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CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

Department of Public Infrastructure

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

Cemetery Board Meeting

March 23, 2017

The meeting was called to order by Carol Grimes at 6:10 p.m.

In attendance were Carol Grimes, Egidio Melo, Barbara McDonald, Zeb Arruda, Molly Gilfeather, and Jeanne Safioleas. Stephen Caton was absent. Martha Crowley was in attendance and during roll call when her name was called she said "sort of here."

There was 1 individual in attendance to speak in open session.

Mr. Saunders asked the chair, "Can I wait until you discuss the new business, and then speak, or only speak now?"

The Chair responded, "You will have to speak now, and you have 5 minutes."

Mr. Saunders responded, "It won't take me 5 minutes, the two things I would like to speak on, or 3 things would be:

1. How is the St. Theresa's thing coming along, because I think that should move ahead?

But the two things that I am talking about are b and c.

2. Item b, you have always had a frost fee that could be implemented during the winter, if there was frost. This year there was a week or so they implemented it, I believe they called it the Winter Fee, even though it was always called the Frost Fee before, and there was no frost, there might have been snow and there might have been difficulties. So that is why, I got everyone to complain to the Mayor's Office. You can't put a frost fee if there is no frost. If you are going to call it a Winter Fee, I just needed to know how you're going to implement it, like is there a certain amount of snow you need or depth of frost, I just need to know what perimeters you are going to use.

3. On the c part, I have had several people, but very rarely that will bury an urn inside of someone else's casket, usually a parent has a child that will go in the casket and they will be buried together. I don't think I have ever buried in any of your cemeteries, so it is not common, but sometimes at St. John's and Sacred Heart's they do. They charge an Administrative Fee, for the person whose urn is in that casket, of \$100.00. They call it an Administrative Fee. You don't have to do anything more, the people don't have to tell you the urn is in there, and they don't get the \$100.00. My question is, if you're burying an urn in a casket and you charge \$282.50, which would be my next thing, maybe some people say, I'm not going to tell you, and you lose the whole \$282.50. Whereas, if you had it at a \$100.00 Administrative Fee more people might be more receptive to that, so I am just throwing that out.

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The other question is, if you do put the fee that would be half of what the cremains are, please don't cut it right in half, at \$282.50, could you round it out to an even number, please? I think I have had one person that they had a double urn, that a husband and a wife were in the urn together and then buried, it hardly ever happens."

Mr. Saunders asked the Clerk of the Board, how often does this happen?"

The Clerk responded, "It has happened a few times this past year."

Mr. Saunders responded "That I can see if it's like an urn and you are doubling the urn like an urn and a half but if you're just putting an urn in a casket you really are not doing anything extra, and if you got \$100.00 as opposed to \$282.50 you might get more \$100.00 than you would get people pay \$282.50 and they would say I'm not telling you that it is in there and then you won't get anything."

The Chair responded to Mr. Saunders, "As far as the board goes we have not discussed any of these, so I think we should take it up after our agenda, and come up with what we decided and then we can let you know and all the other funeral directors. Is that okay with the board?"

Egidio Melo and Barbara McDonald responded, "Yes, we agree."

Mr. Saunders stated, "If the Catholic cemeteries only charge \$100.00, it's reasonable."

The Chair thanked Mr. Saunders for coming and for his input, and told him we will get back to him.

4a) On a motion by Barbara McDonald and second by Egidio Melo the minutes from February 17, 2016 were unanimously voted to approve and except.

5) On a motion by Barbara McDonald and seconded by Egidio Melo the certificates for January through December 2016 were unanimously voted to approve and accept.

The commissioner asked that Molly Gilfeather pass out the Budget Information prior to him presenting the Commissioner's Report to the Board.

Molly stated to the Board, "The last 2 years of fiscal year collections are here as well as this fiscal year to date, which is the column all the way to the right, if anyone has any questions."

The Chair asked the Clerk of The Board, "Do you find we have more cremains now then we do burials?"

The Clerk responded, "Yes we do, this year especially there has been more cremations, down the line we really need to look into Columbarium's, because we are running out of room everywhere."

The Chair asked the Board, "Is there any questions for Molly?"

Egidio Melo and Barbara McDonald responded, "No."

6) REPORTS

6a) Commissioner's Report -

Mr. Euzebio Arruda presented his Commissioner's report and discussed the following:

Projects Completed or Ongoing

- The Rural Cemetery Roof on the maintenance garage has been repaired.
- We are in the process of removing the fence on Mathew Street at Rural Cemetery and replacing it with a new one. It is a pure rust haven from top to bottom, and it needs to be replaced. At Oak Grove North Cemetery we are going to start to replace that one, we don't have enough funding to do all of that. The thing is awful, it's twelve foot wide with barbed wire, they must have built this I don't know when, it's leaning over and completely gone.
- We repaired the wall on the west side of Rural Cemetery, that was damaged recently (Rockdale Ave Side).
- We plugged new rows in various locations, as well as plugging for Mausoleums on Section 17 and 18 in Pine Grove Cemetery and sections 210 and D Premium in Rural Cemetery.
- We started repairing the wall on Oak Grove North. If you drive by Oak Grove North you will notice on the west side of that wall, closest to Liberty Street, we had the city masons go by there, that wall had been pushed, over time, and they have replaced 75 to 100 feet of it. When you come up over the hill, you will notice it. Our Masons have started doing work there during down time. This has been neglected over time. We are not going to remove the fence that abuts the properties.
- The contract was awarded and the materials have been ordered to do the Greenhouse Roof and gutters at Pine Grove Cemetery.
- At Oak Grove the gates are being restored to the original rod iron gates from years past. We researched the gates and found pictures so we can restore the gates to the way it looked in years past. During the masons down time he is restoring them, he has a big picture on the wall that he is using to restore them. Slowly but surely you will drive down and see the new gates.

Mrs. Barbara McDonald asked the commissioner, "What about that old red building, the one that has that beautiful mosaic tile inside, is that going to get restored?"

The Commissioner responded, "We are going in front of council for that now, if we get denied than we will come back to you and ask for more money."

Mrs. Crowley asked, "Where is Oak Grove Cemetery, Mr. Arruda?"

The Commissioner responded, "Do you know where New Bedford High School?"

Mrs. Crowley responded, "Yes."

The Commissioner responded, "That is Liberty Street, the cemetery spans over two sections. If you go up Parker Street, there is a North Side, and a South Side, and that's why we say Oak Grove North and Oak Grove South. Take a ride to Oak

Grove South and take a look at the names on the stones and you will see some names that streets are named after."

The Commissioner added, " Please note that Item 8) g needs to be removed from the agenda. (Allocation of FY18 Sale of Lots Funds needed for lease payment on vehicles not to exceed \$149,488.17.)

6a) On a motion by Egidio Melo and second by Barbara McDonald the Commissioner's Report was unanimously voted to approve and accept.

6b) Financial Report -

Financial report was presented by Molly Gilfeather. Molly added, "The expense and revenue collected over the last 3 years is listed here, if any one has any questions."

6b) On a motion by Barbara McDonald and second by Egidio Melo, the Financial Report was unanimously voted to approve and accept.

6c) Clerk's Report - Monthly Burials

On a motion by Egidio Melo and seconded by Barbara McDonald, the Clerk's report was unanimously voted to approve and accept.

7) OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business at this time.

8) NEW BUSINESS -

8a) St. Mary's church was discussed. The Chair stated the following: "When we had our last meeting it wasn't for him to go ahead and knock it down, we gave the previous Commissioner, permission to look into it, to study and get prices to demolish it. I feel that it would be a good idea, to get the Attorney Eric Jacques to come here, and let us know what we can do legally, what we can't do legally, and what our next step would be legally. We paid about 2.2 million for it. The money came out of Perpetual Care, and the money has to be used for the Cemeteries. Perpetual Care paid for the purchase of St. Theresa's. I had gotten a call to go in front of The City Council last year, and they were saying that the money came out of Perpetual Care, which the law states you can only use the Perpetual Care money for Cemeteries. You cannot buy a lawn mower and Mr. Arruda goes and uses it at Buttonwood Park. I got asked by The City Council who gets the money for St. Theresa's, and I told them Perpetual Care and the Council had thought it might go into a General Fund.

The Commissioner responded, "I will reach out to Eric Jacques. I believe he is still the cemetery lawyer, they try not to change lawyers."

8a) On a motion by Barbara McDonald and second by Egidio Melo, the board tabled this item until the next meeting, when they can get Attorney Jacques here to answer questions.

The Chair posed the following question to the Commissioner, regarding item 8b the Winter Fee, "I know it's up to your discretion, I'm not questioning that, but is there rules, when it snows, than you would charge?"

The commissioner responded, "We are in the ground working every single day, whether it is burying people or doing water main breaks at 2 in the morning, sometimes it takes an hour to get to it, sometimes it takes 5 hours to get to it. We know when the ground is frozen

because we are working in it every day. We know when the frost line starts building. The gentleman that spoke this evening is correct, the first part of our winter didn't get that cold.

We know from being out there all the time, if the frost got to 3-6 inches there is no fee. It is when the frost gets to 12 inches when we would implement the fee. To thaw that out it will take a couple of weeks. That could happen in December, or it could be January, or it could be February 1st, I can't say when it will happen. The first part of our winter this year didn't get that cold. The amount of snow that falls makes no difference to us, it could be 60 degrees all week and we get 3 feet of snow on the weekend. This will be at the discretion of the Commissioner that is when it will get implemented.

8b) On a motion by Egidio Melo and second by Barbara McDonald, it was unanimously voted to accept the \$165.00 Winter Fee.

In regards to 8c, Proposal of Fees, Molly Gilfeather addressed the Board and said, "I just want the Board to know, that these fees have been in place, we just need the board to vote on it. There has been no vote on the books for these types of burials."

The Commissioner agreed and said, "I don't disagree with the gentleman that spoke earlier, he made a valid point and right now there is nothing set in writing. We will gage the fee at the Boards discretion."

8c) On a motion by Egidio Melo and second by Barbara Mc Donald, it was unanimously voted to charge \$847.00 for a full body/cremains burial, and charge \$565.00 plus \$100.00 for two cremains.

8d) On a motion by Barbara McDonald and second by Egidio Melo the Board unanimously voted to contribute the \$10,000 from Perpetual Care to match the Grant to be used for the refurbishment of stones.

8e) On a motion by Barbara McDonald and second by Egidio Melo the Board unanimously voted to table the review of the Cemetery Rules and Regulations until the next meeting.

8f) On a motion by Egidio Melo and second by Barbara McDonald the Board voted unanimously to allocate funds for FY18 from Perpetual Care for seasonal help and equipment through June 30,2018 not to exceed \$120,000.

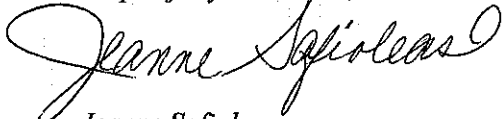
9) *Communication -None*

10) *Tabled Business - Items 8a and 8e*

11) *Executive Session -None*

12) *Meeting was adjourned at 6:45*

Respectfully Submitted,



*Jeanne Safioleas
Cemetery Board Clerk*