. Bartle also suggested using color and Mary Flynn if she were still alive, would want green signs. She is known for having the street light posts painted green.
  - d. The commission discussed these ideas without making any decisions. Williams will bring images of signs around town that might reflect what we’d like to see and we will discuss next meeting.
4. Cost estimates
  - a. Hugh Page reported that Utilities and Water for the garage at the cemetery
    - i. Water – no cost to town as the Water Dept could complete this work
    - ii. Electric – cost would about \$5000
    - iii. Gas – Still waiting on an estimate

- iv. Town Administrator Mike Canales joined the meeting at this point in the discussion and suggested that Page outline all the improvements needed at that garage that would constitute 'capital improvements' and this item will be added as an article to the town meeting warrant to be voted on in the spring.
- 5. Cost estimates marble fence posts
  - a. The number of posts to be replaced along the Church Street side needs to be discussed and reviewed by the Commission. This task to be completed at a future site visit.
- 6. Stone cleaning and Resetting
  - a. Progress thus far.
    - i. Highway Dept personnel have been trained on resetting many stones that are leaning. Additional workshops in the Spring and Fall of 2024 will be scheduled.
  - b. Next cleaning workshop: Oct 2 – 5
    - i. A handful of volunteers showed up to clean marble monuments in the oldest section of the cemetery. Next up in next week Oct 2 – 5!
  - c. Volunteers for on-going cleaning
    - i. Currie received requests from two people (who have children) to hold a workshop on a weekend so others may attend, and others who work during the week also asked for weekend opportunities.
    - ii. Currie has suggested that next spring in 2024, we hold at least one training weekend.
    - iii. Currie also reported that a dedicated volunteer believes we can muster a group of volunteers that will be willing to clean monuments once or twice a month (when the water system is up and running; Page reported water is shutdown at Indigenous Peoples Day/Columbus Day) , to complete this section sooner rather than later.
- 7. Uploaded to Town website: Definitions & Policies on Monuments, Markers, Plants and Decorations
  - a. Marshall has requested the Policies be amended to include 'No Grave Rubbing', which is known to degrade the stone carving over time.
- 8. Old business
  - a. Page has contracted with Burdick Tree LLC to prune a pine tree for safety reasons adjacent to the Rockwell lot. There are also hedges near the garage that will be removed by Hugh this season.
  - b. Page also reported that the string trimmers have been used (around marble monuments) without guards to protect monuments because they are not available for commercial-grade equipment; only at the residential scale, which have no longevity.
  - c. Williams suggested we think about a comprehensive plan related to plants for trimming and removals.

- d. Marshall suggested that next mowing season we mow, but not do string trimming and see how that works out. Currie suggested that putting in thyme or wild strawberry near the cleaned stones would be good.
9. Any specific agenda items to be discussed at our next meeting?
- a. Discuss Preservation Inc re:
    - i. next group of resetting workshops for the highway dept,
    - ii. next cleaning workshop in the spring,
    - iii. phase 3 and 4 of the Sergeant Tombstones
    - iv. document gravestone inscriptions
  - b. Plants
    - i. Discuss maintenance (additions and removals) of the living things – trees, shrubs, turf and groundcover
  - c. Preservation Inc report on the Sergeant tombs; how do we get that document onto the Town website. Marshall will find out.
  - d. The commission would like to make it easier to find the Policies document on the website, and are wondering what is the best way to share the Preservation Inc. report about the tombstones, and the 'database' spreadsheet that they produced as part of the initial study.
  - e. Discuss buying D/2 and equipment and have Highway Department, along with mowing, spray the stones waiting to be cleaned.
  - f. Review sign ideas.

**10. Next meeting will begin at the garage at the Cemetery from 9:15 to 9:45 on October 24<sup>th</sup>** where Page will point out the improvements that are needed, and then the regularly scheduled meeting will continue at the Town Hall at 10am for discussion, deliberation and decision making.

Meeting adjourned at 11:08am

Respectfully submitted,  
Candace Currie, Vice Chair