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MAYOR

CITY OF SALEM  
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CEMETERY COMMISSION

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**BOARD MEMBERS:**  
SUSAN DAMEGREENE  
PATRICIA DONAHUE  
BETH GERARD  
ANTHONY O'DONNELL

**MINUTES OF THE CEMETERY COMMISSION  
MARCH 4, 2020**

On March 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. the Cemetery Commission held a meeting at the SATV Conference Room, 285 Derby Street, Salem, MA.

**1. Roll Call**

In attendance were: Acting Chair Beth Gerard, Members: Susan DameGreene, Patricia Donahue and Anthony O'Donnell; Tree Warden Robert LeBlanc and Joanne Roomey, Commission Clerk.

**2. Friends of Greenlawn Cemetery Chapel Use Request for May 2, 2020**

Christine Lutts was present and requested of the Friends of Greenlawn for the use of the Dickson Chapel on May 2, 2020 from 9:30 a.m. until 12:45 p.m. for up to 50 people. Ms. Lutts, upon her being recognized by the Board, asked for clarification on how items for the Board meetings are added to the agenda? The Board unanimously agreed that meeting agenda items must be submitted (48) hours in advance, or sooner, to Mr. LeBlanc or to Ms. Kelly Ryan, cemetery staff assistant, for proper legal posting.

Mr. O'Donnell made the motion to approve the request of the Friends of Greenlawn for usage of the Dickson Chapel on May 2, 2020 between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. for the Jim McAlister Lecture with the understanding that the attendee number will not exceed (50) and the group is responsible for set-up and clean up after the event. Seconded by Ms. DameGreene. AIF, the motion carried.

**3. Pomeroy Foundation Sign- Request for a Letter of Support**

Christine Lutts requested the Cemetery Commission to write a Letter of Support to the Friends of Greenlawn for the application of grant funding through the William C. Pomeroy Foundation

Ms. Gerard made the motion to approve Ms. Lutts' request to direct the Cemetery Commission to create a Letter of Support from the Commission to the Friends of Greenlawn for the application of grant funding through the William C. Pomeroy Foundation to secure a National Historical Register sign for the Green Lawn Cemetery. Seconded by Mr. O'Donnell. AIF, motion carried.

4. **Approve Minutes:** Susan DameGreene made the motion to approve the December 4, 2019 minutes. Seconded by Patricia Donahue. AIF, the motion carried.

5. **Robert LeBlanc - Cemetery Work Report**

- Interment Activities within the cemetery in the past two months are as follows:
  - Full burials: 19
  - Cremations: 5
- The Wreath's Across America was a very successful event on December 14, 2019 at Greenlawn Cemetery. There were over 2,000 wreathes placed on the veteran's graves. Despite the inclement weather, a number of volunteer groups came out to help with the laying of the wreaths and the program was held under the cover of several tents that had been set up the day before.
- The original date for the Luminaria had to be changed due to reported high winds in the area. The event was re-scheduled and was a success for all the neighbors in the area on December 22, 2019.
- Staff were working on the fall leaf clean-up and then got the first plowable snowstorm on January 18, 2020. The crew are working hard to get a jump on the spring clean-up and get as much done while the ground is bare.
- On January 9, 2020, the Greenlawn Cemetery received an order of ten (10) burial liners to have in stock for the winter months. During the month of January, almost all of them were sold and a new order will need to be placed.
- Early in January, Christine Lutts, Patti Kelleher and Mr. LeBlanc toured the Dickson Chapel to review what needed to be done in the upcoming year. The discussion was about a project that the Friends of Greenlawn could raise money for. There was a proposal to replace stained glass windows and each window was itemized, so they could choose a project that might fit their budget. New estimates came in to do just the glass and that was quoted at \$68,000. Another quote is required for the project because that does not include the woodwork that the stained glass sits in. Once the estimates come back, the Friends of Greenlawn will have a project to fundraise for in the spring.
- The heat in the Chapel was found to be off on the December 24, 2019 and Stadium Oil was called to do some repair work on the furnace. Also requiring repairs was the exhaust pipe for the furnace in the equipment garage. Carbon monoxide was leaking into the building where the staff have their bathroom and break room.
- On January 7, 2020 we got word from Dr. Lisa Delissio from Salem State University, that the grant we had applied for had been awarded. The grant was for \$2,000 for supplies and to help map the arboretum at the Greenlawn Cemetery. On January 23, 2020, Mr. LeBlanc and Christine Lutts met with the Botany class at the college and began to map out the semester course. The students will take field trips to the cemetery, measure the selected trees for the inventory and take samples to catalog the existing trees that are on the property today. Therefore, we will begin to trace where the trees species came from and label the trees with the correct tags.

- The staff will continue with maintenance on the cemeteries and hope to get to some winter pruning to address some of the damage that occurred during the high wind events in October.
- The Cemetery Master Plan RFP has been completed and it is out to be bid on by prospective engineering/architectural firms and due back at the end of March. Once the bids are received, we should discuss the plan to move forward.
- There has been a change in the cemetery staff over the past month. David Cronin, who had been at the cemetery for a good number of years decided to retire. The position is now being advertised internally and interviews will be conducted to fill the open spot.

**6. Discussion on Green/Natural Burials**

The Board had a discussion regarding more folks are choosing to have green or natural burials. Mr. O'Donnell explained that green burials preserve the bodies without any chemicals and there are natural coffins made from biodegradable materials. The Board agreed to further discussion at the next meeting. A talk by Candice Curry, formerly of Mount Auburn Cemetery had been scheduled for March 26, 2020, sponsored by the Friends of Broad St. Cemetery, and that everyone present, was invited to attend. Ms. DameGreene wants to follow up this informal talk with another presentation to the Cemetery Commissioners for consideration of adoption in Salem cemeteries.

**7. Discussion on Broad Street**

The Board agreed to continue this discussion at the next meeting on April 6, 2020.

**8. New Business:** None

**9. Next Meeting Date:** April 6, 2020 at City Hall Annex, 98 Washington Street in the Large Conference Room on the first floor.

**10. Adjournment:** Ms. Donahue made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. O'Donnell. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne M. Roomey  
Commission Clerk