

PEMBROKE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING

April 14, 2022

Minutes

Present: Daniel Chase, James Garvin, Ellen Paulsen (chair), Zachary Sawyer, Adam Mendoza, V. J. Ranfos.

1. Chair Ellen Paulsen called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. at the Pembroke Public Works office.
2. On a motion by Daniel Chase, seconded by Zachary Sawyer, the minutes of the meeting of October 14, 2021, were unanimously approved.

New business:

3. On October 19, 2021, Public Works secretary Chris Addington forwarded a note to the Cemetery Commission on behalf of a resident who had purchased a plot in Pembroke Hill Cemetery and had pre-paid for two future burials in that plot. The resident asked whether her pre-paid burial fees will be honored by the town at a future time when she and her husband are interred in the lot.

Public Works director V. J. Ranfos reported that he had brought the matter to the attention of the Board of Selectmen. The board had concluded that, due to the rapidly rising burial charges made by contractors employed by the town (see below), the town cannot accept pre-payment for interments. The board refunded her check.

In conformity with current rules in Chapter 155 of the Town Code (§155-20), the purchaser will need to mark the corners of the purchased plot with granite corner bounds bearing an identifying initial.

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4. In response to the recommendation of the Cemetery Commission to the Board of Selectmen in October 2021, the Selectmen renewed the mowing contract with Mattice Collins for the period 2022 to 2024.
5. Following up on items from the Commission minutes of 2021, Secretary Jim Garvin reported that he had never received a response to his letter to Jackie and Stephanie Wylie of Fourth Range Road inviting them to offer comments on the proposed pruning of white pine trees alongside the driveway of Pembroke Hill Cemetery. Accurate Tree Service removed the low-hanging branches on the cemetery side of these trees in the autumn of 2021.

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8. The Commission discussed the latest increase in burial charges submitted by Dignified Cemetery Services, effective January 1, 2022. As was the case in 2021 when Dignified Cemetery Services last raised their fees, the new charges to the town exceed the charges made by the town to cemetery lot owners, thereby creating a deficit in the town accounts with every new burial. The Commission voted that Secretary James Garvin shall inform the Board of Selectmen of this situation so that they may change the town fees that are posted in §160-5 (Cemetery fees) if they choose to do so.
9. The Public Works Department has received notice of an encroachment by a granite bench and plantings on the Booth lot in Evergreen Cemetery onto the adjacent Symanski lot. The Booth lot is 3.5 feet wide, and the granite bench placed on that lot is 4.0 feet long and thus overhangs the lot line. Two small cedar plantings near each end of the bench further encroach on adjacent lots and will grow larger with each season.

The Booth lot is bordered by a walkway on the left. The consensus of the Commission is that the town should ask Perry Monument Company the cost of moving the bench six inches to the left to remove the encroachment on the Symanski lot, noting that this will cause the bench to project some six inches into the walkway.

Secretary James Garvin reported that the Commission had previously recognized that commercially available stone benches are usually four feet long while some Pembroke burial lots are 3'-6" in width. For this reason, the Commission sent a letter to all nearby funeral directors and monument companies in 2012 stating that the maximum length of any bench made for placement in Pembroke cemeteries shall be 3'-0" (sample letter attached).

Because this rule was generally ignored, the rule was superseded when Chapter 155 (Cemeteries) of the Town Code was revised in 2019. The current specification for bench dimensions in §155-25 is “four (4) feet long and fourteen (14) inches wide.”

10. The Commission noted that it would be prudent to add more lime to the back of Buck Street Cemetery to encourage the growth of grass in the rather sterile soil there.
11. It was observed that our plan to re-pave the broken asphalt driveway at Pembroke Hill Cemetery may require the replacement of a culvert at the entrance to the driveway.
12. The next regular meeting of the Pembroke Cemetery Commission will be held on **Wednesday, May 11, 2022**, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Please note that this is a ***change of date*** from the normal meeting date of Thursday, May 12th.
13. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
James L. Garvin, Secretary

SAMPLE LETTER

13 July 2012

Waters Funeral Home
50 South Main Street
Concord, New Hampshire, 03301

Ladies and gentlemen:

The Pembroke Cemetery Commission has encountered a few instances of families placing granite benches in Pembroke cemeteries near the monument or headstone that marks a family or individual burial lot. In some cases, these benches have impeded the setting of headstones on adjacent lots.

The Pembroke Town Code, Chapter 156, "Cemeteries," restricts the types and dimensions of monuments placed on lots, as follows:

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In compliance with these ordinances, the Pembroke Cemetery Commission has determined that permanent stone benches or platforms are not allowed by the Pembroke Town Code in the public cemeteries of Pembroke unless the bench or platform serves as the grave monument itself and conforms to the placement and dimensions that the code specifies for monuments. In keeping with §155-6, the Commission interprets the code to specify the seat dimensions for any such bench as limited to three feet in length and one foot (twelve inches) in width.

The Pembroke Cemetery Commission will appreciate your being mindful of these rules and conveying these size limits to any customer or client who may request a memorial bench for a public cemetery in Pembroke.

With our thanks,

Sincerely,

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9. The Public Works Department has received notice of an encroachment by a granite bench and plantings on the Booth lot in Evergreen Cemetery onto the adjacent Symanski lot. The Booth lot is 3.5 feet wide, and the granite bench placed on that lot is 4.0 feet long and thus overhangs the lot line. Two small cedar plantings near each end of the bench further encroach on adjacent lots and will grow larger with each season.

The Booth lot is bordered by a walkway on the left. The consensus of the Commission is that the town should ask Perry Monument Company the cost of moving the bench six inches to the left to remove the encroachment on the Symanski lot, noting that this will cause the bench to project some six inches into the walkway.

Secretary James Garvin reported that the Commission had previously recognized that commercially available stone benches are usually four feet long while some Pembroke burial lots are 3'-6" in width. For this reason, the Commission sent a letter to all nearby funeral directors and monument companies in 2012 stating that the maximum length of any bench made for placement in Pembroke cemeteries shall be 3'-0" (sample letter attached).

Because this rule was generally ignored, the rule was superseded when Chapter 155 (Cemeteries) of the Town Code was revised in 2019. The current specification for bench dimensions in §155-25 is “four (4) feet long and fourteen (14) inches wide.”

10. The Commission noted that it would be prudent to add more lime to the back of Buck Street Cemetery to encourage the growth of grass in the rather sterile soil there.
11. It was observed that our plan to re-pave the broken asphalt driveway at Pembroke Hill Cemetery may require the replacement of a culvert at the entrance to the driveway.
12. The next regular meeting of the Pembroke Cemetery Commission will be held on **Wednesday, May 11, 2022**, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Please note that this is a ***change of date*** from the normal meeting date of Thursday, May 12th.
13. The meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
James L. Garvin, Secretary

SAMPLE LETTER

13 July 2012

Waters Funeral Home
50 South Main Street
Concord, New Hampshire, 03301

Ladies and gentlemen:

The Pembroke Cemetery Commission has encountered a few instances of families placing granite benches in Pembroke cemeteries near the monument or headstone that marks a family or individual burial lot. In some cases, these benches have impeded the setting of headstones on adjacent lots.

The Pembroke Town Code, Chapter 156, "Cemeteries," restricts the types and dimensions of monuments placed on lots, as follows:

§155-6. Size of Monuments (amended 9-7-1993). Monuments shall not be over three (3) feet long, four (4) feet high, and twelve (12) inches thick. The base may not project more than six (6) inches beyond the monument on any side.

§155-8. Curbing, steps and platforms. No curbing, steps or platforms will be allowed on lots except corner posts, which must be at grade of lot.

§155-9. Base of Monuments. No monument shall be erected unless it rests on a concrete base, deep enough to be a substantial foundation in accordance with the size of the monument. Said base must be at least two (2) inches below grade.

In compliance with these ordinances, the Pembroke Cemetery Commission has determined that permanent stone benches or platforms are not allowed by the Pembroke Town Code in the public cemeteries of Pembroke unless the bench or platform serves as the grave monument itself and conforms to the placement and dimensions that the code specifies for monuments. In keeping with §155-6, the Commission interprets the code to specify the seat dimensions for any such bench as limited to three feet in length and one foot (twelve inches) in width.

The Pembroke Cemetery Commission will appreciate your being mindful of these rules and conveying these size limits to any customer or client who may request a memorial bench for a public cemetery in Pembroke.

With our thanks,

Sincerely,

David M. Richards, Chairman
Pembroke Cemetery Commission
By James L. Garvin, Secretary

PEMBROKE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING

April 14, 2022

Minutes

Present: Daniel Chase, James Garvin, Ellen Paulsen (chair), Zachary Sawyer, Adam Mendoza, V. J. Ranfos.

1. Chair Ellen Paulsen called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. at the Pembroke Public Works office.
2. On a motion by Daniel Chase, seconded by Zachary Sawyer, the minutes of the meeting of October 14, 2021, were unanimously approved.

New business:

3. On October 19, 2021, Public Works secretary Chris Addington forwarded a note to the Cemetery Commission on behalf of a resident who had purchased a plot in Pembroke Hill Cemetery and had pre-paid for two future burials in that plot. The resident asked whether her pre-paid burial fees will be honored by the town at a future time when she and her husband are interred in the lot.

Public Works director V. J. Ranfos reported that he had brought the matter to the attention of the Board of Selectmen. The board had concluded that, due to the rapidly rising burial charges made by contractors employed by the town (see below), the town cannot accept pre-payment for interments. The board refunded her check.

In conformity with current rules in Chapter 155 of the Town Code (§155-20), the purchaser will need to mark the corners of the purchased plot with granite corner bounds bearing an identifying initial.

Old business:

4. In response to the recommendation of the Cemetery Commission to the Board of Selectmen in October 2021, the Selectmen renewed the mowing contract with Mattice Collins for the period 2022 to 2024.
5. Following up on items from the Commission minutes of 2021, Secretary Jim Garvin reported that he had never received a response to his letter to Jackie and Stephanie Wylie of Fourth Range Road inviting them to offer comments on the proposed pruning of white pine trees alongside the driveway of Pembroke Hill Cemetery. Accurate Tree Service removed the low-hanging branches on the cemetery side of these trees in the autumn of 2021.

6. A new supply of veterans' flags and flag holders was received by the Public Works Department and will be placed in the Hearse House at Pembroke Street Cemetery for distribution and placement by Commission members. Reusable flags from 2021 were taken to the Hearse House in the fall and placed in a bucket for each respective cemetery, entering the total number of flags for each cemetery on a whiteboard in the building. Unusable flags may be placed on top of the cardboard box in the building or taken to the Roan Family Funeral Home where they may be left in a box for proper disposal.

As we place flags in 2022, we should make note of any plastic flag holders that remain in use so we can replace plastic holders with metal holders that are now available in the Hearse House.

7. In 2021 Zachary Sawyer reported that a Chickering stone in Pembroke Street Cemetery is badly broken. This stone may have been repaired previously with a piece missing from the stone. V. J. Ranfos noted that there are a few other stones in Pembroke Street Cemetery that appear to be unrepairable. Ellen Paulsen has a 2021 list of needed repairs, and we should check and add to this list to continue repairs under our 2022 budget
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The Booth lot is bordered by a walkway on the left. The consensus of the Commission is that the town should ask Perry Monument Company the cost of moving the bench six inches to the left to remove the encroachment on the Symanski lot, noting that this will cause the bench to project some six inches into the walkway.

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