

Cemetery Meeting Minutes

October 5, 2020

Present: Maryann Reeves, Laura Staats, Lynda Sower, Greg Terry

Absent: Joe Borek, David Hodges, Shane McDonald,

Also Present: Bruce Feuerstein

Old Business:

The D2 spray was ordered and received, Shane McDonald offered to spray the markers at the Otisco Cemetery. Lynda was to notify him that the D2 spray had arrived after the last meeting. Today she asked that Laura notify Shane.

Joe Borek stated at a previous Township Board Meeting that he will request a burn permit for brush at Smyrna Cemetery. He was not present for an update.

Marker Repair, Lynda has been unable to reach the Doty's to confirm marker repair in the Smyrna Cemetery. They have moved and not responded to any form of contact.

Land owners; Porter and the Griffioen were contacted inquiring that they suggest a price for the proposed purchase of land north and south of Otisco Cemetery. No response has been received.

The Cemetery Ordinance was discussed and changes will be made based on motions made and voted upon.

Motion made to allow three inch border on all sides of monument to dictate foundation size. Three yes, one no and one abstain.

Motion made to remove the strike through that limits the Clerk to approving special requests. Yes four, one abstain.

The presence of Bruce Feuerstein brought up additional questions. The updates to the ordinance is going to require some additional research and discussion.

Ordinance issues for consideration: Vault deliveries, standardized width and length of foundations, old versus new foundations and locations, what difficulties in updating the entire cemetery, current and future grounds maintenance, allowance of multiple cremations in one burial space; currently up to eight; example: if the family plans on eight flat markers it is unlikely that all of them will fit in the allotted 4 x 8 foot space. Previous ordinance allowed for four cremations to be buried in one burial space with either one monument for all the names or four flat markers.

Bruce Feuerstein brought up that we should consider defining better what is allowed or not allowed on a burial space. He cited a recent issue at another cemetery where the family purchased one burial space and plans to install a small family crypt [columbarium to hold approximately 16 family members.] He is going to gather additional information and present it at the next Cemetery Committee meeting.

Supplies have been purchased for the fencing of the new parking lot at Smyrna Cemetery and have been delivered to Joe Borek for installation. Laura placed the order and has submitted the receipt to the Township for reimbursement. It is suggested that the ordinance sign in Smyrna be relocated nearer to the road with the installation of the parking area.

Maryann previously offered some 'pudding stones' that were to be put around the well to protect it. As these were her husband Fred's and his children have requested to keep them, the offer has been rescinded, with complete understanding. Joe Borek has said that he will place some poles in the area to protect the well from accidentally being run into or snowplowed.

New Business:

Fall Clean-up – the Cemetery Committee and any township resident that would like to attend are welcome to walk through the cemeteries on Friday, October 16, 2020. The Committee will meet in the Smyrna Cemetery at 10:00 am. From there if time allows we will continue on to Otisco Cemetery. If necessary a second date will be scheduled. Laura will text everyone with a reminder earlier in the week.

The fence rail at the front of the Smyrna Cemetery was damaged in the August storm August and the top rail is bent. Lynda has been asked to find out if the repair is covered by insurance and falls under cemetery maintenance.

A brief discussion on the use of weed killer on the cemetery parking areas and center of the drives only. It was agreed that this use should be allowed to maintain the parking area and drives in a weed free manner.

Maryann suggested that we once again look into planting myrtle on the front hill of the Smyrna cemetery. Paul Reeves has previously given permission to remove myrtle from the woods along his property for this purpose. It is hoped that we can get the assistance of community service workers to assist with the digging and installation of the plantings. Maryann will contact Shane to see if there might be any assistance from the Ionia Correctional Facility.

Next Agenda:

Update from Bruce Feuerstein in regards to how Orleans Township handled the private installation of a small columbarium at their cemetery.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 12, 2020 @ 7:00 pm Township Hall

Respectfully submitted,
Laura J Staats