

Minutes of Meeting June 15, 2016

Location: The Towers of Narragansett

In attendance: Pegee Malcolm, Dory Wagner, Charlotte Taylor, Evelyn Wheeler, Alan Clarke, Alex LaForce, Judy Fardig, Betty Mencucci, David Bell, and Michael Laferriere

Excused absences: Roger Guillemette, Bob Butler, Edna Kent, Sally Small, and Jonathan Rascoe

Also in attendance: Julie Nathanson, Felicia Gardella, Walter Slocomb and Carlo Mencucci

Meeting called to order at 7:15pm by Pegee Malcolm

- Introduction of Draft Meeting Minutes from April 20, 2016

Judy made a motion, seconded by Alan, to accept the Draft Minutes. The Draft Minutes were unanimously approved.

- Historic Cemetery Signs

Pegee asked that anyone needing signs submit a list. She reported that Robert Buonaccorsi asked for a sign for a Scituate cemetery cleaned by an Eagle Scout.

- RI Historic Cemeteries Website

It was noted that sometimes the cemetery location descriptions on the database were obsolete. Michael suggested that another column be added to the database to report the last date the cemetery was seen and include current descriptions, if different. He will talk to John Sterling about including updated photos and descriptions column.

The webhosting company has been having problems and the search function has frequently been down. The almost 100 GB of photos would be a challenge to move to another host. Charlotte suggested that grant money might be available to help. Michael will contact Charlotte to follow up.

- Cemetery Restoration Day

Approximately 40 RI cemeteries were cleaned. This could become an annual event if a bill passes state legislature. Pegee recommended writing to representatives to let them know how many cemeteries were cleaned and that this is at no additional cost to the state.

- Airport Expansion Update

Pegee reports that the area is under construction. When the work is complete PAL (Public Archaeology Laboratory) will install the headstones elsewhere. A plaque at WK 026 will explain where the stones were moved and a plaque at the new location will explain that the stones have been relocated. The bodies will not be disturbed and the airport site can still be visited, by appointment only.

- Volunteers

Michael asked how to proceed when someone contacts him looking to clean a cemetery; how to find out who owns it, liability and Do's and Don'ts. Charlotte emphasized that state regulations

require that the cultural aspects of a cemetery are not to be interfered with. Pegee received a call from someone looking to clean a headstone so she referred them to Roger.

- Tax Abatement Update (RIGL 44-3-63)

Evelyn has a list of dates of city and town meetings that she is either on the agenda to appear before or where she will make public comment. She is making sure that people are aware that cemetery property is not to be taxed and that towns may adopt an ordinance allowing them to offer tax abatement to property owners who maintain a historic cemetery on their property.

- GPS/GIS Update

Pegee asked Evelyn which version of the GPS map (with or without confirmed readings) that people will be getting. Evelyn will clarify with Greg.

- Proposed Welcome Center in Hopkinton (exit 1)

There are 3 known cemeteries on the site. Charlotte reports that there may be a burial area from a former poor farm on the property. PAL has done some work there but the developer did not release the findings.

- Commission Appointment

Rick has resigned and Walter Slocomb has submitted a letter of interest in the vacancy. He is awaiting an appointment letter from the state.

- Stukely Westcott Cemetery (WK 165)

Pegee reports that the cemetery was surveyed and the previously-thought boundaries were re-located, moving them closer to wooded property and less in the parking area. A veteran's group took out 2 or 3 dumpsters of brush. The Westcott family has been informed of the latest work.

- Oakland Cemetery (CR 003)

A group from Newport Baptist Church did a cleanup. The RI Cemetery Association will investigate to find out where the perpetual care money is going. Evelyn reported to the Association a hazardous situation in that cemetery where a dug grave was filled with water and covered only by a piece of plywood. She noted to the cemetery commission that monument work was expected to be done on June 25.

Member Comments/Updates have been submitted to Pegee via email

The next meeting will be Spetember 21, 2016 at a location to be determined.

The meeting adjourned at 8:51pm on a motion by Judy, seconded by Alan.

Respectfully Submitted by Maureen Buffi, Secretary