

PEMBROKE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING

November 8, 2018

Minutes

Present: Dan Chase, James Garvin, Ellen Paulsen (chair), V. J. Ranfos, David Richards

1. Chair Ellen Paulsen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Pembroke Public Works conference room.
2. On a motion by Dan Chase, seconded by David Richards, the minutes of the meeting of October 11, 2018, were unanimously approved.
3. The Commission noted that Collins Tree Service has not yet cabled the three-trunked red oak tree at the back of Old North Pembroke Cemetery and that New Hampshire Monuments has not yet mounted the repaired finial on the Fowler monument at Old North Pembroke Cemetery.
4. Secretary Jim Garvin distributed a letter replying to the request by Katherine and Matthew Roan that the Commission consider allowing winter burials in the public cemeteries of Pembroke. A copy of the reply is attached to these minutes.
5. The Commission continued to revise the existing Chapter 155 (Cemeteries) of the Town Code, addressing a variety of new subjects not previously included in the Pembroke chapter. The Commission thanked member Dan Chase for his invaluable work in compiling cemetery ordinances from as many neighboring towns as possible for comparison to our Chapter 155. Secretary Jim Garvin will distribute the edited draft of Chapter 155 to Commission members by e-mail, and the Commission will be free to continue its discussion and editing of the ordinance by e-mail over the winter of 2018-19.
6. The next meeting of the Pembroke Cemetery Commission will be at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 11, 2019 at the Pembroke Public Works office on Exchange Street unless an earlier meeting is called by the chair.
7. On a motion by David Richards, seconded by Jim Garvin, the meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
James L. Garvin, Secretary

3 November 2018

Katherine and Matthew J. Roan
Petit-Roan Funeral Home
167 Main Street
Suncook, New Hampshire, 03275

Re : Winter Burials

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Roan:

The Pembroke Cemetery Commission wishes to thank you for your detailed letter discussing the prospect of winter burials in the public cemeteries of Pembroke.

The Cemetery Commission is presently beginning to revise Chapter 155 (Cemeteries) of the Pembroke Town Code.

In the course of this revision, the Commission expects to analyze issues that have not previously been addressed in Chapter 155 but that are of interest to the public, including “green” burials, indigent burials, impermanent mementoes at graves, and the like. At your suggestion, the Commission will include winter burials among the topics to be addressed.

The adoption of a revised Chapter 155 will require some time. The Commission must revise existing sections of the ordinance, draft new sections, and present our recommendations to the Pembroke Board of Selectmen. In Pembroke, the Selectmen act as the designated Cemetery Trustees. The Cemetery Commission acts in cooperation with the Pembroke Public Works Department as agents of the Selectmen in the routine administration of the public cemeteries. After the revised chapter has been considered and amended as necessary, it will be presented at a public hearing.

Winter burials are not addressed in the current Chapter 155 except under the general statement in §155-15 that “vehicles of any kind are not allowed entrance to any cemetery during the frost period and after heavy rains. Determination of access will be at the discretion of the Superintendent.” Because of the adoption procedures outlined above, this language will not change before the winter of 2018-19. However, the existing section does not explicitly prohibit winter burials if permission is obtained from the Superintendent, who is the director of the Public Works Department.

The Commission appreciates your adding this issue to the agenda for our revisions to Chapter 155. We thank you for inviting us to consult you for further information and advice on this important matter.

Sincerely,

James L. Garvin, Secretary