

PEMBROKE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING

October 8, 2015

Minutes

Present: James Garvin, V. J. Ranfos, David Richards (chair), Fleda Young.
Also attending was Ellen Paulsen.

1. Chairman Richards called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Pembroke Town Hall.
2. The Commission approved the minutes of the meeting of September 10, 2015.
3. The Commission discussed the proposals of the Paulsen family, as outlined in Item 3 of the minutes of September 10, 2015.
 - a. Ellen Paulsen and V. J. Ranfos reported that they had met at Old North Pembroke Cemetery on October 5, 2015. Ellen passed around the deed that had been issued by the Town of Pembroke to Patricia Viken and Jeannie Viken Schlette (now Keith) in 1977, defining a lot for the interment of Harold Viken. This lot was equivalent to a lot for three full burials, measuring 8½ feet by 12 feet. The back corners of the lot are marked by two stone corner bounds, and two additional stones will be placed at the front corners as they are temporarily staked by V. J. Ranfos. The lot now holds three cremation burials.

The Paulsen family requests permission to purchase two additional 4 foot by 8 foot lots, one on each side of the existing 8½ foot by 12 foot lot, for future cremation burials of family members. Discussion followed regarding the size and spacing of future grave monuments or markers. Secretary Jim Garvin noted that the size and spacing of markers for multiple cremation burials has not yet been defined in the course of the Cemetery Commission's efforts to update the Chapter 155 ("Cemeteries") of the Town Code, but assumed that this will be addressed before there is need for additional markers at these lots. The reason that this is potentially significant is that Old North Pembroke Cemetery is considered to be a historic cemetery that is closed to new burials under ordinary circumstances, and the character of new monuments should be harmonious with the existing gravestones.

The Commission voted unanimously to authorize the sale and issuance of burial permits for one additional 4 foot by 8 foot lot on each side of the existing lot, as it will soon to be defined by stone corner bounds. This sale is contingent upon verification by the Public Works Department that the new lots will not interfere with or encroach upon existing graves or gravestones.

Ellen Paulsen then asked whether some of the slotted granite bases for older stones, placed at the rear stone wall of the cemetery, could be reused as bases for future

markers in the Viken-Keith-Paulsen lots. Secretary Garvin reported that these granite bases had been improperly removed from old marble gravestones when the latter were re-plumbed some years ago. Since most of the bases can no longer be matched with their original marble gravestones, the Commission authorized the use of some of these bases for future grave monuments, provided that the future monuments are thin enough to fit the existing slots in the bases.

The Commission noted that the above authorizations are made in the context of the sale of the 8½ foot by 12 foot lot to Patricia Viken and Jeannie Viken Schlette (now Keith) in 1977, before the Cemetery Commission was established, and that Old North Pembroke Cemetery remains closed to new burials and monuments except for cremation burials of descendants of Harold Viken and Patricia Viken (later Lafford) to the extent that the descendants may be accommodated in the lots mentioned above.

- b. As he reported to the Commission in an e-mail message of September 14, 2015, V. J. Ranfos consulted with town administrator David Jodoin about the Paulsen family's suggestion that they might plant new sugar maples near the existing ancient maples in front of the Old North Pembroke Cemetery wall in anticipation of the necessary removal of the old trees. David Jodoin had responded that new trees could be planted outside the cemetery wall.
 - c. Ellen Paulsen reported that she and her daughter, Katie, had examined the old wooden gate from Old North Pembroke Cemetery on October 4th. The family remains interested in replicating the gate and will plan further over the winter. They will investigate some of the decay-resistant woods that Jim Garvin had suggested and have copies of his drawings of the old gate as a guide to dimensions and details.
4. Ellen Paulsen confirmed that she is interested in joining the Cemetery Commission. Secretary Jim Garvin will convey her interest to the Board of Selectmen via David Jodoin.
 5. Chairman David Richards notified the Commission that for personal reasons he will no longer be able to chair the Commission after this, the final scheduled meeting of 2015. He will remain a member of the Commission. Those present expressed sincere gratitude for Dave's service as a member of the Commission since 2005, as acting chair from 2006 to 2008, and as chair since 2008.
 6. Dave Richards updated the Commission on his former discussions with Jack French regarding the wish of Robert Griggs to donate land adjacent to Buck Street Cemetery on the former Hiram Batchelder Farm (owned by Mr. Griggs) for future expansion of the cemetery. Dave has been unable to contact Mr. Griggs directly and will pass Mr. Griggs' contact information to Secretary Jim Garvin. Prior understandings are that such a donation will provide for eight 4 foot by 8 foot burial plots in the new section of Buck Street Cemetery for the Griggs family, or a 16-foot square of land of Mr. Griggs' choosing, and that other lots on the new land will be reserved for indigent burials.

7. Regarding removal of the pine trees in Evergreen Cemetery, forester Ronald Klemarczyk will again explore the possibility of a temporary lease of an access way through land of the abutters north of the cemetery, but it seems likely that access will need to be made on town land north of the northern cemetery gate. V. J. reports that there should be enough clearance north of the north gate for logging equipment to enter the cemetery after the ground is frozen and existing vegetation is cleared.
8. The Commission discussed the possible repointing and repair the Badger-Appleton tomb in Evergreen Cemetery. Jim Garvin reported that he had examined the tomb. He found that prior work had involved raking out the mortar joints, filling them with an unknown substance, and painting the face of the tomb. This cosmetic work is deteriorating, and Garvin took samples of the soft, fibrous filler for examination under a microscope. The material could contain asbestos, so Garvin has located an asbestos testing firm, RPF Environmental of Northwood, that performs diagnosis on mailed samples. The cost of a test on the material from the Badger-Appleton tomb will be \$50, and the Commission authorized Garvin to encumber \$50 from the balance remaining in the 2015 marker repair budget. Garvin will collect another sample (two are required) and ask RPF Environmental whether they are willing to bill the Town of Pembroke for the test, then will complete the necessary forms and submit the samples.

Jim Garvin developed written specifications for re-pointing the tomb and assembled a short list of masons who are knowledgeable about historic masonry and lime-sand mortars. He recently added one more name to this list and gave the revised list to V. J. Ranfos.

9. V. J. Ranfos reported on recent monument repairs. New Hampshire Monuments of Pembroke completed the repair of the gravestone of Achsah Carlton in Buck Street Cemetery at a cost of \$750, leaving a balance of \$490 in the 2015 monument repair budget. The "Other Supplies" account has a balance of \$41.93. Donald Cotnoir of New Hampshire Monuments has offered repair estimates for markers of John Carlton (\$750) and Worcester (\$750) in Buck Street Cemetery; and for Mercy G. (\$750), Robinson (\$625), and a large stone in front of the Fife obelisk in Old North Pembroke Cemetery (\$750). These outstanding repairs total \$3,625, which provides an estimated figure for the 2016 monument repair budget.

V. J. will ask Mr. Cotnoir whether he could complete any wintertime repairs with the \$400± remaining in the monument repair budget.

10. The next regular meeting of the Commission is scheduled for Thursday, April 14, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. at the Pembroke Town Hall.
11. The meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
James L. Garvin
Secretary