

MINUTES SEPTEMBER 24, 2003

The monthly meeting was called to order at 1:15 P.M. Present were Commissioners Ellen O'Brien Cushman, Alexander E. Corbett, III, Charles R. Johnson, Superintendent Robert P. Gardiner and Administrative Assistant Nancy T. Fay. Martha Moore also attended as the League of Women Voters Observer.

The Minutes of the April 28, 2003 Meeting were unanimously approved.

Budget and Operations: The AFSCME Contract mandated clothing allowance was discussed. Concern was expressed that there are no restrictions on this funding.

To date this fiscal year there have been 29 burials of which 13 were cremations and 20 of the total were non-residents. Revenue to date is \$26,435, about \$2,000 below last fiscal year.

Ms. Cushman reported a telephone call questioning the non-resident fee imposed on her mother's funeral. She had been a long-time resident but relocated from Belmont in the 1980s. Ms. Cushman explained the policy and its reasoning. She informed the woman that she could address her concern and ask for a waiver from the entire Board of Cemetery Commissioners.

It was reported that some individuals are interested in setting up a fund to embellish the area in and around the Veterans III section. There is no planting permitted on the individual Veteran graves so a collective beautification fund, similar to our successful Annual Planting fund, is desired. Superintendent Gardiner and Chairman Cushman agreed to meet with Town Accountant Barbara Hagg to establish this interest-bearing fund.

Telecommunication Tower and Water Line: Chairman Cushman reported that the water line has been installed. The communication tower is in the hands of Tower Ventures II of Providence, RI. They are working with Town Counsel writing the lease. Tower Ventures II is expected to meet with the Land Management Committee in October or November to present the drawings for that committee's approval prior to going to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Land Management Issues: Chairman Cushman reported that the McLean Conservation Restrictions (B1 and B2) have been signed (with minor changes) by the Town and State Office of Environmental Affairs. It is in the hands of McLean and will be filed with the deed when the transaction is processed.

Design/Construction: The Master Plan has been reviewed and is being finalized. The contract is being prepared and is final except for specifications being worked on by Halvorson Design Partnership.

Ms. Cushman informed the Board of the planned Town project to improve Concord Avenue abutting Highland Meadow Cemetery. The improvement would include granite curbing and sidewalks. The Commissioners unanimously expressed concern about the potential change in the character of the roadway as it related to the design for the new cemetery. Others interested and affected are the McLean Land Management Committee, the Cemetery Commissioners and neighbors. The LMC will be holding a meeting. Chairman Cushman has agreed to write a letter to Community Development articulating the concerns of the Commissioners. Tom Gatzunis has asked for the radius of the opening to the cemetery in connection with this sidewalk/curbing project. Superintendent Gardiner will communicate this to Halvorson.

Pricing for Highland Meadow: The first step is for the Commissioners to decide on the perpetual care responsibility. Are we to just take perpetual care cost of the new cemetery, the old and the new, or phase in the current cemetery perpetual care over a period of time? The October meeting will set aside time to discuss what we hope to achieve for the new cemetery and what our perpetual care obligation should be.

Superintendent Gardiner provided a recent survey of the policy of various local cemeteries and charges for “scattering” and interring ashes for informational purposes.

The next meeting was set for October 22nd at 9:00 A.M. The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Alexander E. Corbett, III, Clerk