

**CEMETERY STAKEHOLDERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2017

**TRAFALGAR ROOM
OAKVILLE TOWN HALL
1225 TRAFALGAR ROAD, OAKVILLE**

A meeting of the Cemetery Stakeholders Advisory Committee was held on Monday, June 5, 2017, in the Trafalgar Room of the Oakville Town Hall, commencing at 2:02 p.m.

Present: Liz Behrens, Chair
Louella Brace
Eileen Ellison
Thomas Holmes
Rodger Klarer
Councillor Roger Lapworth
David McMillian
Olga Shewchun

Staff: C. Bell, Commissioner of Community Services
C. Mark, Director of Parks and Open Space
J. Arnett, Senior Manager of Operations
H. McGregor, Supervisor of Cemeteries and Environmental Services
J. Warren, Council and Committee Coordinator

Regrets: Moira Fogarty
Ralph Gardiner

The items in these minutes are not necessarily in the order discussed.

1. Call to Order

Liz Behrens, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

2. Regrets

As noted above.

3. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

Moved by David McMillian

That the minutes of the Cemetery Stakeholders Advisory Committee meeting of May 5, 2017, be approved.

CARRIED

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

5. Discussion Item(s)

a. Review Terms of Reference

Heather McGregor, Supervisor, Cemetery and Environmental Services reviewed the Terms of Reference with the committee, providing clarification regarding the committee's role.

b. Review Staff Comments from Meeting of May 8, 2017

Staff reviewed changes and responses regarding each item discussed at the meeting of May 8, 2017. All feedback reviewed has been reflected on the summary chart highlighted in yellow. The committee requested Bereavement of Ontario pamphlets which will be provided at the next meeting.

c. Review of Cemetery Report to Council and Draft By-law

The committee reviewed the by-law beginning at section 3.7 and the follow comments were noted.

Section 3: Interments

Section 3.7

Interment Hours:

Clarification was provided that the time was changed to 2:30 p.m. to decrease the amount of staff overtime. Burials can occur after 2:30 p.m. for an additional fee. It was added that burial arrangements can be made over any weekend but no lot sales.

Section 3.8

Outer Containers:

Minor wording adjustments were made to this section.

Section 3.9

Number of Interments of Enrichments Permitted in Lots:

This section is legislated by the Province of Ontario and there were no comments or suggestions from the Committee.

Section 3.10

Cremated Remains Placement and Scattering:

No comments or suggestions from the Committee.

Section 3.12

After Business Hours Interments:

No comments or suggestions from the Committee.

Section 3.14

Apparatus and Marquees:

No comments or suggestions from the Committee.

Section 3.16

Social Services Interments:

No comments or suggestions from the Committee.

Section 3.17

Opening and Closing of Interment or Scattering Rights:

Staff agreed to adjust language to soften the wording “passage over lot” to ensure that a respectful route is exercised. Questions were asked regarding winter burials and inclement weather in winter months, and staff responded that full burials can take place throughout the year, but most families who choose cremation as an option will wait until the weather improves. It was also mentioned that if the family needs to have a cremation burial during the winter, Town of Oakville staff will be able to accommodate by using larger machinery under frozen ground conditions.

Section 4: Disinterment

Section 4.1

Requirements for a Disinterment:

No comments or suggestions from the Committee.

Section 4.5

Removal of Markers from Lot(s):

Minor wording amendments made to this section.

Section 5: Care of the Cemetery

Section 5.1

Health and Safety of Visitors:

Clarification was provided that artificial flowers have been moved to a separate section. Staff provided additional clarification that prohibited items removed are placed into a holding area at Trafalgar Lawn Cemetery for families to collect. This area is clearly labelled to indicate that all items not collected will be discarded on the first business day of each month. Items collected at St. Jude's Cemetery are placed near the existing office building

Section 5.2

Maintenance of Grounds:

No comments or suggestions from the Committee.

Section 5.3

Planting and Care of In-Ground Lots:

Discussion occurred and the following points were raised:

- A member suggested that the wording is too broad.
- The committee suggested that the health and safety of the cemetery should come first.
- Responding to questions staff informed the committee that this is not an item that can go to the Appeals Committee, it's considered general operation of the cemetery.
- Staff clarified that there are no signs posted at the cemeteries indicating this section of the by-law.
- A member suggested that perhaps a small pamphlet could be distributed to rights holders including a high level overview of information.

- Responding to questions from the committee staff responded that people are advised on why their item is removed if they inquire, and there have never been any escalations.
- It was suggested that committee members who have personal issues with something that has occurred submit a complaint to the Parks and Open Space department.
- A member inquired as to why after so many years are these rules now being developed.

Moved by Olga Shewchun

That the following underlined section be removed from the by-law:

“The Department reserves the right to remove all flowers, potted plants, wreaths, stonetoppers and baskets of flowers when they become withered or unsightly or for any reason that deems such removals to be in the best interest of the cemeteries as determined by the Parks and Open Space department.”

LOST

Section 5.3.1

Flowers in Vases:

Staff clarified this refers to vases that can be inverted for the winter, not removed. Staff also informed the committee that when items are missing, such as flowers, it could be for any variety of reasons including weather or vandalism.

Section 5.3.2

Flower Beds:

Discussion occurred and the following points were raised:

- It was suggested that staff be contacted prior to new flower beds being installed.
- Staff clarified that over the years many flower beds have become too large for the space and are now encroaching into neighbouring lots.
- A member circulated photographs of gardens at one of the sites for review, and inquired as to why flower beds are now part of the by-law when they have not previously been included.
- A member noted that they can understand why this clause has been added to the by-law and that perhaps previous approvals should be honored.

- Staff advised that this section of the by-law has been added to establish fair rules for everyone and that families have gardens that do not adhere to the changes have been contacted.
- The committee was informed that should anyone in the cemetery approach them with issues regarding the cemetery, they should direct those people to contact staff directly, or that they may delegate before Council when this by-law comes forward for consideration.
- Staff noted that any gardens that have not been maintained annually by June 30th, would be removed by the Parks and Open Space department.
- Staff will look at this item further in order to consider the discussion and feedback provided by the committee.

Section 5.3.3

Shrubs:

- Staff advised that this section is similar to section 5.3.2 *Flower Beds*, and that shrubs can occasionally grow and expand to far outwards from the plot. Staff noted that they look at this item further as part of the same discussion mentioned in section 5.3.2.

Section 5.3.4

Potted Plants:

- A member shared concerns that wording in this section gives staff permission to remove potted plants “without notice”.
- Another member noted that staff should be given support to use their discretion.

Moved by Olga Shewchun

**That the following underlined section be removed from the by-law,
section 5.3.4 – Potted Plants:**

“The Department reserves the right, without notice, to remove and discard any potted plant when they become withered, unsightly, or not respectful of the dignity of the cemetery.”

LOST

Section 5.3.5

Memorial Wreaths and Other Winter Arrangements:

- A committee member suggested that wreaths not wrapped in plastic will cause wear and tear and therefore people may not be able to afford to replace their wreaths as often as required.
- Another member suggested that the new date of April 30th remain April 1st.
- Staff will discuss the committee's feedback and report back at the next meeting.

6. Information Item(s)

7. Items to be Discussed at Next/Future Meetings

The next item in the by-law to be discussed is item 5.3.6 – Artificial Flowers.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday, September 5, 2017
Oakville Municipal Building
Trafalgar Room- 2:00 p.m.

9. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.