

**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
COMMITTEE FOR CEMETERIES**



**PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2025
1 JUNKINS AVENUE, PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801**

For the Zoom recording:
<https://youtu.be/qmAVWWcmHf8>

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call:

Attending: Dee Dee Forte, Peter Splaine, Celeste Brooks, Steve Buzzell, Mike Griffin, Sue Polidura, Corin Hallowell. Staff: Stephanie Seacord (recording secretary)

2. Approval of the Minutes of the September 4, 2025 Cemetery Committee Meeting on a motion by Peter, seconded by Celeste.

3. Point of Graves wall and trees update – Corin

DPW held a meeting including the City Engineer to create a Capital Improvement Program element (project) sheet to move forward in hiring a design engineer. Repairing a section of the wall is not preferred over replacing the whole wall as historically-accurately as possible. The results including estimates from the design process will determine how the City proceeds.

Corin also reported that City Arborist Max Wiater had lifted the tree limbs at the turnstile that were impeding access.

4. Potential 2026 DPW coordinated projects

- Union Cemetery wrought iron repair and fence straightening – Dee is providing photographs to Peter Hapny who would be able to repair or replace the needed pieces, but would not be able to reinstall.
- Wendell Tomb preservation – Dee has contacted the mason who did the Treadwell Mansion wall reconstruction, as recommended by Mike Griffin. As there is no anticipated excavation to repair the tomb exterior, an archaeologist is not expected to be needed. The mason will evaluate repair and stopping leaks into the tomb.

5. Hall Cemetery headstone straightening update – Steve presented a detailed report, with photos, of his efforts. Attached. Corin suggested putting the images on the Committee/historic cemetery city webpages and potentially reporting to City Council.

Dee is meeting with the UNH LIDAR expert (Alexander Garcia Putnam) for followup on the yellow fever gravesite investigations at North Cemetery on Saturday, October 4 at 10 am. She will ask about using ground penetrating radar

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to see if there are more buried pieces or child headstones at Hall Cemetery.

6. Sons of the American Revolution ceremony on Sep 13 – Sue attended and provided photos to add to Committee/historic cemetery city webpages.

Stephanie reported that the NH Commission for America 250 has launched a website with calendar for any related events, programs, exhibits that are being planned around the state, It is NewHampshire250.org Strawberry Banke, Portsmouth Historical Society, Portsmouth Historic Sites Associates and others have attended the NH Historical Society/NH Humanities meetings about the 250th. The Heritage Museum Trail, of which the former are members, is planning “What does the Declaration mean now?” programming.

7. October tours at North Cemetery – Dee will follow up with Emma Stratton at Portsmouth Historical to determine when the Committee might join a tour.
8. New Business
 - Green Burial program at South Church on October 29 at 3 pm.
 - Committee membership and terms – Dee will connect with City Clerk Kelli Barnaby to learn more about the terms for the committee members. The City Council is scheduled to vote on the appointment of new applicant Brighid “Briggs” Brady at their meeting on Monday, October 6.
9. Public Comment -- none
10. Adjournment at 4:44 pm on a motion by Peter Splaine, seconded by Sue Polidura.