

## Cemetery Trustees Minutes of Meeting April 4, 2017

Meeting convened at 6:30 PM with Trustees Charlotte Allen and Susan Weeks present. Selectman Bill Marcussen, Scott Thompson and Rick Thompson attended as well. Peter Sluski joined us for the last portion of the meeting.

The primary discussion was the abandonment of the Thompson-Moulton cemetery which had been declared by the Selectmen on Jan. 9, 2017. The Thompsons sent a letter to the Selectmen in Dec. stating that they were opposed to the abandonment process. Neither the Selectmen nor the Cemetery Trustees understood at the time that the letter should have stopped the abandonment process for the Thompson-Moulton Cemetery.

The Cemetery Trustees would like to keep the abandonment in place and enter an agreement with the Thompsons to satisfy the concerns of both the Town and of the Thompsons. A draft agreement was looked at. It would provide that the Thompsons may care for the cemetery as long as they wish to and when they no longer wished to, then the Town would take over. (The Town has provided regular maintenance for at least 30 years.) As far as is known, the Thompsons are not descendants of the Moultons, so they have no legal right to the Moulton portion of the cemetery but, if the cemetery is declared abandoned, then the Cemetery Trustees have authority for maintenance and can authorize the Thompsons to do the work. There is money in perpetual care funds to care for at least 3 Thompson plots and probably 4. The Cemetery Trustees have rights to provide care for those plots even without abandonment.

If the abandonment is undone, then a period of 20 years of neglect would have to occur before it could be declared abandoned again – unless there was consent by the descendants.. The Trustees do not wish to un-abandon the Moulton portion of the cemetery as that would leave care for it in limbo.

The Thompsons were concerned that the abandonment process gives the Town the right to sell burial rights in the cemetery. The Thompsons believe there may be a few spaces left in the Thompson portion of the cemetery. The Town has no need of spaces in the cemetery and would include a provision in the agreement that the Thompson family members are entitled to any burial spaces available and

that the Town would assist them with identifying them and allocating them to Thompsons.

The Thompsons were upset about the write-up in the paper – believing that it was accurate – and not happy about the publicity in general. The Cemetery Trustees did not generate any articles or publicity about the cemetery. It was pointed out that the email the Thompsons received from Selectman Sundquist outlining the selectmen's plan of action was sent without the other selectmen having voted for the plan of action and without their knowledge.

The Thompsons are still doing research on the issue and thinking about what they want to do. They will be in touch with the Cemetery Trustees when they have decided.

The Cemetery trustees will meet on Apr. 17, 2017 at 6:30 pm to review minutes, mail and other business which we were unable to tend to tonight. Meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Susan Weeks, Acting Chair