

Hollis Cemetery Trustees

Meeting Minutes, August 8th, 2026

Final

The meeting was held at Church Cemetery, starting at 7:34 a.m. and ending at 8:14 a.m.

Trustees in attendance in person included Erika Cross MacDonald and Raul Blanche. Susan Hsieh and Melinda Willis participated via a phone call. Marc Squires was absent. Also in attendance were Erin Hubbard as Hollis Select Board member representative for today's meeting, and DPW Director Joan Cudworth.

- 1) Review Ekstrom/Bennett monument request** - The Bennet/Ekstrom family had requested approval to proceed with future installation of a monument of a particular color for their stone of choice for their lot. Susan conducted an investigation and obtained color samples from the monument company. Based on matching the name of the color provided by the family with an actual sample, Susan determined that the color would blend well with other monuments at the cemetery. Susan recommended approval of the request. The Trustees voted in the affirmative 4-0-0 to approve the request based on a motion by Melinda seconded by Susan. The roll call was, Susan yes, Melinda yes, Erika yes and Raul yes.
- 2) Agenda deadline for meetings** - On this topic the Trustees discussed the most effective way to receive the final meeting agenda for an upcoming meeting. Examples are a pdf file via e-mail and placing the file on a Google Drive folder plus an e-mail announcement to let the trustees know the documentation was ready for their review.
- 3) Review Burial fees and consider updates** - Joan and Erika led discussion and provided reference data on total man hours spent by the DPW every year on full burials and cremation burials. That data, based on 28 total burials last year, was compared with what the town currently charges for burials and it appears current burial fees are adequate, reasonable and on line with overall expenses. Erika asked Joan to estimate the annual machine hours so that we can include that cost in our analysis of what we charge versus the cost of an average burial. Joan also expressed the view that her staffing is very limited and recommended the Trustees have a backup plan of action when scheduled burials may not be performed due to DPW staff that may not be available for burials while at the same time responding to another town emergency such as a flash flood.
- 4) Review proposed cemetery rule changes** - This topic was tabled for the next meeting to enable the Trustees to complete review of proposed changes.
- 5) Review shrub and tree pruning at cemeteries** - Joan recommended that the Trustees add a line item to its budget for tree branch trimming at all cemeteries. An approach is to add a task to the landscaper contract to

automatically recommend and perform any needed trimming during the year. These costs have previously been budgeted as "Project" line items.

6) Approval of Meeting Minutes - The July 18th meeting minutes were approved in the affirmative on a 4-0-0 vote that resulted from a motion by Susan seconded by Melinda. The nomination was based on a motion by Susan seconded by Erika. The roll call was, Susan yes, Melinda yes, Raul yes, and Erika yes.

7) Expenditure and Revenue reports - Melinda noted that the budget reports need updating to include all items and categories, trust funds and expenditures against them. The current budget view provided by the Town administrator to the Trustees does not provide a complete view. Erika asked what expenses fall under the General Fund category and what expenses under the Trust funds. Melinda agreed to provide a written overview explanation of the budgeting process used by the Cemetery Trustees. After discussions, Melinda made a motion to accept the provided reports into records. Susan seconded it. The roll call was, Susan yes, Melinda yes, Raul yes, and Erika yes for an approval based on a 4-0-0 vote.

8) Future meetings:

- a) Saturday September 12th to start at 7:30 a.m. at Town Hall's Community room.
- b) Saturday October 3rd to start at 7:30 a.m. at East cemetery.

9) Action Items:

Susan

- research and communicate available monument colors to Trustees.

Erika

- talk with the Town Administrator about the key for Town Hall Community Room and forwarding necessary emails to Trustees.
- send reminder to VFW in November to clean up flags at all cemeteries and discuss holiday wreath decorations and clean up.
- arrange a meeting with Hollis Trails Committee to discuss enhancements and trail access at North Cemetery.

Melinda

- share financial information and documents in Google Drive.
- talk with Warren / Trustees of the Trust Funds re: trust fund balances.
- talk with the Town Finance Director re: Trust Funds and reporting.

Joan

- estimate machine hours and cost per burial.
- estimate cost of cemetery parking area and lane repairs on an annual basis.

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 a.m. based on a motion by Erika seconded by Melinda. The motion passed in the affirmative on a 4-0-0 vote. The roll call was, Susan yes, Melinda yes, Raul yes, and Erika yes.

After the meeting Erika, Erin, Joan, and Raul walked the Church cemetery grounds. They noticed the grass being tall and several American flags being torn. The torn flags were disposed of properly at the Town's transfer station DFW box.

Respectfully submitted,

Raul Blanche

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