

Otisco Township Cemetery Committee Meeting – June 15, 2015

Present: Melissa Kline, Lynda Sower, Laura Staats, David Hodges, Paul Reeves

The Cemetery Committee reviewed the minutes from the meeting of April 29, 2015.

Laura thanked the Otisco Board for placing \$10,000 in the Cemetery Budget. Laura will place an order for a gallon of D/2 stone cleaner, at the price of \$40. Laura and Mariann will use the cleaner to compare its cleaning ability to that of Dawn. Laura will also check into the purchase of 4 plastic trash containers for use at the Smyrna Cemetery. Laura suggested that when it comes time to clean some of the headstones that we call the Otisco County Courts and see if there is anyone who needs to perform Community Service that could be employed for the morning or afternoon to assist.

Paul made a suggestion regarding some possible changes to the Cemetery Ordinance. Laura asked Lynda to please make copies for everyone. David suggested that they be mailed to each committee member in advance for review and discussion at the next meeting.

Paul pointed out that he would like to see in the new ordinances that a new foundation ordinance would be implemented. That rule would basically state that one large base be used to support all the markers within the plot, allowing sufficient space for the addition of an urn. This would facilitate easier maintenance and make for a cleaner looking cemetery. Also, that for veterans graves that a flag holder be permanently embedded in the foundation to facilitate the placing of flags at all veteran graves.

Discussion regarding cremations allowed per plot, current ordinance states two cremation burials per plot. We would suggest a change to the ordinance to allow four cremation burials per plot, specifying that only one large monument capable of holding all 4 names be allowed per plot.

A discussion was held regarding changes to the current ordinance, removing the Sexton from making decisions regarding burials, monuments, etcetera allowed in either Cemetery. The restated ordinances would state that only the Township Clerk could make those decisions. Currently changes are being made that the Clerk learns of later and must change the Township records to reflect the new information. All payments for services should be made to the Township Treasurer or Township Clerk. Currently the Sexton often accepts the payment of these fees, and then holds them for a month or more before submitting them to the Township.

The group then went to the Smyrna Cemetery and did a walk through. It was determined that numerous bushes and/or small trees growing between headstones, that are obviously weeds should be killed to keep them from re-growing and then trimmed out. Some tree removal and trimming was discussed. No specific trees were tagged for immediate removal or trimming. Paul stated that he will try to locate the north property line, where numerous saplings should be removed. He will contact the land owner to the North to let her know that we will be doing some work along the property line and see if she has any problems if we remove any trees that are currently leading over the cemetery.

It was agreed that the scraping and grading of the drive, and then covering it with crushed asphalt would be a good investment and go a long way towards making the Cemetery look nice. 2 quotes had been received one for less than \$2200 the other in excess of \$5000. At the next meeting we will need to determine if we would like to call Mr. Schultz to go ahead with the work.

The broken monuments for; Gordon Thompson, Ellen – by the Fish monument, Charles Hart, Polley Kenney, Mrs. Benjamin Moe, Pliny Sabin, Pliny Baby, Belez, Mrs. Alvin Moe, an Unreadable by Mary Jane Osborne, Unreadable next to Jones - civil war veteran, and Chris Spencer, were selected for cleaning and repair. Laura will contact Gravestone Services of Orleans for a final quote regarding the cleaning, repair and resetting of these monuments.

Removal of the fence on the north side of the south entrance drive, was discussed, it was determined that this would facilitate easier maintenance, removal of leaves in the autumn, and create a cleaner look to that portion of the cemetery.

Paul stated that he will contact someone regarding re-landscaping the front hill. The current landscape is difficult to maintain. He will investigate the inclusion of the word Smyrna in the landscaping, be it in a planted shrub that would require trimming to maintain the display. Or possibly some other material could be used to spell out the cemetery's name.

Laura will measure and calculate the paint required for the Sexton's shed at Smyrna and purchase it.

The Cemetery committee will schedule a work day for some Saturday in July for cleanup and trimming in the Smyrna Cemetery.