



HOPE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING

Monday January 8, 2024 – 4:00 P.M.

Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office

Meeting Room A

50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

If you choose to use the Microsoft Teams platform:

- 1) Go to www.teams.com
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 234 643 923 886
- 3) Enter password: d79WY4

If you choose to attend via phone:

- 1) Call 1-469-998-7682
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 258 153 693#

If technological problems interrupt the virtual meeting component, the meeting will continue in-person.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Attendance (Roll Call)
3. Acceptance of Minutes for the May 8, 2023, June 5, 2023 & November 6, 2023 (Roll Call) & December 4, 2023 (Table)
4. To request a reasonable accommodation or interpretation or submit written comments or questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Hope Cemetery by email at Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Please note that interpretation requests must be received no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Para solicitar una interpretacion razonable, o enviar comentarios o preguntas por escrito por favor comuniquese con la oficina de la Division de Parques, Recreo & Cementerio por correo electronico a Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Por favor note que las solicitudes de interpretacion deberan ser enviadas 48 horas antes de la reunion.

5. Public Participation – Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in person and remote participation at the Hope Cemetery Commission meetings. To partake in the “Public Participation” section of this meeting, you may join us directly within the 50 Officer Manny Familia Way Meeting Room A, follow the information above to join via the Microsoft Teams application or dial the direct line as indicated. If you would like to raise your hand when in the meeting as a call-in user, you may dial *5.
6. Assistant Commissioners Report (See Report Topics Below)
7. Old Business
 - a. Overview of the Hope Cemetery Master Plan
 - b. 5 Year Capital Plan Discussion
8. New Business:

Agenda items must be submitted three business days preceding each Commission Meeting to Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov

 - i. Request of Commissioner Chris Faucher to discuss the attached letter
9. Date of Next Meeting:
 - February 5, 2024
 - March 4, 2024
 - April 8, 2024
 - May 13, 2024
 - June 3, 2024

8. Meeting Adjourned (Roll Call)



HOPE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday November 6, 2023 – 4:00 P.M.

Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office

Meeting Room A

50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

If you choose to use the Microsoft Teams platform:

- 1) Go to www.teams.com
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 260 973 572 648
- 3) Enter password: UfbZiM

If you choose to attend via phone:

- 1) Call 1-469-998-7682
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 397 538 792#

AGENDA

1. Call to Order at 4:06 PM
2. Attendance (Roll Call)
 - a. Commissioner Curewitz
 - b. Commissioner Faucher
 - c. Commissioner Idris
 - d. Commissioner Lizotte
3. Acceptance of Minutes for the May 8, 2023 & June 5, 2023 (Table)
4. To request a reasonable accommodation or interpretation or submit written comments or questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Hope Cemetery by email at Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Please note that interpretation requests must be received no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Para solicitar una interpretacion razonable, o enviar comentarios o preguntas por escrito por favor comuniquese con la oficina de la Division de Parques, Recreo & Cementerio por correo electronico a Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Por favor note que las solicitudes de interpretacion deberan ser enviadas 48 horas antes de la reunion.
5. Public Participation – Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in person and remote participation at the Hope Cemetery Commission meetings. To partake in the “Public Participation” section of this meeting, you may join us directly within the 50 Officer Manny Familia

Way Meeting Room A, follow the information above to join via the Microsoft Teams application or dial the direct line as indicated. If you would like to raise your hand when in the meeting as a call-in user, you may dial *5.

6. Assistant Commissioners Report (See Report Topics Below)

7. Old Business

a. Garden Cemetery Concepts

- i. This item was requested to be taken off the agenda.

b. Green Burials

- i. Chairman, Commissioner Curewitz reported that he spoke to a couple of Representatives regarding a pending legislation. The Legislation is to build on the existing laws, which are clear saying that if we want to have a Green burial section it's legal to do so. There is some nuance with two sections state code that seem to contradict but the State Reps are pushing for additional expanded green burials here in the state of Massachusetts. He proceeded to ask administration if there is any advertising of the Green Burials and could they do anything to advertise that fact.
- ii. Assistant Commissioner answered that there is no advertising, people are informed once they come in to buy lots but there is no major push in marketing or advertising for that.
- iii. Commissioner Faucher asked if the funeral directors have been advised.
- iv. Assistant Commissioner stated that it will be added to the fees and policies to review at the following meeting and that he would add some language about the Green Burials.
- v. Commissioner Idris asked if there are any brochures of the rules or the process of the burial.
- vi. Assistant Commissioner informed that all the information is on the City of Worcester website as well as all fees and policies and recommended the board view those documents.

c. Overview of the Hope Cemetery Master Plan

- i. There was a discussion about keeping the Master Plan on the agenda as some recommendations still have not been completed. It was recommended to keep item on the agenda.

d. Burial Process Policy

- i. There was a request to remove form the agenda.

8. New Business

a. 5 Year Capital Plan Discussion

- i. There was a discussion about priorities such as the barn, new maintenance building, the old administration building, the fence, water, roads, the berm, the prioritizing those items, and budgeting.

- b. Request of the Islamic Society of Greater Worcester to speak to the Commission
 - i. Mr. Mohammad Elrefaei was there to request an additional increase of 3000 graves for the Islamic Community in Section 1.
 - ii. Commissioner Curewitz asked about how many lots are available in section 1.
 - iii. Assistant Commissioner Antonelli explained that there are about a thousand available in section 1. That section was designed as an individual lot section and they are sold as individuals, they can sell 2 individual lots but not in bulk sale. Administration made a recommendation and based on that recommendation the motion was made.
 - iv. Commissioner Faucher made a motion to put in writing that the City of Worcester Hope Cemetery Commission will notify The Islamic Society of Greater Worcester upon the beginning of the design and construction in section 2 of the Master Plan. Second by Commissioner Idris. All were in favor. Motion was approved 4 – 0.
 - v. There was further discussions and Mr. Elrefaei explained that they also pay for people who can't afford a burial.
 - vi. Assistant Commissioner Antonelli advised that anyone that can't afford a funeral can go through the state. The State of Massachusetts has a program that can help pay the bills.

9. Date of Next Meeting:

- December 4, 2023
- January 8, 2024
- February 5, 2024
- March 4, 2024
- April 8, 2024
- May 13, 2024
- June 3, 2024

8. Meeting Adjourned (Roll Call)

Commissioner Faucher made a motion to adjourn. Second by Commissioner Idris. All were in favor. Motion to adjourn was approved 4 – 0. Meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

1. Friends Of Hope Cemetery -
 - a. Signage
 - b. Cemetery Plantings
 - c. Events
 - d. Sound System
 - e. Mausoleum

- There weren't any updates on the above items, however, there was an update on a donation accepted by the City of Worcester, from Friends of Hope Cemetery towards in the amount of \$65,763.99 for additional upgrades and repairs to the water system at Hope Cemetery.

2. Genealogical - NA
3. Compost Site - NA
4. Water System - Update
5. Hope Cemetery Records - NA
6. Perpetual Care Fund – City Treasurer - NA
7. Rules and Regulation Changes - NA
8. Lot Sale Fee Changes - NA
9. Interment & Associated Fees - NA
10. Fiscal Year Budget - NA
11. Fiscal Year Capital Budget - NA
12. Donations NA
13. Monuments and Mausoleums - NA
 - a. Discussion on new cremation burial options
14. Section Development -
 - a. Section 39 Possible Columbarium NA
 - Location – See Master Plan on the City Web Site
 - RFP
 - Design
 - Timeline
15. Building Rehab - NA
 - a. Barn
 - Reports – Submitted by the Friends of Hope Cemetery (2-10, 2007)
 - Grants
 - Historical Commission
 - Plans of storage
 - b. Admin
16. Condition of Hope – Update
 - a. Sheriff's Community Outreach Program
17. Hope Cemetery Master Plan Approved by City Council 10-10-17
 - a. [City Parks | City of Worcester, MA \(worcesterma.gov\)](http://www.worcesterma.gov)
18. Misc. -
 - a. Productivity Reports
 - b. Staff
 - c. City Council Orders
 - NA
 - d. Articles
 - e. Other



HOPE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday June 5, 2023 – 4:00 P.M.

Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office

Meeting Room A

50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

If you choose to use the WebEx platform:

- 1) Go to www.webex.com
- 2) Click the "join" button on the top right side of the screen
- 3) Enter Meeting ID#: 2306 910 1534
- 4) Enter password: Hopecomm6-5

If you choose to attend via phone:

- 1) Call 1-415-655-0001
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 2306 910 1534

AGENDA

1. Call to Order at 4:06 PM
2. Attendance (Roll Call)
 - a. Chairman, Commissioner Curewitz
 - b. Commissioner Deedy
 - c. Commissioner Faucher
 - d. Commissioner Lizotte
3. Acceptance of Minutes for the April 10, 2023
 - a. Commissioner Deedy made a motion to approve the minutes. Second by Commissioner Faucher. All were in favor. Minutes were approved 4 – 0.
 - b. May 8, 2023, Minutes - Tabled.
4. To request a reasonable accommodation or interpretation or submit written comments or questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Hope Cemetery by email at Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Please note that interpretation requests must be received no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Para solicitar una interpretacion razonable, o enviar comentarios o preguntas por escrito por favor comuniquese con la oficina de la Division de Parques, Recreo & Cementerio por correo electronico a Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Por favor note que las solicitudes de interpretacion deberan ser enviadas 48 horas antes de la reunion.

5. Public Participation – Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in person and remote participation at the Hope Cemetery Commission meetings. To partake in the “Public Participation” section of this meeting, you may join us directly within the 50 Officer Manny Familia Way Meeting Room A, follow the information above to join via the WebEx application or dial the direct line as indicated. If you would like to raise your hand when in the meeting as a call-in user, you may dial *3.

6. Assistant Commissioners Report (See Report Topics Below)

7. Old Business

a. Garden Cemetery Concepts

- i. There was a discussion about research done on what a Garden Cemetery Concepts are, the opinion was that it was not realistic, with fountains and marble streets, that the more realistic option would be bushes and flowers.
- ii. There was also discussion about planting trees in areas that currently don't have graves, and maybe plant some shrubbery. It was also discussed that best case scenario would be some tree planting.
- iii. The Cemetery staff was congratulated for the hard work to make the Cemetery look beautiful for Memorial Day.
- iv. There was a discussion about having a 5-year plan and the funding, priority being the maintenance area. There was a request to add the top 5 projects for the following meeting.

b. Green Burials

- i. Commissioner Curewitz reported that he has tried to reach out to state reps and has a meeting. He will update once information is available.

c. Overview of the Hope Cemetery Master Plan

- i. There was a copy of the 2017 Master Plan Copy. Will keep on the agenda and will discuss at the next meeting.

d. Burial Process Policy

8. New Business

9. Date of Next Meeting:

- September 11, 2023 (At Hope Cemetery – Tentative)
- September 25, 2023 (New Date)
- November 6, 2023
- December 4, 2023
- January 8, 2024
- February 5, 2024
- March 4, 2024
- April 8, 2024
- May 13, 2024
- June 3, 2024

8. Meeting Adjourned (Roll Call)

Commissioner Faucher made a motion to adjourn. Second by Commissioner Lizotte. All were in favor. Motion to adjourn was approved 4 – 0. Meeting was adjourned at 4:29 PM.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

1. Friends Of Hope Cemetery -
 - a. Signage
 - b. Cemetery Plantings
 - c. Events
 - d. Sound System
 - e. Mausoleum
 - Friends of Hope Cemetery were not able to attend, no updates available.
2. Genealogical - NA
3. Compost Site - NA
4. Water System - NA
5. Hope Cemetery Records - NA
6. Perpetual Care Fund – City Treasurer - NA
7. Rules and Regulation Changes - NA
8. Lot Sale Fee Changes - NA
9. Interment & Associated Fees - NA
10. Fiscal Year Budget -
 - a. Documents of the operating budget were included in the package they have been tentatively approved. There were no changes or additions.
11. Fiscal Year Capital Budget -
 - a. There was no funding allocated for the Cemetery on the upcoming fiscal year. There was discussion about equipment. However, Hope Cemetery will be getting a new dump truck. There was also a discussion about the barn and its safety. They also discussed the computer program (HMIS) at the Cemetery, the possibility of getting a new system and the funding for it.
12. Donations NA
13. Monuments and Mausoleums - NA
 - a. Discussion on new cremation burial options
14. Section Development -
 - a. Section 39 Possible Columbarium NA
 - Location – See Master Plan on the City Web Site
 - RFP
 - Design
 - Timeline
15. Building Rehab - NA
 - a. Barn
 - Reports – Submitted by the Friends of Hope Cemetery (2-10, 2007)
 - Grants
 - Historical Commission
 - Plans of storage
 - b. Admin

16. Condition of Hope – NA
 - a. Sheriff's Community Outreach Program
17. Hope Cemetery Master Plan Approved by City Council 10-10-17
 - a. [City Parks | City of Worcester, MA \(worcesterma.gov\)](http://www.worcesterma.gov/city-parks)
18. Misc. -
 - a. Productivity Reports
 - b. Staff
 - c. City Council Orders
 - NA
 - d. Articles
 - e. Other



HOPE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday May 8, 2023 – 4:00 P.M.

Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office

Meeting Room A

50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

If you choose to use the WebEx platform:

- 1) Go to www.webex.com
- 2) Click the "join" button on the top right side of the screen
- 3) Enter Meeting ID#: 2301 501 0316
- 4) Enter password: Hopecomm5-8

If you choose to attend via phone:

- 1) Call 1-415-655-0001
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 2301 501 0316

AGENDA

1. Call to Order – Meeting was called to order at 4:07 PM
2. Attendance (Roll Call) – Commissioners Present were:
 - a. Commissioner Curewitz
 - b. Commissioner Deedy
 - c. Commissioner Faucher
 - d. Fatima Idris – Present later into the meeting
3. Acceptance of Minutes for the March 6, 2023 – Commissioner Faucher made a motion to accept the minutes. Second by Commissioner Deedy. All were in favor. Motion was approved 3 – 0.
 - a. Minutes for April 10, 2023, were tabled
4. To request a reasonable accommodation or interpretation or submit written comments or questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Hope Cemetery by email at Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Please note that interpretation requests must be received no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Para solicitar una interpretacion razonable, o enviar comentarios o preguntas por escrito por favor comuniquese con la oficina de la Division de Parques, Recreo & Cementerio por correo electronico a Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Por favor note que las solicitudes de interpretacion deberan ser enviadas 48 horas antes de la reunion.

5. **Public Participation – Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in person and remote participation at the Hope Cemetery Commission meetings. To partake in the “Public Participation” section of this meeting, you may join us directly within the 50 Officer Manny Familia Way Meeting Room A, follow the information above to join via the WebEx application or dial the direct line as indicated. If you would like to raise your hand when in the meeting as a call-in user, you may dial *3.**

6. **Assistant Commissioners Report (See Report Topics Below)**

7. **Old Business**
 - a. **Garden Cemetery Concepts –**
 - i. **There were no discussions, questions, or concerns about Garden Cemetery Concepts.**
 - b. **Green Burials**
 - i. **There was a discussion about a State House Bill, and there were a couple of questions about the Green Burial process, and the different types of burial choices.**
 - c. **Overview of the Hope Cemetery Master Plan**
 - d. **Updated Hope Cemetery Map – Updated**
 - i. **There were no questions about the map**
 - e. **Burial Process Policy - Tabled**

8. **New Business**
 - a. **Hope Records**
 - b. **Barn**
 1. **Commissioner Faucher asked about the barn and if the city had a structural engineer access it. Assistant Commissioner reported that a structural engineer did review the barn and that there were some modifications done to the interior as necessary. There was further discussion about what the barn is being used for, the condition of the building, issues that have been addressed, as well as funding.**
 - ii. **Reports – Submitted by the Friends of Hope Cemetery (2-10, 2007)**
 - iii. **Grants**
 1. **Grant have not been done.**
 - iv. **Historical Commission**
 1. **Hope Cemetery is on the National Register of Historical places/buildings.**
 - v. **Plans of storage**
 1. **The plan is to try to find or build a storage for the larger equipment first.**
- c. **Columbarium**
 - i. **Location – See Master Plan on the City Web Site**
 1. **Locations can be found in the Master Plan on the City’s Website.**

- ii. RFP
- iii. Design
- iv. Timeline

1. A decision was made that the security, roadway repairs, and water were more important items because they affected the regular use of the Cemetery. The Columbarium is still in the docket for review, but it has not been funded, and there is another phase of improvements on area 2 & 3 as you come down Hope Ave. There is no current timeline.

d. Master Plan

- i. Review of Finding – Plan located on the City Web Site
- ii. Review of Recommendations - Plan located on the City Web Site
 - 1. There was discussion about the Master Plan and areas that need attention. Using a different species of trees. The idea of focusing on one thing per year and what the focus may be for 2024. The fact that there isn't any Capital funding for Hope Cemetery for 2024. The goal is to get a support building to store equipment.
- iii. Sheriff's Community Outreach Program
 - 1. The city has not reached out to the Sheriff's Community Outreach Program for the Cemetery.
- iv. Capital priorities – No funding identified for Hope Cemetery for this fiscal year.
- v. Commissioner Curewitz requested all the above items be moved to the Assistant Commissioner Report.

9. Date of Next Meeting:

- June 5, 2023
- September 11, 2023
- October 2, 2023
- November 6, 2023
- December 4, 2023
- January 8, 2024
- February 5, 2024
- March 4, 2024
- April 8, 2024
- May 13, 2024
- June 3, 2024

8. Meeting Adjourned (Roll Call) –

Commissioner Idris made a motion to adjourn. Second by Commissioner Faucher. All were in favor. Motion was approved 3 – 0 – Meeting was adjourned at 5:04 PM.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

1. Friends Of Hope Cemetery -
 - a. Signage
 - b. Cemetery Plantings
 - c. Events
 - d. Sound System
 - e. Mausoleum
 - Assistant Commissioner Antonelli asked Janet Parent from the Friends of Hope Cemetery to speak and give an update.
 - Ms. Parent said that last year all street signs were replaced. She added that they fertilize and spray the dogwood, fertilize dozens of trees and hundreds of flowers. They do walks and talks, the weekend before Memorial Day they offer free coffee and donuts. Ms. Parent discussed other things the Friends of Cemetery does. There weren't any further questions.
2. Genealogical - NA
3. Compost Site - NA
4. Water System - NA
5. Hope Cemetery Records - NA
6. Perpetual Care Fund – City Treasurer - NA
7. Rules and Regulation Changes - NA
8. Lot Sale Fee Changes - NA
9. Interment & Associated Fees -
 - a. Assistant Commissioner Antonelli gave an update on Internment Fees, current & future fees, as well as other associated fees, and other cemeteries fees in comparison.
 - b. There were various discussions and questions regarding the fee increases, different types of fees and what they were for.
 - c. Commissioner Deedy made a motion to accept the Interment and & Associated Fees. Second by Commissioner Faucher. All were in Favor. Motion was approved 4 – 0.
10. Fiscal Year Budget -
 - a. Assistant Commissioner Antonelli discussed the new fiscal year budget
11. Fiscal Year Capital Budget - NA
12. Donations - NA
13. Monuments and Mausoleums - NA
 - a. Discussion on new cremation burial options
14. Section Development -
 - a. Section 39 Possible Columbarium - NA
15. Building Rehab - NA
 - a. Barn
 - b. Admin
16. Condition of Hope –
 - a. There were no discussions, questions, or concerns about the condition of Hope Cemetery.
17. Hope Cemetery Master Plan - Approved by City Council 10-10-17
 - a. [City Parks | City of Worcester, MA \(worcesterma.gov\)](http://www.worcesterma.gov)
18. Misc. -
 - a. Productivity Reports
 - b. Staff

- c. City Council Orders
 - NA
- d. Articles
- e. Other

December 5, 2023

Commissioner Jay J. Fink P.E.
D.P.W. & Parks Department
20 East Worcester Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01604

Mr. Commissioner,

The members of the Hope Cemetery Commission request that you prioritize the funding of the preliminary steps leading to the replacement or renovation of the maintenance facility for Hope Cemetery. As I'm sure you are aware the barn is in a terrible state of disrepair and pose not only a safety concern for the employees but no longer meets the needs of the cemetery in the twenty-first century. The barn was constructed in 1882 when the cemetery was maintained utilizing horse drawn mowers as evidenced by the hay loft on the top floor.

This project has been discussed by this commission for close to twenty years. There was a Conditions and Treatment Report done for the barn in 2007. This report discusses the deficiencies observed and the steps needed to restore the building to its original beauty and functionality. There have been some structural repairs performed in the years since the report, these repairs have mostly been stop-gap measures to put off the inevitable replacement. With the exception of the structural repairs very little has been done in the way of maintenance. At the time of the study and report it was the opinion of the Commission that renovation of the building would not be cost effective and would not meet the required needs of the cemetery going forward. In the 2018 Hope Cemetery Master Plan it was recommended by the consultants that the barn be demolished, and a new multi-story maintenance facility be built in its place.

The Commission realizes that there may be some obstacles to the demolition of the barn structure. In 1997 Hope Cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places with specific reference to the barn. The barn has also been on Preservation Worcester's most endangered structures list since 2005. The Commission does not feel that these obstacles are insurmountable. We welcome a dialog with all interested parties.

The Commission appreciates your attention to our request. We feel the time has come to take steps to move this much anticipated project forward.

Sincerely,

Matthew Curewitz
Chairman Hope Cemetery Commission

cc. Asst. D.P.W.& P Commissioner Rob Antonelli,
Cemetery Commissioner Fatima Idris
Cemetery Commissioner Andrew Lizotte
Cemetery Commissioner John Deedy
Cemetery Commissioner Christopher Faucher

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

1. Friends Of Hope Cemetery - Update
 - a. Signage
 - b. Cemetery Plantings
 - c. Events
 - d. Sound System
 - e. Mausoleum
2. Genealogical - NA
3. Compost Site - NA
4. Water System - NA
5. Hope Cemetery Records - NA
6. Perpetual Care Fund – City Treasurer - NA
7. Rules and Regulation Changes - NA
8. Lot Sale Fee Changes - NA
9. Interment & Associated Fees - NA
10. Fiscal Year Budget - NA
11. Fiscal Year Capital Budget - NA
12. Donations - NA
13. Monuments and Mausoleums - NA
 - a. Discussion on new cremation burial options
14. Section Development -
 - a. Section 39 Possible Columbarium NA
 - Location – See Master Plan on the City Web Site
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18. Misc. -
 - a. Productivity Reports
 - b. Staff
 - c. City Council Orders
 - NA
 - d. Articles
 - e. Other

