

Otisco Township Cemetery Meeting Minutes

September 26, 2017

Cemetery Committee Members present: Maryann Reeves, Paul Reeves, Laura Staats, Lynda Sower

Ralph VanOker, Sextant, stopped in near the end of the meeting.

Absent: Shane McDonald, David Hodges

Old Business:

Tree Removal and Quote: Maryann will talk with Climbin' High Tree Service for an update on the tree removal and a quote on the oak tree near the Baker burial plot, as the Township insurance agent said the tree should be removed before it falls and breaks any markers.

Cemetery Deed: Paul Reeves reported that a deed search has previously been done for the old portion of the Smyrna Cemetery and that no deed exists. Ionia County has no record of a deed for the 7 acres of property that is known as the Smyrna Cemetery. If the Township would like; a deed can be generated, it would require that all properties surrounding the Smyrna Cemetery will need to be surveyed to verify the borders as well as title searches to verify those properties owners. The cost could be quite extensive. The Cemetery Committee is satisfied with that information. It is noted that there are some old records stored in the Otisco Township vault and those will be researched further for any possible information regarding this piece of land.

Laura will call Rick Anderson and let him know that he has won the bid for the Otisco Township Cemetery driveway extension.

Columbarium Update:

- Lynda will bring a Resolution before the Otisco Township Board to move forward with plans for the proposed columbarium to be located at the Smyrna Cemetery.
- Paul will get pricing for tentative costs the foundation for the proposed columbarium.
- Laura will get pricing for excavating and preparing the area for foundations and Memorial Ash Garden. It was noted that there is a drainage culvert that runs along the South edge of the Smyrna Cemetery property that must be maintained.
- It is believed that we can find someone to cut and remove the necessary trees from the proposed area for the columbarium and ash garden, resulting in no cost to the Township.
- Laura will make inquiries regarding the cost for having necessary drawings and site plan for the proposed columbarium.
- Laura will ask Roger, Township Zoning Administrator, on what the cost of a permit will be.
- Laura will talk with Nick Crebessa at Nature's Needs regarding the ground preparation, layout, plants, and installation for the Memorial Ash Garden.

The South drive of the Smyrna Cemetery is a public road, and it is believed that in some of the older records that the name is given. We have asked Lynda to see if she can find that name.

The Cemetery Committee has selected Thursday, October 19, 2017 at 10 AM to meet in the Otisco Cemetery for the fall walk-through and removal of debris. Maryann will call Ralph VanOker, David Hodges, Paul A Reeves and possibly others that might be interested in participating in the walk-through. It is noted that this event is open to any Otisco Township resident to attend and participate. The committee plans to visit the Smyrna Cemetery for the same purpose, on the same day. If necessary the Smyrna Cemetery will be visited on Thursday October 26th at 10 AM.

Laura made mention that she had stopped at Rest Haven Memorial Gardens and asked them about their excess dirt. They said that from time to time they need to find some place to dump it. Laura told them that it would be welcome any time at the Smyrna Cemetery. They were given the location for dumping, it is south of the current dumpster location. They stated that at any time we would like that we may have someone stop by to pick up dirt and deliver it to the Smyrna Cemetery, and they would be happy to load it into whatever truck or trailer. Otherwise, they would move the dirt at their own time, convenience, and schedule. Laura made Lynda aware that she had spoken with them.

Maryann said that she would speak with the Shindorf's and the Zahm's regarding the possible future purchase of land to the West of the existing Otisco Township Cemetery for future cemetery expansion.

It is noted that someone is still dumping their personal garbage at the Township cemeteries. It is also noted that the NO DUMPING signs have not yet been installed.

It was also discussed that with any leftover Cemetery funds that we might want to consider selecting some of the older, crooked grave markers in one of the cemeteries and having them lifted and ribbon foundations installed and the markers reset.

Next Agenda:

Sign Update:

Tree Update:

Costs information

Next Meeting: October 31, 2017 @ 9:00 am, Otisco Township Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura J. Staats