

EAST HAVEN OLD CEMETERY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 18, 2021

The East Haven Old Cemetery Board held a regular meeting on Thursday, November 18, 2021 virtually and transacted the following:

Chairperson Melanie Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm.

Roll Call was taken a quorum was present.

Present: Chairperson Melanie Johnson, Commissioners Judy Ruggiero, Arlene Hackbarth, Robert Sand, Marcia Federico, Barbara Buonome.

Approval of Minutes:

Chairperson Johnson asked if there were any corrections or omissions from the October 28, 2021 regular meeting minutes.

Commissioner Judy Ruggiero stated minutes should say, "Commissioner Sand made a motion to accept Treasurer's Report as read, not mad a motion".

Commissioner Robert Sand stated minutes should say, " filing of excess concrete, not excel concrete".

Commissioner Arlene Hackbarth stated minutes should say, " Chairperson Johnson asked for a motion, not made a motion".

Chairperson Johnson asked for a motion to accept the October 28, 2021 regular meeting minutes with the noted corrections. Commissioner Sand made a motion to accept the minutes with noted corrections; Commissioner Federico seconded the motion to accept the minutes with noted corrections. All in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried. October 28, 2021 meeting minutes accepted.

Treasurer's Report:

Commissioner Ruggiero reported she deposited a donation of \$1,000.00 from the East Haven Historical Society; the donation was earmarked for headstone restoration. The current balance in the account now stands at \$16,815.81.

Chairperson Johnson asked if there were any questions concerning Treasurer's Report, hearing none, Chairperson Johnson asked for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as read.

Commissioner Sand made a motion to accept Treasurer's Report as read; Commissioner Buonome seconded the motion to accept Treasurer's Report as read. All in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried. Treasurer's Report accepted as read.

Old Business:

Chairperson Johnson asked if there was any old business to discuss. Commissioner Ruggiero stated she spoke with Benny on November 2, 2021, Benny told Commissioner Ruggiero he

would take care of filing the excess concrete off of the headstones and contact her when work complete. Commissioner Ruggiero had not heard back from Benny. As of Wednesday, November 10, 2021, work had not been completed as was attested to by Commissioner Sand who visited the cemetery to check on progress.

Commissioner Ruggiero stated on October 1, 2021 she left a message for Wendy Bellmore concerning wreaths being donated to Old Cemetery by Wreaths Across America in honor of the Veterans buried in the cemetery. Commissioner Ruggiero had several including will the wreaths be removed by those handing them, and, if two of the wreaths could be placed on the side gate and 2 on the fence. Also there was a question as to if there is a ribbon on wreaths indicating the purpose. Wendy Bellmore returned the telephone call and stated the wreaths would be removed by those handling the installation once the color of the wreaths turned brown which would be in mid-January, there will not be a ribbon indicating purpose, and, yes the wreaths can be hung at designated locations. Wendy Bellmore went on to ask Commissioner Ruggiero if it would be possible for the Veterans from Post 89 to walk the cemetery in the spring to attempt to identify the location of Veteran's graves so next year wreaths can be laid. All Commission members were in agreement of this idea.

Commissioner Ruggiero inquired how the burial of the Mr. Savino's relative's remains went. Chairperson Johnson and Commissioner Hackbarth both stated it was a short solemn and tasteful ceremony. Mr. Savino spoke to Chairperson Johnson and Commissioner Hackbarth; he thanked the Board for all the help provided.

Commissioner Ruggiero then stated she had received a letter from Judge Michael Albis concerning whether or not the Old Cemetery land was placed in a trust. According to the communication, Judge Albis, due to the length of time since original discussion took place with Town Council, 25-30 years ago, he cannot be of any help, as he does not have any recollection of the events. He stated all and any files concerning this matter were turned over to his successor.

It was suggested to go thru the Town Council meeting minutes concerning this matter, perhaps there would be information since the Old Cemetery Board has a gap of meeting minutes from 1947 to 1989, as does the Town Clerk's Office. Chairperson Johnson will make arrangements to begin this project to find information concerning sale of property in the 1970s and whether or not land put into a trust.

Chairperson Johnson stated she had not heard back from Charlie Coyle concerning the walk thru of the Old Cemetery by the Mayor's Office and an advisory group. Mr. Coyle was supposed to give a copy of the report once ready in regards to necessary repairs but has not done so. Also, Mr. Coyle has not gotten back to Chairperson Johnson concerning the fence the neighbor erected due to constant amount of trash thrown in the yard from people at night who congregate at the back of the cemetery. It was suggested a police patrol but that has not occurred.

New Business:

Chairperson Johnson asked if there was any new business to discuss. Commissioner Sand stated the new contract with Garden of Eden needed to be discussed. Commissioner Sand

reached out and left a message for Fred concerning number of mowings and such. Fred would like a 5 year contract but that is not possible according Town regulations, what was possible would be a year extension of the original contract at same price. Contract would begin July 1st 20_ and end June 30th 20_; there was also a 2-year option if both parties agree.

Fred would have to sign extension every year as the years would need to be updated.

Chairperson Johnson instructed Commissioner Sand to speak with Candace Criscuolo who works in the Finance Dept. at Town Hall and who handles the contracts. Commissioner Sand will reach out to Ms. Criscuolo.

Commissioner Sand asked if there were any additions, subtractions, revisions that needed to be made to the contract. Commissioner Ruggiero stated Fred started, after a discussion with the groundskeeper for East Lawn Cemetery, to mulch the leaves instead of picking them up before cutting grass as stated in contract to do so. Fred did not ask the Board before making this change. Commissioner Ruggiero asked how the other member felt about mulching vs. picking up the leaves, discussion occurred concerning this matter.

Chairperson asked to take a vote concerning changing the language in the contract to read, "mulching of leaves".

Yes votes: Chairperson Johnson, Commissioners Buonome, Federico, Hackbarth, Sand

No votes: Commissioner Ruggiero

The language in contract will be changed to read, "mulching of leaves".

Chairperson Johnson discussed the 2022 schedule of meetings and asked if dates were correct, dates were correct. Board Clerk Stacy Gravino suggested if Board members would like to move meeting time from 7:30 pm to 7:00 pm, they were within their rights to do so. Discussion took place.

Chairperson Johnson asked for a motion concerning changing the meeting time for 2022 meetings from 7:30 pm to 7:00 pm. Commissioner Sand made a motion to change meeting time for 2022 meetings from 7:30 pm to 7:00 pm; Commissioner Hackbarth seconded the motion. Roll call vote took place: Yes vote: Chairperson Johnson, Commissioners Buonome, Federico, Hackbarth, Sand. No vote: Commissioner Ruggiero.

Motion carried, meeting time changed to 7:00 pm.

Commissioner Ruggiero would like to keep meeting time at 7:30 pm, Commissioner Sand stated the Board could try the new time, 7:00 pm, for the year and revisit it when setting schedule for 2023. All members agreed with this statement.

Chairperson Johnson asked if there was any other business to which the Board needed to attend, hearing none, Chairperson Johnson asked for a motion to adjourn meeting.

Commissioner Sand made a motion to adjourn meeting, Commissioner Ruggiero seconded the motion to adjourn meeting. All in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Gravino, Clerk