

Town of Oak Bluffs Cemetery Commissioners Minutes December 4, 2002

Commissioners Present: Jesse B Law III, James Maseda and Melanie Bilodeau.

Others Present: Richard Combra, Jr and Nicole L Morey.

Meeting opened at 10:00 AM.

Ride-on mower

Mr Law and Mr Maseda discussed the need for a new ride-on mower as the current one is over ten years old. Mr Maseda said he will meet with David Billings to see what is available and what would be able to maneuver around the gravestones better. They were advised that there is some money available in Perpetual Care or they could wait for Town meeting to use the funds available in Sale of Lots.

Motion: To purchase a new ride-on mower. By: Mr Law. Motion passed unanimously.

New fence

They discussed the need for a new fence needed around the entire cemetery but were mostly concerned with the area along Pacific Avenue. They felt the front section was most important and it could be split rail along dirt road. Mr Maseda said he would look into what the SSA just put up in Falmouth and Mr Combra said he would contact a couple of fence companies to get different styles and costs and would present it to them at their next meeting.

Building

Mr Combra asked if the members had any thoughts on upgrading the building, he felt if they re-shingled the outside, replaced the trim and some windows it would be almost brand new. He would like to have a cemetery map available inside for citizens to access. Mr Law and Mr Maseda agreed and Mr Combra said he would get an estimate for work.

Lot Size and Price

Mr Law said they are running quickly out of land and perhaps they could start burying people two deep in order to have more land. He said Sandy Fisher told him he could do it that way. Mr Maseda felt they should change to burying people up and down soon. Mr Law and Mr Maseda agreed that the price should increase to \$600.00 for a lot that will hold two internments one top of another effective January 1, 2003 and anyone who purchased lots prior to that date are now able to use their unused single lot for two burials and would be able to sell back lots back to the Town for the price of purchase.

Motion: Effective January 1, 2003 the cemetery lot price will increase to \$600.00 and would hold two internments one on top of the other. By: Mr Law. Motion passed unanimously.

(Mrs Bilodeau arrived at 10:30 AM)

Remap Cemetery

Mr Combra raised the possibility of getting someone in to remap the cemetery as the current maps are on old shades, etc. Mr Law said he would love that and it might be expensive, and they should think about tagging all the lots so anyone would be able to find a certain grave by lot number. Mr Combra said he would look into it.

Land

Mr Law said that a letter needs to be formally written to the Board of Selectmen requesting the need to use of Town Counsel to purchase the property behind the cemetery. He said that there are a few "owners

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unknown” lots back there and also they could take some by eminent domain if necessary. Mrs Bilodeau suggested going through the Assessors’ Office and as there are so many “owners unknown” lots in Oak Bluffs, the Assessors have an account with Reynolds, Rappaport and they could obtain the information on the Cemetery’s behalf then it could be taken by eminent domain or perhaps for back taxes owed on the property.

Motion: To write to the Board of Assessors requesting their aid in locating owners of abutting lots and to write to Board of Selectmen requesting their permission to use Town Counsel once this information is received. By: Mr Law. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr Law informed Mrs Bilodeau what was discussed prior to her arrival, she agreed with everything previously voted on. It was decided that after the cemetery is surveyed, a list of empty lots be compiled and the names be published in various papers both on and off-island. It was explained that the Town just sells and maintains the lots but has nothing to do with the actual burial itself.

Mrs Bilodeau wanted to know if the employee was happy and if things were going well for her. Mr Combra replied that this time of year Gail Landers works at the LDO for twenty hours a week and gets paid extra for any time spent at cemetery, then she goes back to forty hours and splits it between the cemetery and the LDO until the summer help returns.

Missing Deeds

Mrs Bilodeau asked if there was missing deeds for any period time. Ms Morey replied that there are copies of any deed issued since the Highway Department took over and she supplied a list of lots sold since 1979 to the Town Clerk. Mr Law added that it goes back to Violet Rego and when she died no ones knows where any paperwork went but Kate Wey told him that she did not have anything. It is hoped that after the surveying and advertising, the issue may be resolved.

Old Well

Mr Law asked Mr Combra to look into filling in the old well by the fence on Pacific Avenue and Mr Combra said he would speak to the Water District Superintendent about it.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole L Morey
Office Administrator