DISCUSSION

`resent:
Wayne Printz, M Lee Dearing, Lester Seal
Excused:
Chair Bill Davis, Betty McGahey, Cathy Morrison, Karen Jones, Joyce Stevens
Staff:
Charlotte Shifflett – Cemetery Director, and Amber Cubbage – Assistant

The meeting began by Pledging Allegiance to the Flag. In the absence of the Chairman, Wayne Printz presided over the meeting. The By-Laws state that 3 members constitute a quorum. This meeting will be referenced as Discussion for the records.

- Lester Seal and Lee Dearing were welcomed to the Elkton Cemetery Commission as new members. This is the first scheduled meeting since their appointments were approved by council. Karen Jones was appointed by council but was unavailable to attend tonight's meeting.
- Lester and Lee advised other attendees that they will do their best and appreciated the opportunity to serve.
- Councilman Printz has ideas that would enhance the appearance of the cemetery, especially near the front entrance located at Elk Run Drive.
- Lee reiterated he has been involved with the cemetery since 1992 and believes the commission should move forward.

Mausoleums
Councilman Printz inquired if any rules or plans had been made in the past to accommodate owner's requests to place mausoleums in Elk Run Cemetery?

- The subject was initiated regarding placement of mausoleums in Elk Run Cemetery. Several years ago the commission refused the placement of a mausoleum to be located on a designated lot owned by the deceased and his immediate family.
- A spot was selected and voted on by commission members for the placement of future mausoleums.

Rate Increase
The audit report from last year contained a statement from the Auditor which advised the town that the Perpetual Care fund is rapidly decreasing and would probably is broke in several years without rate increases.

- Bill Davis/Chairman asked to record that he is against any increases. He will vote "no" to any future increase.
- Members in attendance would like to look into the By-Laws and current finances before making a motion.
- Lester Seal would like to see how the fees are broken down when sales and burials occur.
- The open/close fees of $400.00 go into General Fund
- Grave Sales places $100 in R/E fund and the remaining $500.00 in the P/C fund. Sales are moving at an average pace. Open and close fees were down some last year. Normally, the cemetery averages approximately 50 burials per year with some of these being cremations at a cost of $150.00.
- Mr. Dearing emphasized when he was an active member of the Cemetery Commission the funds totaled approximately $500,000.00. He believed that the deed limits spending to interest only from the P/C fund. However, the cemetery department reimburses the town annually for expenses. The last two years they reimbursed the town approximately $61,000.00.
- Several years ago the R/E fund was depleted when the commission purchased 10.4 acres of land from Dr. Downey for the sum of just over 300,000.00 (including closing costs).

- The Cemetery Commission feels it increased the town's capability to increase revenue about 7 million dollars by future grave sales.
  In 1985 the town took possession of the Elk Run Cemetery from the acting Cemetery Commission.
- The deed is on file at the court house and in part reads as follows:

As a part of the consideration for the conveyance recited herein, it is agreed by the town of Elkton as follows:

1) *It will manage the above described property as a community cemetery, the management of which shall be under the control of a commission appointed by Town Council for that purpose.*
2) *The funds coming into its hands shall be managed for the purpose of perpetual care and accounted for in the Town's annual audit as a separate account.*
3) *The town will have the right to be compensated for labor and materials used by it in the in the maintenance and care of the cemetery on the basis of the fair market value of said labor and materials.*

- Verbiage containing the word **"shall" always means "shall"**
- The town treasurer controls all money from revenue and expenses.
- The auditor only checks with the Cemetery Director to find out the number of interments made during the fiscal year.
- Members would like to have a vote in deciding how the money is being spent.
  1) They do not want to be selective.
  2) Lester Seal would like to meet with the treasurer and learn more about the financial side of the cemetery funds.
  3) During Mr. Donachy's tenure the town attorney noted the deed does not give authority to the commission but rather to the town manager.
- Perpetual Care funds should not be spent; only the interest from investment of the funds.
- At our next meeting a motion should be made to elect additional officers, namely a vice chairman to preside in case the chairman is unable to attend.

Weed Control Contract

Lee Dearing and Wayne Printz felt the weed control practice in the cemetery should be continued.

Cedar Tree in Section 3/Frye Way

A relative submitted a complaint that tree roots were pushing a tombstone out of the ground.

- Lester Seal volunteered to look at the tree to see if the roots extend under the asphalt.

Flowers

Theft and/or Removal

- Mr. Printz "Thanked" the Elkton Police Department for watching the cemetery closely in an attempt to rectify a recent situation that occurred.
- Mr. Printz would like to get a quote on the price of a camera to be placed at the main entrance to view ingress/egress.
- We need to place the cemetery on high alert. Perhaps no one should be allowed there from dusk to dawn! Night visits to the cemetery are fairly uncommon.
- There may be a possibility we could piggyback the camera on to the EPD quote.
  Pathforward: Mr. Printz will discuss the issue with Chief Hammer.
- Guests, Mr. & Mrs. Doug Bailey were offered an opportunity to ask questions but had none at this time.
- Would it feasible to place inexpensive signs at entrances informing the public that no night visits will be permissable?

Honorary Membership

- It was suggested that Mrs. Joyce Stevens be placed on the commission as an honorary member since she moved further away and has no transportation available to attend future meetings.
  Pathforward: Mr. Printz will talk to Betty McGahey and see how she feels about becoming an honorary member.
- The Commission would like to see all cemetery monies placed in a separate account.
- The Commission would like to see maintenance reimbursed at a reasonable rate. Currently, all money goes into the general fund.
- Allow the commission to get back into running the cemetery affairs.
- Justify the budget to have the Cemetery Director's salary of 50% charged to a lower percentage in view of the fact that the cemetery director is also the Zoning Administrator. The commission recommends it be lowered to 25%.
- The cemetery is not easy to mow and much worse to keep up the trimming.
- The $7.50 hr. salary is inappropriate if we want to keep experienced help.
- More than one part time helper should be employed in case of absenteeism, illness, and other emergencies.
- That person should be on the payroll immediately to complete tasks such as dead flower removal, windblown arrangements scattered about, and old grass and brush removal.
- Consider hiring retirees who are seeking to supplement their income by working part-time.
- Consider hiring someone who takes pride in their work and understands the responsibility, dignity and respect required that goes with working in the Elk Run Cemetery.

Commission Projects:

- The Elk Run Cemetery Commission was instrumental into paving the roads in the cemetery.
- Town personnel maintain the streets.
- In 2010 the Cemetery Commission purchased 10.4 acres of land for future development of the Elk Run Cemetery.
  Once lots are developed and sold revenue from this property could total as much as 7 million dollars for the town.

Fees Collected

- At the end of the fiscal year approximately how much money is deposited into Open/Close fees?
  1) The average year has approximately 50 burials. Last year did not meet that number. However, an increase in cremations accounts for a downward turn in fees.
  2) $400.00 goes into the general fund for each full burial. $150.00 goes into the for a cremation burial.
  3) Grave Sales deposits $100.00 per space into the Real Estate Account and $500.00 per space into the Perpetual Care account.
- Mr. Printz reiterated that our funds are low and we are going to be in "big trouble".
- The recent equipment purchase was not discussed and/or recommended by the commission so where did the money come from for payment?

Rate Increase

The board of commissioners' plan to call a meeting in the near future with all members in attendance to discuss the fact that they do not recommend any rate increase for grave sales or open/close fees. Economic times are hard and the vast majority has an issue when they are required to pay cash for a burial space in addition to open/close fees. The cemetery is for the burial of the dead and should not be expected to pay town expenses.

Upcoming Projects List

- Take inventory of existing mowers and other equipment; then budget for any new items needed. Consider construction of a flat mausoleum to place cremated remains.
- Continue to proceed with the idea of constructing bathrooms.
- Charlotte will campaign for monetary donations to be designated toward bathroom facilities.
- Consider planting and irrigating new shrubbery at the front entrance before spring arrives.
- Look into the possibility of placing the cemetery grid on GPS. Go with available technology.

Submitted by: Charlotte and Amber

Attachment

Cemetery Commission Members

..... *Chairman Albert "Bill" Davis*
..... *Council Repre. Wayne Printz*
..... *Lee Dearing*
..... *Karen Jones*
..... *Betty McGahey*
..... *Cathy Morrison*
..... *Joyce Stevens*
..... *Lester Seal*

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORARY MEMBERS OF THE CEMETERY COMMISSION

Whereas: Joyce Stevens has served as an active member of the Elk Run Cemetery Commission for the Town of Elkton for approximately ten years.

Whereas: Joyce Stevens has moved further from Elkton and lack of transportation prevents her from being able to attend meetings.

Whereas: Joyce Stevens has participated and been a voice for the Cemetery Commission. As an Honorary Member she shall be entitled to attend any and/or all meetings of the commission, she will be allowed to join in discussions, but her position will be that of a non-voting participant and she shall not be counted as a part of a quorum at any scheduled meetings.

Whereas: Becoming an Honorary Member gives Joyce Stevens an opportunity to mentor newly elected officials by providing mission, history, policies, and operating practices of the Elk Run Cemetery Commission, if they desire.

Whereas: Elkton Town Council has the recommendation from the Cemetery Commission members to appoint Joyce Stevens to become an Honorary Member until her resignation.