

Minutes of Meeting Oct 16, 2024

Location: Warwick City Hall Annex

In attendance: Pegee Malcolm, Richard Ring, Lynne Rider, David Guiot, Jeff Burns, Deb Suggs, Betty Mencucci, Maureen Buffi, Judy Fardig, and Charlotte Taylor

Excused absences: Elliott Caldwell, Christine MacWilliams, Jim Bessel, Marjory O'Toole, Larry Hunter, Caroline Wells, and Edna Kent

Also in attendance: Elise Carlson, Dave M., and Carlo M.

Meeting called to order at 6:34 pm by Pegee Malcolm, chair

- Introduction of May 15, 2024 Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Judy and seconded by Charlotte. All voted in favor to accept the May 15, 2024 meeting minutes as is.

- Bones Unearthed

During excavation for a water line in Barrington, bones were discovered. Protocol states that the police, medical examiner and Charlotte should be notified when remains are discovered. Charlotte was not contacted and the remains were scooped up, taken away, and the trench filled in. Three federal tribes and the state have interests in this situation. This is the second time in the year that proper procedures were not followed.

- Proposed Kiosk

A woman proposed creating a kiosk to note the names of deceased children from the Ladd School who are buried in a lot on the property of the Veteran's Cemetery in Exeter. It was stated that an effort should be made to contact families of the deceased.

- Met School Volunteer

The school contact, Santa Santiago reached out regarding a student looking to do a cemetery project. Pegee set him up at a small local cemetery. There is another volunteer looking for a project but needs a place to work.

- Missing Stone Found

The gravestone of the nephew of Major General George Sears Greene was discovered in East Greenwich. It belongs in Warwick in the same lot as the general (WK #23).

- Historical Cemetery Signs

DOT sign-shop started the new sign order in July. Pegee will send out a list of the signs which are already completed.

- Re-Appointments

The following appointments are due to expire this year: Edna, Marjory, Judy, and Larry. In 2025: Christine Pegee, Dave, and Jim's terms will be up for re-appointment. In 2026: Maureen, Caroline, Eliot, and Betty's appointments will expire.

- RI PBS Weekly

Pamela Watts met with Betty and Carlo Mencucci to learn about their gravestone conservation work. At a farm cemetery where the Mencuccis have been working, they were able to demonstrate small stone re-setting. They toured another local cemetery which Betty described as a mess. The group visited BU #26, where Bathsheba Sherman is buried, they were able to re-set the new tablet. Lastly, they viewed the cemetery on the property of Betty and Carlo.

- 2025 Meeting Schedule

The previously agreed upon meeting schedule of the third Wednesday in February, May and October at the Warwick Town Hall Annex is still acceptable to all for 2025.

Additional Member Comments and Updates – Others have been submitted to Pegee via email.

Richard reported that Hazard Mitigation Grants are available. He has information, including a FEMA brochure, which Pegee can distribute to anyone who is interested.

Charlotte announced that RI Historic Preservation & Heritage Commission awarded a CLG Grant to Block Island to delineate boundaries of indigenous and people of color burials. She also mentioned that when she was dealing with the Barrington case a former police officer offered free service of a cadaver dog to look for unmarked graves.

Lynne noted that Foster has a new member who has been doing lots of work.

Dave reported that the Seasons Gas Station on Plainfield Pike in Cranston has adopted the 2 cemeteries on the property and they look great. Regarding Oakland Cemetery, a city-appointed special master was able to get Bank of America to relinquish \$300,000 that was being held. In a survey of Oaklawn Ave., the suspected area of the burial site for the former training school for girls (lot hasn't been located) was not found to be in a flood zone although the next street is in a flood zone

For Barrington, Jim reported that their clean-ups and repairs had taken place and GPR was performed at one cemetery.

Deb reported that a cleanup of the original Teft family cemetery took place at the request of the Teft Family Association. She also noted that in North Kingstown she's had no luck finding any interest in working in historical cemeteries, while in South Kingstown, two cemetery groups vie for opportunities.

Maureen noted that the Pawtuxet Valley Preservation and Historical Society's cemetery group did some stone re-setting in a few small West Warwick cemeteries. In Coventry, clean-up continues in Maple Root Cemetery with high school students earning volunteer hours for National Honor Society. Maureen was contacted by a descendant of some folks buried in CY #33. She met the couple to start cleaning the messy lot. The adjoining property is the site of an elaborate Christmas display which extends very close to the undelineated boundaries of the cemetery.

Betty gave an update on BU #39 which never had an official Right-of-Way but the proposed one was not easily accessible by way of a very steep hill. It was suggested to Betty that the Historical Society purchase the land to get the cemetery.

The next meeting will be on February 19, 2025 at 6:30 pm, at the Warwick Town Hall Annex.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:04 pm on a motion made by Charlotte and seconded by Judy.

Respectfully submitted by Maureen Buffi, secretary