

DRAFT Minutes of Meeting June 15, 2011

Middletown Police Station

In Attendance: Lester Hilton, Henry Duquette, Pegee Malcolm, Alan Clarke, Evelyn Wheeler, Judith Fardig, Sally Small, Letty Champion, Robert Butler, Lee Teverow, Paul Robinson

Excused Absences: Dory Wagner, David Kirchner, Roger Guilemette

Additional Attendee: Jacob Beach (Intern)

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Wheeler

Introduction of Draft April 20, 2011 Minutes

- 11 – 0 to accept minutes as written**

Old Business:

- 1. Evelyn's report on GPS: Approximately 2800 are done; Updated version ready this week; Alan Clarke offered to donate a GPS unit and**

URI has some units to use as well

2. Henry's report on Web Committee: Committee voted to seek a new web developer; Would like to work on developing a web-based version using John Sterling's full Access DB; Rick Whitesell offered to donate \$1,000.00 towards development and hosting of the website; Evelyn will write a letter to Ken Rahn thanking him for all his time and assistance

3. Evelyn's report on signs: DOT has \$2,000.00 that can be used for signs, but the money must be used by June 30th; Evelyn has submitted 3 batches of sign requests to date but has not heard back as of yet; The hope is to have \$20,000 in the next fiscal year's budget for signs.

4. Who owns a cemetery: There's a case in North Kingstown of a descendant who wants access to a cemetery where there is a right of way – the landowner refused and the town has recommended that the descendant hire a lawyer; Many landowners don't understand what "right of way" means; Johnston is seeking permission from the legislature to put \$500,000 from its Perpetual Care Fund into the General fund to help with their fiscal crisis

New Business:

1. Bruce Frail's presented information on Major Sullivan Ballou

Camp #3, Department of Rhode Island, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Gold Star Cemetery Marker Project. The Markers were developed to hang from the base of the cemetery sign, and provide information on the back regarding the soldiers who are buried at the cemetery (or where to get that information). In addition, a website will be maintained that will provide information on each soldier, organized by cemetery. This project will ultimately mark every cemetery within the borders of Coventry, Rhode Island that has a veteran of the American Civil War buried there. In addition, a new flag holder with a card holder and Gold Star card can be ordered for individual veterans. The website is <http://americancivilwarancestor.webs.com/goldstarcemeteryproj.htm> and the informational sheet provided by Bruce Frail is attached.

2. Nominees for office:

Peggy Malcolm for Chair

Henry Duquette for Vice-Chair

Nominations needed for Secretary position as well

3. Paul Robinson's presentation on a cemetery found in Foster: A land-owner was digging holes to set poles for a barn and broke through what appeared to be a grave shaft. The Foster Police and state Medical Examiner were called in and determined that the site

was not a crime scene. RIHPHC was called in and determined that there were at least two graves there. A small prayer ceremony was conducted, and the cemetery will be noted on the Tax Plat map. The owner is going to put up a fence surrounding the area.

4. Evelyn's report on bill in General Assembly: The bill initially passed both the House and the Senate, but an amendment was made in the House before the bill passed. The amended bill now needs to be reintroduced in the Senate before it becomes law.

5. Next year's meeting schedule:

September 21st: Warwick City Hall

November 16th: Bristol Veterans' Home?

April 18th: West Greenwich Town Hall or Library

June 20th: East Greenwich

6. Member updates/comments

a. Chair Wheeler: The new law opens up the Commission's ability to advise (it no longer specifies to the General Assembly), and asked if the Commission should consider advising on some DOT projects if the Commission is concerned

b. Henry Duquette: A landowner from North Smithfield notified the town of a cemetery that he had found (24 years ago) because someone had dug a large hole in front of one of the stones. There are 10 marked burials in there, and one of the fieldstones is marked with four letters [RSJC?] from 1851. Burrillville is going to start using folks sentenced to community service to aid in cleaning up Burrillville cemeteries.

c. Sally Small: The restoration team is coming to Prince's Hill cemetery again the third week of August

d. Alan Clarke: Discussion of cemeteries that need signs

Respectfully submitted by Emily Corbett, Secretary