BURLINGTON
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# Cemetery Commission Meeting Agenda

**June 21, 2018, 4:30 PM**
**Lakeview Cemetery, 455 North Avenue**

**I. Approval of Agenda**
**II. Approval of Minutes from April 12th Meeting**
**III. Old Business**
A. Lakeview fence repair/replacement
B. Meeting between Parks and Cemetery Commission
C. Lakeview office building repair
D. Update on FoLC requests (ramp, vacuum, WWI book)
**IV. New Business**
A. Commission letter to City Council
**V. Superintendent's Items**
A. Section 6 and Fence Update
**VI. Commissioner's Items**
**VIII. Public Comments**
**IX. Adjournment**

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City of Burlington  455 North Avenue  Burlington, Vermont 05401  (802) 863-2075

## Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, April 12, 2018, 4:30 pm
**Commissioners Present:** Rita Church, Allison Curran, Lainey Rappaport
**Commissioners Missing:** Emma Swift, Francis (Tag) Taginski
**Staff Present:** Holli Bushnell, Cemetery Office Assistant
Cindi Wight, BPRW Director
**Public Present:** Ron Wannamaker
**Attachments:** Martha Keenan office repair letter
Mtg. was started at 4:33pm by Co-Chair Allison Curran

**I. Approval of Agenda**

Lainey Rappaport moved to approve the agenda, Rita Church seconded

**II. Approval of Minutes from April 12th Meeting**

Rappaport moved to approve the minutes, Church seconded.

III. Old Business

**A.** Lakeview fence repair/replacement –

Allison Curran called for an update from individuals present. As Francis (Tag) Taginski was not present and has been deeply involved with this issue there was not much to report from the commissioners' side. Ron Wannamaker had a small amount of information to share, as did Cindi Wight.

Wight commented that, as there was a quorum available for this meet and decision could possibly be reached as to a path forward. She pointed out that the commission needed to choose if they would prefer a historic or modern fence, what sort of material they'd like to use, and if they would like to keep the project timeframe short or if they'd rather spread it out over the next few years.

Curran believes that that new fence should have the same aesthetic as the original, but does not necessarily think it needs to be made of the exact same materials as the cost is exorbitant.

Church pointed out that, as Lakeview is the main cemetery for the city for at least the next decade it makes sense to replace the current fence with something similar or identical to the one we currently have. Lakeview should remain as beautiful and pristine as possible.

Ron Wannamaker shared that, in his communications with 2 different fence companies, Stewart Iron Works who made the original fence and one other, that the minimum cost for a new fence would be over or around $100,000. Stewart would be closer to $200,000, however they do still

have the mold of the original fence (which lasted almost 100 years). While the other company would be less expensive it would be of lesser quality.
He shared that Stewart has offered the option of sending out a couple of consultants to survey the fence and provide us with an exact estimate of how much it would cost them to replace it. This service would cost us around 2 to 3 thousand dollars, but would provide us with the exact information we need to get accurate estimates from other companies. Wannamaker suggested that we see if Preservation Burlington or Friends of Lakeview would be willing to provide funds for this service. All agreed that this would be a wise course of action. Wannamaker offered to deal with the consultants from the fence companies, and to craft a letter to send to Preservation Burlington to examine possible funding/support options.
Wight pointed out that there is the possibility of replacing the fence in phases, starting with the most pressing areas, and then replacing other sections over the course of the next few years to spread the cost out.
After some discussion of the look and quality of the fence, Curran moved that the replacement fence look as similar to the current fence as possible (with the knowledge that the repairs may need to be phased in based on pricing). Church seconded the motion.

**B. Meeting between Parks and Cemetery Commission -**

Rappaport explained that her impetus for requesting this meeting is based upon frustration in the lack of/unclear signage and care of the cemeteries on behalf of the city as well as an on-going issue with cemetery areas being used as a “dump” by locals (and as a place to walk dogs). It was requested that this conversation wait until later when the signage was actively discussed during Superintendent’s Items.
The next Parks Commission meeting is 7/17 at 5:30pm at the waterfront. It was decided that one member of the cemetery commission will attend this meeting (informally), and the commission will invite the members of the parks commission to attend the next cemetery commission meeting

**C. Lakeview office building repair –**

Wight reported that she received an email from Martha Keenan, CIP Project Manager for DPW (see attachment). Work may take place over the next few years. There is $50,000 budgeted for work ($25,000 from FY2018 and $25,000 from FY 2019). Work will include porch, roof, siding and windows.

**D. Update on Friends of Lakeview Cemetery requests (ramp, vacuum, WWI book) –**

Church reported that the Friends of Lakeview Cemetery were very pleased with the new vacuum, though they haven’t had a chance to use it yet. Holli Bushnell expressed her gratitude for the new vacuum at this time as well.
Church reports that the Friends would also like to thank BPRW for the purchase and installation of the accessible ramp for the open chapel event. It worked very well for their purposes. She suggests that the rental/usage of the ramp be added to the chapel rental form so that individuals who may need it will have the opportunity to use it.
She also expressed her gratitude for the beautiful plantings around the front entrance gate and the chapel. Although the plantings were not completed before Memorial Day (due to weather), the space looks beautiful now, and the Friends are grateful for that.
The next big event scheduled by the Friends of Lakeview is going to be 10/20/2018 and will focus on WWI. There will be an open chapel with an exhibit of WWI artifacts as well as a tour of

the cemetery focusing on both WWI soldiers and volunteers on the home front. An article written by David Lightbody will be included in the History Space section of the Burlington Free Press that will highlight the individuals included in the tour as well as the works of the Friends of Lakeview. Bushnell asked for clarification on the details on this event so that it could be placed on the parks website. The date will be held on the Parks calendar and will be listed on the Friends of Lakeview section of the website.
The Friends are also curious to know when the WWI book that was approved for purchase at the 4/21 meeting will be available. As Bushnell does not have the information on this book she cannot request its purchase. On the suggestion of Church and Wight she will contact Annie D'Alton, former office assistant at Lakeview, and get the information on the book.
There were no other major requests from the Friends of Lakeview Cemetery.
Church reports that there was a great turn out for the Memorial Day open chapel and tour. Many visitors from out of town/state provided donations which was greatly appreciated.

**IV. Superintendent's Items**

**A. Signage –**

Wight presented the final draft of the proposed signage for Lakeview. She explained that city ordinance was not required on the signage and would probably be overkill (and ultimately unclear considering the historical nature of the most of the ordinances).
Rappaport commented that she had seen lit candles in the cemetery back in November and would like to have candles listed as items that are not allowed. After some discussion of wording the commission concurred that candles should be listed amongst the items that are not allowed in the cemetery. Lainey moved to approve the signage with the addition of candles, Church seconded.

**B. Fence and Section 6 Update -**

Funding is the primary concern when it comes to creating a new section. There is the possibility of selling lots on an old grass road to a mausoleum owner, and, should that purchase happen, those funds could be used to survey and lay out section 6. Assistant Cemetery Superintended Jeff Shedd has also informed Wight that there is an additional section, what will now be known as section 8, that could be located between the Muslim section at the end of section 7 and the New North Outline that borders the northwestern edge of the cemetery. Shedd will do a draft outline of this area for BPRW approval. This draft outline may include a location of an additional cremation garden.
A brief discussion followed concerning the perpetual care fund and the difference between the perpetual care and endowment. Bushnell shared a conversation that she had with Shedd in regards to the meaning of endowment. Endowed stones provided funds for floral arrangements and other care of that nature. It does/did not provide for larger issues such as the resetting of stones that have tipped over. Wight suggests that, should the commission have concerns regarding tipped stones, they should attempt to rally volunteers and search for grant funds to help reset/repair stones.
Curran shared that the cemetery commission has already worked a bit with VOCA to right damaged or tipped headstones. A discussion followed of potential volunteer groups we could work with (parks volunteers, BHS students, recruiting volunteers independently, etc…).
Wight departed to attend another meeting at 5:23, but the discussion of cemetery volunteers continued. According to Church, past volunteers are not allowed to do building repairs or any work that city employees would do otherwise. Curran explained that, as we do not offer the service of righting headstones, volunteers would be welcome to assist with that. They have

already righted several headstones at Greenmount. It is a simple process and can be explained in about 10 minutes. However, each stone that is corrected needs to be well documented (critical, especially at a larger cemetery like Lakeview). Wannamaker offered the idea of contacting Tom Visser, the head of the historical preservation program at UVM, and possibly using historical preservation grad students from UVM to improve the cemeteries. This is common practice at Shelburne Museum and is used in conjunction with a planning document (so that, as grad students change, the plan remains consistent). The commission may consider this option in the future.

**V. New Business**

**A. Commission letter to City Council**

Curran has been working on a rough draft of the letter, outlining our current concerns about Burlington city cemeteries. This will include aspects of past presentations, but will focus heavily on current concerns such as signage (which may become a moot point after this meeting. Other topics include additional burial space (section 6 and 8, also purchasing a new municipal cemetery) and green burials. At this point Bushnell shared that, after having another request for green burials, she did a little research on the issue. While the city ordinance does require vaults for full burials, individuals can elect to purchase a vault with holes in the bottom to assist in rapid decomposition. They are also allowed to purchase biodegradable coffins (wicker, etc…). While this is not perfectly green it is a nice compromise and certainly greener than regular full burial. The fence repair will also be included in the letter, as will the rallying of volunteers for potential headstone repair/righting.

As an aside, Bushnell will speak to Shedd in regards to the number of lots being purchased on the grass road (to fund section 6 layout). Church brought up that this is quite a few lots and that perhaps the commission may want to look at limiting the number of lots that can be purchased. Curran commented that Howard Dean purchased quite a few lots (32), and that his purchase skewed the cemetery income for several years afterwards. Bushnell commented that, while it's wonderful that prominent community members can support the cemetery and purchase as many lots as they want, the cemeteries should be a place where all community members should feel welcome as well as a place that can service the entire socioeconomic spectrum represented in Burlington.

Curran pointed out that, as there aren't a lot of other options, we may want to consider some restrictions in order to insure that our cemetery remains an equitable place for all residents.

**VI. Commissioner's Items**

**A. Perpetual Care Fund –**

Church reminded the group that the perpetual care fund be reexamined. The commission needs to insure that the funds are being properly managed and that the funds will be used for commission driven projects. Curran concurred. Bushnell will research, and the perpetual care fund will be reviewed at the next meeting.

**B. Allison Curran Retirement –**

Curran official informed the commission that she did not seek reappointment. She will send out notes and updates on her current projects and intends to attend future meetings as a citizen of Burlington. Church stated that she understands Curran's decision, but that Curran 

will be missed. Church reminded the group that officers need to be elected in July (around the 15th). Election of officers will be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

**VIII. Public Comments**

Church shared that she has heard generally positive comments from the public. Curran shared that the individuals she has spoken to are interested in the commission and what the group is doing. Hopefully this trend will continue.

**IX. Adjournment**

As officers need to be elected at the next meeting, one has tentatively been scheduled for July 12th, 2018 at 4:30pm. Bushnell will contact commission members and inform everyone of this information. Meeting may be rescheduled depending on the availability of Francis (Tag) Taginski and Emma Swift.
Rappaport motioned to adjourn, Church seconded.
Meeting was adjourned at 5:53pm.