

## Otisco Township Cemetery Committee Meeting – April 29, 2015

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

The Cemetery Committee reviewed the minutes from the meeting of June 16, 2014.

Maryann asked if the cemetery committee has a budget. Lynda stated that there is a \$5000 CD that is earmarked for cemetery use. Lynda also noted that other funds are available from the grounds and maintenance budget that can be transferred into the cemetery budget. The Cemetery Committee would like an annual budget set for maintaining the two cemeteries.

The committee reviewed some of the items from last year's minutes to see what had been completed. It was noted that 2 dead trees were removed from the Smyrna Cemetery.

A review of the additional items that were contained in the minutes of the June 16 meeting were discussed and a few were selected as top priorities. One of the priorities was to have the pipe in the driveway near the Sexton's shed cut and removed. This is an old water pipe that is no longer in use. Lynda is to contact Geiger Well and get a quote to see if they would remove the old pipe from the driveway. Laura will call for quotes for crushed asphalt to be placed on the driveway at Smyrna Cemetery.

David suggested the removal of the 2 trees at the exit of the Smyrna Cemetery, Maryann Reeves will call for quotes on this tree work and others that were suggested for the Otisco Cemetery. She will instruct those giving bids to contact David to tour the cemeteries to see which trees were being discussed.

David suggested that we replace the trash containers at the Smyrna Cemetery, for the time being he will bring one down from the Otisco Cemetery to be used until new ones can be purchased. Maryann suggested purchasing four or five of the plastic barrels in which we would have drain holes drilled in the bottom so they don't hold water.

At Smyrna Cemetery David suggested the removal of the fence on the south side of the property to facilitate mowing.

The committee needs to make a trip to the cemetery to determine how many foundations need to be replaced. Measurements need to be taken so that it can be calculated what the cost would be to have foundations corrected or replaced. Old monuments without bases should have a foundation created and the old monument stone should be placed flat on the new foundation; assuming that we can determine the proper location for the monument.

Maryann Reeves said she would call Keene Township offices to see who may have done work in Marble Cemetery. Laura said she would call a couple of monument marker makers to see if they do that type of work or whom they would recommend. It was noted that the majority of broken, toppled, missing headstones are at the Otisco Cemetery.

Laura asked if we could include the cemetery rules in the June Newsletter, she will write something up and present it to Lynda for inclusion. We will reiterate the rules and give people the opportunity to make corrections to any grave sites that do not meet these requirements. It will be stipulated that anything not accomplished by the end of July will be handled by the cemetery committee starting in August. Laura will draft a letter to Vicki Eddington, whose

husband is buried in N 28-5, as she does not receive the Otisco Township newsletter, and include the cemetery rules for her letting her know that if the extra items surrounding this grave have not been taken care of prior to the end of July that the cemetery committee will handle it.

A brief discussion was held regarding a Cremation Remembrance Wall, all present said that it was a nice idea and something to look forward to for the future.

Linda reviewed the lot purchasing policy with the cemetery committee, briefly it states that residents of Otisco Township may purchase 2 lots in advance. Nonresidents that wish to be buried at either Otisco Cemetery or Smyrna Cemetery may purchase a single lot at the time of need.

Laura has said that she will come in and review some of the old records for plot purchases, specifically in the Otisco Cemetery to determine the ownership of graves S386 space 3 & 4. This space currently holds the headstones for 2 members of the Demarest family. The official Otisco Cemetery plot map shows that these spaces were previously sold to Leland & Linda Harrell.

David said that if the Township will purchase the paint for the Sexton sheds at both cemetery locations that he will paint them. Maryann noted that the sheds should be white with green trim, as these are the colors that are typically used in Smyrna.

David commented that while mowing the Otisco Cemetery he has seen cars pull in park momentarily with a brief exchange between cars, it is presumed that these are drug deals.

Laura suggested that at the Otisco Cemetery that the entrances be reversed making the South the drive the entry rather than the exit, because of the blind view to the North due to the hill. It would be better to exit from the North drive on the top of the hill where there is a clear view both ways.

It was briefly discussed that the Township often finds out that there has been a burial AFTER it has taken place. Contacting the Township Clerk would facilitate in maintaining the Township records, and ensuring that deaths have been properly recorded with the Township. Laura will draft a letter that would be sent to all the local funeral homes, including funeral homes in Lowell, Greenville, and any others that we know have serviced clients in either Cemetery. This letter would indicate that it is their responsibility to contact the Township Clerk to be assigned a burial plot number. The clerk will then call the Sexton and make arrangements for burial. This should ensure that graves are being dug in the proper places. Laura would like to suggest we charge a fee to the funeral homes if this process is not adhered too; say a \$100, fee.

Melissa asked if anyone knew about a cemetery that use to be near where she lives on Center Street. She has been told that at one time in Cook's Corners that there was a church, funeral home and graveyard. No one present at the meeting had any knowledge of this additional or old Cemetery located near Church Street.

The cemetery committee will try to have quotes available for the Wednesday, May 13, 2015 Otisco Township Board Meeting. They will schedule your next meeting for some time after the Otisco Township Board Meeting, at that time they will plan a walk-through of the cemeteries again.