

**Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**September 14, 2023 9:00 AM**  
**Abel's Hill Cemetery, Chilmark**

Attendance:

Commissioners: Judie Flanders (Chair), Laurisa Rich, Matt Tobin

Other: Susan Murphy (Superintendent), Carolyn Stoeber (Administrator), Tim Boland

The meeting was called to order by Judie Flanders at 9:09am

A. Approval of Minutes - August 10, 2023 minutes were reviewed, minor corrections made - approved unanimously

B. Administration Report

i. Plot applications and leases:

- There were two new applications
  - Celli – incomplete (needs confirmation that all partners and beneficiaries have been notified)
  - Larsen #336 (full plot) - approved
- Williams (half plot) did not want plot #311 (big rock) and was assigned #328

ii. Bill Payments and Budget Review – Carolyn is working on getting budget software access and will have a budget report at the next meeting.

iii. Record keeping

- Veterans list – Susan spoke with Joanne who referred the cemetery commission to the funeral home. Judie was told by the funeral home that they do not have those records.
- Burial sites of deaf Chilmark residents – Judie's conversation with Jane Slater informed the commission that those who were deaf in Chilmark were not singled out as different during their life, so the same attitude should remain regarding the cemetery. As far as the legacy of the Chilmark deaf community, the library has extensive records and all inquiries could be directed there.

iv. Mapping - digital access – Laurisa had a report after speaking with the Town of Tisbury. They use MS Access right now, but have a list of software they are looking into for the future. Laurisa will email the list to Carolyn.

v. Correspondence – Carolyn will work on the letter to the abutter.

vi. Other

- Carolyn will update the website to reflect the full title of the document, "Cemetery Regulations & Policies", make changes to encourage people to read information before they visit, and update the website to be more ADA compliant.
- Carolyn will flip the excel spreadsheet map to have Bayberry Avenue at the bottom of the page for an easier orientation.
- Carolyn will try to locate the 8/30/19 large-scale map of the Midlands that Susan obtained from Jennifer Christy.

C. Superintendent Report

i. Burials – There was one cremation burial this month (Murry family)

ii. Duplication of plot location in Midlands – Judie will reach out to the Cook family to assign the plot next to Cioffi in the Kings Section since their plot,

purchased in 1974 was also sold to another family. If there are other duplicate or missing plots in the Midlands, space in the corner of Wildgrass Avenue can be assigned to rectify these clerical errors.

iii. Fencing

- One additional fence post with corresponding rails is needed between Wildgrass and Beetlebung Avenues to protect the plots where the road is encroaching. This restoration was approved to happen during fall cleanup. Matt Tobin will drop off a fence post before November.
- There is the possibility of additional space for plots at the end of the row between Beetlebung and Shadbush Avenues should additional fencing be approved in the future.
- Plots #275 & #276 are experiencing road encroachment. The use of snow stakes was approved as a temporary measure to allow the vegetation to regrow and establish where the road should be by guiding drivers away from these two plots.

iv. Mowing/Brush cutting - Don Sexton yearly payments

- Due to a rainy spring necessitating more frequent mowing and the increase in the mowing fee, Susan inquired about the procedures for line items in the budget that would exceed \$10,000. Susan will obtain a bill from Don and report back to the commission at the next meeting. Matt explained that mowing at a cemetery requires an attention to detail that other mowing does not require in order to avoid harming the monuments. This will need to be taken into consideration when evaluating any quotes for work at Abel's Hill.

D. Old Business

- i. Update on Stockade fence – Postponed until next meeting
- ii. Veterans and Deaf people's listings - Carolyn will ask if Jennifer Christy has a list of Veterans that can be brought up to date.
- iii. Review of needed tree care - cleanup of branches, preemptive trimming, etc. Tim Boland, Executive Director at The Polly Hill Arboretum, joined the meeting at 10:33 and had many recommendations for trees that could be planted at AHC when existing trees need to be replaced. Matt and Tim walked through the area needing replanting and Matt will report to the commission at the next meeting. Tim left 3 pamphlets about tree care that Judie will circulate among the commissioners.
- iv. Update on repair of oldest memorials - Warren Gowell – He reported to Susan that this project is still on his list of things to do.

Documents reviewed: 8/30/19 large-scale map of the Midlands, Excel spreadsheet rendering of the newest section (Kings).

Next meeting: October 12, 2023 9am with the place to be determined closer to the date.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:17am.