

TOWN OF CHARLESTON
Cemetery Commission Meeting 11/14/2024

MINUTES

A meeting of the town Cemetery Commission was held November 14, 2024. Attending were Commission Members Sherman Allen Jr., Janice Bowen, Martin Davis, and Darald Moulton; Sexton/Laborer Brad Peters; Town Clerk & Treasurer Teri Gray; and Asst. Clerk Colleen Kellogg.

THESE MINUTES ARE UNOFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

Chairperson Sherman Allen called the meeting to order at 5pm and welcomed all attendees.

Janice Bowen moved to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2024 meeting as written, with a second by Darald Moulton, and the minutes were approved as written. There were no changes to the agenda or public comments.

Sherman Allen asked members to allow Brad Peters to speak on all matters, and all agreed.

Listing repairs made in 2024, Brad Peters said rotted posts were replaced at Buck Cemetery along with half of the posts at Bly Cemetery—one side was still good and the back will wait to see what posts are left over from Hillside. He ordered 70 posts for Hillside and was given 82, so there will be extra. Asked about Crawford Cemetery, Brad Peters said some posts need repair, and he has metal stakes to use.

Peters said he used two gallons of stain to complete the shed at Hillside. Asked about the roof, he said two bottom rows of shingle are rough, and there is a ten square foot section on the back where the asphalt is taken right off, but it does not leak and can wait until 2026. It will take 8.5 bundles so he should plan to buy nine. Sherman Allen asked the cost of shed roofing for West Village. Cost information will be researched for the 2026 budget. As far as equipment, Peters said next year's costs will be basics like mower upkeep and oil changes. The Hillside mower needs new blades.

Treasurer Teri Gray presented an accounting of the 2024 budget to date. Over \$3,000 remains, but final payroll and maybe some gasoline charges are still coming. The balance of a new reserve fund for cleaning stones is \$384. Members agreed that more is needed to begin any stone cleaning, and Brad Peters suggests waiting until there is a couple of thousand in the fund.

Gray reviewed cemetery lot prices, how costs are allocated, and recommended that any changes be made prior to town reports so that prices can be listed correctly. All members are happy with prices and agreed to leave them as-is. There was a question about whether Charleston prices are competitive with other towns, so this may require some research.

Teri Gray asked members to assign numbers to line items for the 2025 budget.

- Sherman Allen noted that the wage line item was overbudget, and Brad Peters explained that the mowing seasons have started early in the past two years. Darald Moulton made a motion to raise the hourly wage for laborers from \$16 to \$17/hr. The motion was seconded by Janice Bowen and approved unanimously. By agreement, Members said the wage budget should be set at \$11,500 for 2025.
- Regarding veterans' flags, Brad Peters said 198 needed each year, after adding Loren Laflam and John Ward to the veterans list. Two boxes of 106 can be ordered. Darald Moulton said his brother James should also be added. Sherman Allen will let the legion know about the order. Members agreed that \$175 will again be sufficient for this purchase.
- Under new equipment, laborers agreed that mowers are good for next year. They might need a new weed whacker, but an individual may have one to donate. Members agreed to keep the New Equipment line item at \$500 and Repairs at \$2000.
- The gasoline line item is under budget for 2024. Members agreed that gas prices have come down and this line item should be \$1000 for 2025.
- Regarding fencing, most posts have already been purchased, so the standard \$100 budget will cover 2025. There were no other budget needs to discuss.

Sherman Allen said someone asked about him about permitting green burial on the Cahill lot at Hillside. He told them it was not permitted, but he would discuss the matter with the Commission. There was discussion of what green burial entails—generally just a body with no embalming and burial must happen quickly. After discussion, Darald Moulton said he was hearing a consensus among board members that they are not interested in permitting green burial. All members agreed.

Sherman Allen suggested setting the 2025 Annual meeting for Thursday, April 10th at 5:00pm, and all members agreed. The Clerk's Office will work with members on the agenda in March.

Seeing no other new or old business to discuss, Janice Bowen made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Darald Moulton, and the meeting adjourned at 5:38pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherman Allen, Jr., Chairperson

Approved this 10th day of April 2025:
