

Minutes of Meeting April 20, 2022

Location: Warwick Public Library

In attendance: Pegee Malcolm, Bob Butler, Russell Dinoto, Christine MacWilliams, Richard Ring, Judy Fardig, Jim Bessel, Charlotte Taylor, Betty Mencucci, Marjorie O' Toole, Larry Hunter, Debbie Suggs, and Edna Kent

Also in attendance: Sarah Zurier, Dave McCarthy, Carlo Mencucci, Bill Brown, and Maureen Buffi, secretary

Excused absences: Walter Slocomb, Caroline Wells, Lew Keen, and Jeff Burns

Meeting called to order at 6:39 pm by Pegee Malcolm, chair

- Introduction of November 20, 2021 meeting minutes

Bob made a motion to accept the minutes and Charlotte seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously accepted.

- New Commissioners

Debbie Suggs and Larry Hunter will replace Russell Dinoto and Joe Jordan, respectively, in Washington County. Maureen Buffi will replace Alan Clarke who resigned as a representative of Kent County. Bob Butler will no longer serve as the commission representative for the League of Cities and Towns.

- Statewide News

Pegee reported:

- A car crashed through the fence at a cemetery in Warwick, damaging a fence and knocking down stones.
- Warwick has had lots of volunteers in recent months.
- The future site of Top Golf continues to be used by the state for COVID. State cemetery #2 behind it is not yet accessible
- The Champlin remains from URI are still awaiting burial in a Perryville lot.
- A headstone for Mathilde Bockel Voss found in a garage in Rumford was determined to belong in Pine Grove Cemetery (in Boylston, MA)
- The Commission was given 4 gallons of D-2. A 25% discount off a purchase of a case of 4 has been offered to commissioners.
- The Lincoln Cemetery on Sandy Lane in Warwick was found to have indigenous people buried there.

- RI Historical Society

Richard gave a presentation on the historical society's ongoing project to digitize and post material online.

- Cemetery Photo Digitization Project

Christine reports that 1800 photos have been saved and posted as well as 1400 plot maps. Anyone having cemetery photos (not individual headstone) should send them to Christine who will forward them to Michael.

- Perpetual Care Funds Bill H7376

Lew and Pegee have been working with Representative Lauren Carson on legislation to protect perpetual care funds. A revised bill was reviewed by the RI Cemetery Association who had concerns regarding the reporting requirements. The bill has been put on hold.

- Historical Cemetery Awareness and Preservation Weeks

Sarah reported that post cards, signs and fliers promoting the April and May statewide event had been widely distributed. Events have been advertised in 21 local newspapers. Christine announced that 119 events had been scheduled in April with more to take place in May.

- Durfee Hill Management Area

Bill reported concerns for a plot of unprotected land on state property in Glocester which was previously documented as having been a quelling place of the Nipmuc people. The area is currently being used for hiking and dirt bikes. Charlotte will contact DEM.

- Upcoming 2022 Meeting Dates

- June 15 - Wednesday at the Veterans Cemetery in Exeter
- September 21 - Saturday at Burrillville Historical Society (exact date TBD)
- November 16 - Wednesday possibly in Westerly (exact date TBD - last year was held on a Sat. due to early darkness)

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

Pegee brought in an unknown rusted metal object found in a cemetery at a Civil War veteran's grave in hopes of getting identification help.

Jim reported that someone was looking for the gravestone of Prince Greene, a Black private in a RI regiment, whose gravestone was carved by the first Black RI stone carver. At one time the gravestone was reported to be in storage at the Veterans Cemetery in Exeter but Jim says it is not on the property.

Charlotte gave an update on the Cato St. cemetery in Woonsocket where graves were discovered on a small lot which had purchased. A variance was requested.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:03 pm on a motion made by Jim and seconded by Christine.

Respectfully submitted by Maureen Buffi, secretary