

Minutes 2... Montague Cemetery Commission

Monday, June 19, 2023, 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

In person/Hybrid meeting

Montague Senior Center, 62 5th St., Turners Falls, MA

1. Roll call

- a. Present—Judith Lorei, Mary Kay Mattiace, Jamie Fuller, Jo Jo-Ann Prescott

2. May and June meeting minutes to be approved at next meeting. **Jo-Ann** volunteered to take minutes and **Annie** will continue with finances. Thank you Annie for all your hard work!

3. All members agreed to continue as MCC participants for another year.

4. Updates

a. Highland Woods

- i. Plot sales—9 sold and paid for
 - 1 anticipated sale
 - 7 expressed an interest

All of this has happened without any advertisement. **Judith** will send in information on Highland Woods to Green Burial Massachusetts to add to their online database.

- ii. Recent improvements are the addition of a storage shed, the new archway installed, and a coffin cart built by Mark Fraser.

- iii. Annie will research How much money has been spent from the original \$10K allocation

- iv. 2 signs will be needed – one at each entrance to Highland Woods to differentiate it from the lawn section - at a cost of around 4K. **MK** will check again with Hales sign company about the cost and time frame. **Judith** will check with the town accountant about how to access funding for

this project.

v. DPW has yet to address challenging asphalt pathway conditions at two places in the lawn section of the cemetery. **MK** will contact them to get an idea on a time line.

vi. **Judith** will purchase lowering straps for families not working with a funeral home at the time of burial.

vii. **MK** will bring a couple of designs for edging and seating for the gathering area at Highland Woods. Jamie will research bench designs and costs. We may be able to utilize a “*go fund me*” page for donations for some benches. **MK** will check with the Montague wood bank to see what might be available.

viii. Mike will no longer be doing the maintenance and will retire the end of June. Discussion about what we could do to recognize his hard work over the past 20 years. **MK** will speak to Kate about writing an article for the paper about his contribution to us and the community.

b. Volunteer clean-ups and partner reports

i. Old South—Jamie...looks good but a lot needs to be done.

ii. Highland—need **Annie’s** help to differentiate between weeds and flowers in the wildflower garden. Other projects as mentioned above.

iii. East Mineral— one headstone buried in overgrowth -otherwise looks good.

iv. Chestnut Hill—fallen fence, sign is missing. Judith will assess.

v. Burnham—only one plot left and that is for a Burnham family member.

vi. Dry Hill—Mark Fairbrother has been mowing for years there. Many broken stones etc. Needs cleaning around stones and trimming, extremely difficult to get to. One needs to hike 1.1 miles from the trail or take a 4 wheel drive up a very difficult rocky road.

c. New contractor from Chicopee to start July 1st.

Volunteer clean-up day will be on Tuesday, July 11 at 10am. MK will contact the volunteers.

d. Mapping and database projects still in progress. **Judith** will send Jo-Ann the data mapping of Highland Woods so she can continue that process. **Jo-Ann** working on Highland to display names on headstones. **Jamie** working on mapping Fairway as well. Jamie has a neighbor, Anne Marie Kitteridge who studies indigenous peoples mounds and artifacts. Could be helpful in the future.

5. Budget

Excess funds will go to Old South and Dry Hill Cemeteries.

All agreed **Old South** needs to take **priority** in clean-up. In the meantime, an evaluation needs to be done in regard to cutting limbs, tree removal etc. It needs to be by one who intimately knows the needs so the contractor will know specifically what needs to be done. Work has to be done by one who has a certificate of insurance for clean-up projects.

6. Meeting with the Board of Health—we would like to provide them with regular updates at their meetings going forward. Next meeting on June 28th at 5pm.

Next meeting...**July 24th at 6 pm**. Judith will ask Annie to reserve the room at the Montague Senior Center.

Meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM.

*