



## CEMETERY COMMITTEE

**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 6, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.**  
**Conference Room A**  
**Portsmouth City Hall**  
**1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth, NH**

Members Present: Chair Susan Sterry (Sterry); Celeste Brooks (Brooks); Peter Splaine (Splaine); Sue Polidura (Polidura); Michael Griffin (Griffin); Steve Buzzell (Buzzell); Duncan MacCallum (MacCallum)

Members Present via Zoom: Eva Boice (Boice)

Members Staff Present: Suzanne M. Woodland, Deputy City Manager / Regulatory Counsel

Members Absent: Co-Chair Dee Forte (Forte)

Public Attendees: John Chagnon (Chagnon)

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call:** Meeting called to order at 4:00 p.m. and roll call of the members was taken and as noted above.
2. **Minutes:** Polidura made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2025 meeting with a single correction which was mentioned by Boice. Boice seconded the motion. All in favor. The motion was approved.
3. **Review New Volunteer Policy:** DCM provided a summary of the City Council's adoption earlier this year of a new policy regarding volunteers that sit on City boards and that a Volunteer Handbook was created as a result to serve as a resource. The handbook can be found on the City Clerk's section of the City website. DCM also stated that there are two (2) new policies that are referenced in the handbook: a non-discrimination policy and electronic devices or emails that may have been given by the City. It will be a requirement that all committee members at the time of appointment or renewal to a board sign off on the policy.
4. **Discuss Visitor Etiquette for the City of Portsmouth Historical Cemeteries:** A draft document of points of etiquette was initially prepared by Forte and reviewed by DCM. The Committee discussed the list and made some revisions which will be circulated and discussed further at the next meeting. Chagnon, a Proprietor of the Proprietor Cemetery, requested a copy of the final guidelines and stated that the

Proprietor Cemetery Trustees were working on guidelines as well. Chagnon requested getting together with Griffin to discuss signage at Proprietors, Cotton and Harmony Grove cemeteries. Griffin commented that this is important as people are not aware that there are 5 different cemeteries that adjoin each other, and signage, a map and identifying the key people that are buried there would be helpful. Sterry said that it would be beneficial for all the cemetery organizations to work together on this endeavor. Chagnon invited the Committee to the next trustees' meeting on April 23, 2025 to discuss signage. Chagnon also mentioned a possible website for the Proprietors Cemetery.

5. **Discuss Guidelines for Installation of Additional Markers in City of Portsmouth Historical Cemeteries:** The Committee opted for an update on maintenance items. Hallowell provided an update on the work done at North Cemetery during the last month. The chain link fence along the dirt road towards the railroad track area was removed and the area was cleaned up. Plans to grade the area and to plant grass in the Spring. Portions of the fence which extended towards North Mill Pond and the drainage swell were left due to undetermined boundary lines. The tree crew will take down the two (2) dead ash trees, and debris and loose rocks were removed. Earl Chase, Horticulturist from Prescott Park and the DPW crew remove invasive species at the shoreline.
6. **Other Business:** Sterry stated that the Cemetery Committee received a \$10,000 grant from the Mahoney Family in honor of their mother and father. This was accepted by the City Council and will be designated strictly for North Cemetery. The fence was taken down, the removal of dead trees will be scheduled, and the area will be landscaped.

Sterry stated that NH L-CHIP grants will be available for a matching grant. She intends to write a grant which will target repair of and straightening of headstones.

Brooks stated that she is still waiting to hear back from Flatbread about being scheduled for their fundraising evening.

Boice announced that this was her last meeting as she is moving out of state and expressed appreciation for preserving the history of the great City of Portsmouth.

7. **Public Comment:** None.
8. **Adjournment:** Brooks moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Griffin. All in favor. Motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 3, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in Conference Room A.

Minutes prepared by:  
Barbara Zulkiewicz

Minutes Approved: April 3, 2025