

Cemetery Meeting Minutes

June 5, 2018

Present: Paul Reeves, Maryann Reeves, David Hodges, Shane McDonald, Laura Staats

Old Business:

Reviewed the Newsletter insert regarding the future plans for a Columbarium at Smyrna and the handouts that are available in the boxes located next to the cemetery signs.

Laura will ask Joe D to follow up on the repair to the driveway in Otisco Cemetery. Including, should there be a small pipe laid under the surface of the driveway to channel the run-off water under, rather than over the driveway surface in hopes of keeping it from washing out again.

Will need to determine if Joe Borek will be on schedule to complete the tree removal by July 4th.

Maryann will give Ralph VanOker the list of names for Ribbons to be placed in the Smyrna and Otisco cemeteries. The following list was determined: Smyrna – Dorothy Alan lot # 312 and Lydia G Breuer lot # 38. One of these graves has no marker and the other no visible foundation. In Otisco Cemetery – Zella Jones N96-3, Ruth Smith N72-3, Joel Curtis N13-1, Lula Helsel N89-2 & Ron Helsel N89-1. These are all older graves with no permanent marker. A ribbon foundation will be poured and the location number inscribed into the foundation for future identification. It will be requested that at the same time that the sextant add the grave location information numbers to the foundations poured this year that were not marked. The committee hopes to be able to install some ribbon foundations each year to upright old markers and mark unmarked graves for future generations.

The broken urns and ceramic culverts used as planted that are now in disuse and broken will be cleaned out in the fall when the fall cleanup takes place. The committee feels that they are an eyesore within our cemeteries and that they need to be removed. A motion was made and seconded that we remove the unsightly broken urns and ceramic culverts in the fall clean up. Passed 5-0

New Business:

Ralph VanOker will be limiting the number of cemeteries he will service in 2019 and has notified us that he will no longer be available to do the Smyrna and Otisco cemeteries as well as the Orleans cemetery. The Cemetery committee will gather information on possible replacement sextants to present to the board when needed.

There were comments on how nice the one side of the Moon marker located on the north side of the drive near the front of the Smyrna cemetery looks, the committee has decided to order a five gallon pail of the D2 marker cleaner so that the older headstones can be sprayed. It was noted that the full cleaning power of the spray takes about 10 – 12 months to fully show its cleaning ability, but the Moon marker shows that it works. Laura will return to the Smyrna cemetery and spray the other three sides of the marker, as only one side was done to see how well it worked on its own.

David Hodges commented on the trees along the front of the Otisco cemetery and how they have many dead limbs and are always dropping dead branches. It was determined that the trees are in the road right of way. A motion was made and seconded to have David contact the Ionia County Road Commission to see if the trees can be added to the trim or removal list. Passed 5-0

Shane McDonald reported that there is a lot of traffic in and out of the Smyrna Cemetery at some very late hours. He asked about the possibility of the gates being closed in the evening. His

work schedule precludes him from volunteering to open and close then. Paul reiterated a story about a time when the gates were locked and a funeral was taking place and the only key holder was out of town. The gates have not been locked since. A brief discussion was held about pricing automated gates that would open at dawn and close at sunset, not requiring a person to be present. The committee will continue to look into this option and get some pricing for a future possible upgrade to the Township Cemeteries.

Next Meeting: August 14, 2018 @ 9:00 am Township Hall

Respectfully submitted
Laura J Staats