



FINAL
GRANTHAM CEMETERY TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
Teleconference Only
April 21, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Trustee Chair Warren Kimball called the meeting of the Town of Grantham Cemetery Trustees to order at 6:35 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21, 2020.

As Chair of the Cemetery Trustees, due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically, and these reasons shall be reflected in the minutes.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are providing public access to the meeting by telephone and other electronic means. Notice of the meeting was given, as required by RSA 91-A, and included details for participating in the meeting. Members of the public will be invited to speak and recognized by the Chair. If, at any time during the meeting, there becomes a problem with access please call 603-863-6021 or email at: info@granthamnh.net.

Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. Would each member state their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is also required under the Right-to-Know law.

PRESENT ON THE CALL: Trustee Chair Warren Kimball, Trustee C. Peter James, Trustee Ralph Beasley, and Board Clerk Emily Owens.

RESIDENTS ON THE CALL: Cindy Rand and Garth Rand.

- II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 18, 2020:** Trustee James recommended a correction to header IV Old Business section c from Website Organization to Work Order Review. Trustee Beasley made a motion to approve the minutes from February 18, 2020 as amended, seconded by Trustee Chair Kimball. *Approved Unanimously by roll call.*

III. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Approval of Invoices:** There were no invoices to approve since the February meeting. The Pontem Software bill has been paid for this year.
- b. Green Burial:** Residents Cindy and Garth Rand attended the meeting by teleconference to discuss their interest in a green burial. A green burial, as defined

by NHFunerals.org, is the burying of bodies without embalming chemicals directly in the dirt without a casing, casket, or vault. Currently, this is not allowed under the Grantham Cemetery Regulations. Regulations 3.e states that each full burial must have a concrete vault or equivalent. However, the Regulations do not require a body to be embalmed or placed in a coffin. Additionally, the Rands would like to be buried together but the “stacking” of bodies is prohibited. The Regulation allows for one full burial of a person and one cremation in the same plot. Trustee James explained that the concrete vault was for safety because wood and bodies decay over time and the weight of a person walking above can cause a grave to collapse. Also, it is an issue for caretakers to maintain the plots because the ground becomes unlevel. Mrs. Rand will pass information along to the Trustees because she feels green burials are better for nature and closer to what our ancestors did. She wondered if a part of the cemetery could be designated as a green burial area and if other residents have expressed an interest. The Trustees stated this is the first they have heard from residents regarding this topic. Trustee Beasley mentioned some of the research he found regarding differences between the current Grantham Regulations and green burials; the main two being burial depths and stacking of bodies. The depth of green burials is roughly 3.5 feet but currently the concrete vault is placed roughly 4.5 to 5 feet deep and as previously mentioned stacking is not allowed. Mrs. Rand thought stacking would be a great way to save space in cemeteries. Trustee Chair Kimball stated he would look at the material Mrs. Rand will provide and see if the regulations can be changed to conform more to modern day burials. The Rands thanked the Trustees for their time and left the call.

- c. **Work Order Template:** This item was tabled until a meeting can occur in-person.
- d. **NHCA Spring Meeting:** Because of the pandemic the spring meeting of NHCA was cancelled.
- e. **Pontem Software Update:** The software has been installed on the laptop and the next steps are to schedule a two-hour training session with Pontem. The training session will occur during the summer.
- f. **Election of Trustee Chair:** Trustee Chair Kimball made a motion to nominate the Trustee James as the new Chair of the Cemetery Trustees, seconded by Trustee Beasley. Discussion of the motion occurred with Trustee James willing to accept the position. *Approved by roll call (2, 0, 1), Trustee Chair Kimball Aye, Trustee Beasley Aye, and Trustee James abstained.*

IV. OLD BUSINESS:

- a. **Fisher Cemetery:** In response to the pandemic, Town Administrator White issued a Memo freezing any unnecessary spending for all departments, Boards, and Committees. This reason, along with social distancing, has resulted in the need to delay the plaque and post project at the Fisher Cemetery. The pictures supplied by Trustee Kimball were very helpful, but Trustee Chair James thinks the next steps are to probe the ground and measure the area sometime this summer.

- b. Cemetery History:** This item is tabled until the pandemic issue is resolved.
 - c. Review Regulations:** The Trustees are still interested in updating the Cemetery Regulations, but this item is tabled until the pandemic issue is resolved.
- V. ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, a motion was made by Trustee Beasley, seconded by Trustee Kimball and approved unanimously to adjourn at 7:12 p.m. The next Trustee meeting is scheduled for May 19th, at 6:30 p.m. location to be determined.