

Essex Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes (draft)

Wed., Aug. 24, 2022

Essex Town Offices

Members present: Joe Teegarden, Elaine Strunk, Sue Brown, Joan Janzen

Others attendees: Cheryl Brown (Assistant Town Clerk, Administrative Liason to CC)

Absent: Bob Covey, Sexton (see Sexton's Report attached below.)

Meeting minutes:

1. 10:38 am Joe Teegarden, Co-Chairman, called the meeting to order. The CC reviewed and updated the agenda.
2. No members of the public in attendance.
3. A motion was made and the minutes were unanimously approved.
4. Sexton's report: WORK COMPLETED

☐ ☐ Full size interments – 1

☐ ☐ Cremation interments - 6

☐ ☐ Foundation layouts for memorials – 1

☐ ☐ Corner posts marking - 2

☐ ☐ General cemetery work including meeting with lot owners– Approximately 8 hours – includes trimming columbarium shrubs

COMMENTS & OBSERVATIONS

I would like to thank the Town of Essex and MT. View Cemetery Commission for the opportunity to serve as sexton for the 2022 season. Once again, I have found everyone to be supportive, friendly and most cooperative and, as you are aware, this will be my last season at Mt. View.

Following a relatively quiet early summer, we cared for 7 interments during this period. I have trimmed the shrub row near the columbarium as well as spending time meeting with families and monument companies with lot/grave questions. The affidavit of lot ownership appears to be working well and, although creating additional paperwork for the office, will likely provide the anticipated legal protection for all parties. The ground improvement project is making good progress under the guidance of Joe and Public Works. I anticipate the fruits of our efforts will begin to present themselves next summer. Finally, I am pleased with the utilization of the urn covering as approved by the Commission.

Again, my thanks to Cheryl, Commission members and Parks & Rec. for your support. As always, I welcome suggestion for improved service.

5. Discussion about survey map and grave placement: The CC had several questions about the plotting and grave placement process. There is also question about how expensive the completed project could be. As a cost-saving measure, Elaine suggested plotting the gravesites in just the '300 Section.' Actions taken:

- Joe Teegarden will contact Joe Flynn (surveyor) about meeting with him in the surveyed area to get a clear understanding of the plotting and what the grave placement will actually look like when the process is completed.
 - Cheryl can hold off payment of the 2nd invoice until after Joe's meeting with the surveyor.
6. Discussion about dealing with possible dead trees: there is one large dead tree in the Common Burial Ground, but, as was noted, it has been there a long time and doesn't appear to be leaning. There are also some trees in MVC whose health is uncertain. The five or six small trees(Viburnum lentago) by the columbarium are sick, too, with what appears to be mildew. Joe will gather more information and consult with Dave Foster, who first mentioned concern about falling trees.
7. Filling the sexton's position for 2023: CC members were in agreement that the sexton's position as demonstrated and defined by the present sexton (Bob Covey) entails a high standard of professionalism, responsibility and time commitment, as well as the ability to work with people, oftentimes at a difficult point in their lives. The present \$2500 honorarium is not adequate in light of what is expected of the person in this position. The CC proposed offering \$10,000 (which includes the original \$2500), a budget increase of \$7500. Cheryl will meet with the Town Manager later this week with this proposal. Cheryl also get information on the Town process of advertising and hiring.
8. Cheryl asked the CC for direction on the Urbane-Laramie lot situation. The sexton has probed and there is no sign of interment. Since there is no deed in this case, the CC recommended that Cheryl offer the family the opportunity to sign an Affidavit of Heirs to settle the ownership issue.
- In this discussion, the CC also clarified that the Affidavit of Heirs (AOH) is not appropriate to use when there IS an existing copy of the deed. and there is no issue about ownership, ie. pre-emptively. Now that the Town and the Junction have legally separated, Cheryl has been asked by a community member if Junction residents could still purchase plots in the MVC. Through discussion, CC members decided that, according to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations, Junction residents are no longer able to buy lots in the MVC.
9. **Next meeting: Wed., 10:30, Sept. 28, 2022 at the Town Offices**
- Meeting adjourned 12:10pm.

(Minutes submitted by Sue Brown, CC Co-chair)