



The regular meeting of the Town of Mahone Bay Cemetery Committee was held on Monday, February 24th at 3:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Present:

Mayor D. Devenne
Councillor J. Bain, Chair
Councillor J. Feeney
B. Morris
CAO D. Heide
Director of Operations D. Mackenzie
Manager of Finance L. Wentzell

Gallery:

None

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 PM.

2) Agenda – February 24th, 2020

Morris - Feeney

THAT the Committee approve the agenda for February 24th as presented.

CARRIED

3) Minutes – September 16th, 2019

Feeney - Devenne

THAT the Committee approve the minutes from the September 16th, 2019 meeting of the Cemetery Committee.

CARRIED

4) Operations Report/Discussion

D. Mackenzie provided the committee with his report, noting that little work has been done at the Cemetery during the winter months so far, though he did note that one of the garbage bins had been stolen.

A discussion was had regarding the status of locating the property lines for Park Cemetery. It was determined that staff will follow up with ABLE Engineering to confirm property boundaries and will report at the next meeting of the committee. A question was raised about the ownership of Bayview Cemetery and staff will look into this as well.

The committee discussed repairs that are required at Bayview Cemetery. It was recommended that an application be submitted to the provincial Beautification and Streetscaping Program for streetscape improvements to Edgewater Street, to include repairing or replacing the Bayview Cemetery fence.

5) Cemetery Finances

Discussion was had regarding Fiscal 2019/20 expenses and the Budget for Fiscal 2020/21. D. Mackenzie recommended that the \$5,000 for trees remain in the budget for 2020/21, to be used primarily for the removal of dead or unhealthy trees, rather than the planting of new ones.

Conversation turned to the potential of establishing a Plot Sales program. It was communicated to the Committee that there are substantial legislative requirements that need to be adhered to in order to administer a Plot Sales Program. It was concluded and the Committee unanimously agreed that this was not an avenue to be explored any further.

J. Feeney discussed with the committee the idea of setting the Cemeteries up as stand-alone charities. While this might allow the Cemeteries to access some additional funding sources, it would be a heavy administrative burden to administer. A discussion will be held with Deborah Trask for information on possible funding sources, to determine if the cemeteries are currently eligible (while municipality operated).

It was announced by CAO D. Heide that Bayview Cemetery received a donation in the amount of \$20,000 from the Estate of George Kenneth Gregoire, which will go into the Perpetual Care Fund of Bayview Cemetery. The Committee will continue discussions concerning appropriate recognition of this donation at its next meeting.

It was recommended by the committee that the Director of Finance review the Administrative allocation to the Cemeteries to ensure it accurately reflects staff resources being dedicated to Cemetery administration.

6) New Business: Natural Burials

The idea of natural burials was discussed amongst the committee members and detailed some of the conditions and complexities of operating a true natural burial site. It was determined that the committee did not have sufficient information to make a decision at this time. Staff have been directed to research the criteria surrounding natural burials.

The discussion turned to Muslim burials in Park Cemetery and how the Town should be promoting this service. It was also noted that this should be kept in mind in the plans for the possible future expansion of Park Cemetery, ensuring appropriate plots are made available to the local Muslim community.

In addition, CAO D. Heide proposed the idea of offering a columbarium option at either (or both) Park and Bayview Cemeteries for those not requiring the use of a traditional ground plot. The committee will explore this further at their next meeting, considering local examples.

B. Morris raised the question of whether or not there are any existing requirements that outline who can be buried at Bayview Cemetery. There was a discussion held around the table, confirming there is no known formal documentation of any restrictions; as all plots have been sold, it is the decision of the owner who is to be buried.

7) Other

Councillor J. Bain mentioned that individuals are still welcome to go back to Park Cemetery and remove the small pine tress if they would like.

In addition, Councillor J. Bain would like to see the historic plot plan preserved for archival purposes and a copy made to be used as the working copy. Staff will look into costing for this and report back at the next meeting.

8) Adjournment

Adjourned on motion by Mayor D. Devenne at 5:24 PM

TOWN OF MAHONE BAY

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Chair, Councillor John Bain

Recording Secretary, Luke Wentzell