

Delaware First State Cemetery Association
May 23, 2023
Minutes

A meeting of the Delaware First State Cemetery Association was held at Holy Cross Early Learning Center in Dover, Delaware on May 23, 2023. President Len Dornberger called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Len introduced the two other board members in attendance - Lou Ottaviano, Vice President and Jim Frazier, Secretary/Treasurer. Those members and guests in attendance then introduced themselves. Len then asked attendees to submit their ideas for future topics on the papers on each table.

The minutes from the last meeting on April 12, 2022 were then presented. Motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Jim Frazier then gave the Treasurer's report. The balance in the association checking account as of May 1, 2023 was \$4,323.89. Over the last year:

> Payment of \$540.00 to Lang Design for website upgrade to WordPress.

>Payment of \$225.00 to Lang Design for annual website hosting.

>Payment of \$25.00 to DE Department of State for annual franchise tax report.

Electronic Form 990N was submitted to the IRS in January 2023. Nineteen (19) memberships are paid and up-to-date. Notifications were sent out with the meeting notice.

Motion made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried.

Delaware Cemetery Board – Due to Mark Christian's absence, Len gave an overview of this State-funded program. He reviewed the background of the Board, types of projects funded, the application

process and the approval process. During the last year, only \$58,000 of the available \$100,000 has been distributed, primarily because of the lack of applications. (Note: Len Dornberger serves on both DFSCA and DCB.)

Money for the fund comes from a \$2.00 fee included with the issuance of every death certificate in the State. Program was originally championed by State Senator Margaret Rose Henry. The Board holds four meetings a year and their application is available online at <https://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/hp/DECB.html>

Discussion moved to new legislation (House Bill 162, sponsored by Representative Sean Lynn) regarding the issue of human remains, green burials, natural burials and human composting. (Ed. Note: At the end of the General Assembly session on June 30, 2023 the bill was still awaiting action by the House of Representatives.) Disbelief was expressed that the sponsor of this legislation never reached out to any cemetery management to solicit input.

Addition to DFSCA By-Laws

A proposal was put forth to add another membership category to our current designations – Former Member – with annual fee of \$25.00. Motion made and seconded to do so. Motion carried.

Board Members

Len Dornberger, Lou Ottaviani and Jim Frazier have all agreed to continue in their roles for another two-year term. It was suggested that we add some other members to the Board. Two names were offered from the floor – Janie Miller from Union Wesley Cemetery and Louis Cicalese of Odd Fellows/Camden. Motion made and seconded. Motion carried.

Membership and Attendance

Of the 33 registered cemeteries back in 2022, only 12 made reservations back in October 2022, and that included the 3 Board members, so a decision was made to cancel the meeting. Is this still a viable group? Today's attendance is encouraging.

General Questions and Discussion

Discussion turned to meeting format. Would adding the capability of online participation be beneficial? We can research further. Should we increase meetings from two per year to more? Would a session on ground penetrating radar be helpful? Discussion on various management structures of the attendees' cemeteries. DFSCA is primarily an information sharing organization.

Volunteer help is currently calculated at \$28.00 per hour and these hours can be submitted as a cemetery's cost-share for the 50/50 match requirement from the Delaware Cemetery Board.

Cemeteries that are decades old could possibly be broken into yearly segments for ongoing funding, making submission and completion more manageable.

Funeral directors can be located and verified through the licensing search function accessible via the DE Division of Professional Regulation's website.

Many of our cemetery records are older and hand-written, sometimes making it unclear as to which spaces are occupied/unoccupied. Record-keeping begins at the master map.

Surface stone markers are not as popular as monuments or headstones. Cemeteries are forever; plan beyond your time.

There being no further business to discuss, on a motion made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 11:54 p.m. Lunch was then served. President Dornberger reminded everyone that the next DFSCA meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 19, 2023 at 10:30 a.m., again in the Holy Cross Early Learning Center.

Respectfully Submitted,

James Frazier
Secretary/Treasurer

Attendance Roster

NAME	CEMETERY / VENDOR
Jennings Hastings	Glenwood Cemetery
Heather Ennis	Old Drawyer's Cemetery
Frank Littleton	Odd Fellows Cemetery - Laurel
Janie Miller	Union Wesley UM Church Cemetery
Emmett Smith	Mt Zion UAME Church Cemetery
R. Thomas Worley	Old Presbyterian Cemetery - Dover
Michael McGrath	Old Union Church Society
Faith Kuehn	DHSS - Holloway Campus
Tina Geist	St James Episcopal Church -Newport
George McDowell	St James Episcopal Church -Newport
Raymond DePasquale	Camden Odd Fellows Cemetery
Louis Cicalese	Sharon Hills Memorial Park
Mike Carvin	Smyrna Odd Fellows Cemetery
Cindy Davis	Newark Union Church & Cemetery
Anne Daly	Newark Union Church & Cemetery
Amanda McAtee	Division of Research - Legislative Hall
Brad Dennehy	Milford Community Cemetery
Joann DellAversano	St Peter (New Castle); St Paul (Delaware City)
Carmen Hardcastle	Whatcoat United Methodist Church
Michael Early	Merestone Consultants
Don Esch	Merestone Consultants
Melissa Morri	St Joseph on the Brandywine
Lou Ottaviano	Sharon Hills / Odd Fellows
James Frazier	Barratt's Chapel Cemetery
Len Dornberger	Holy Cross Cemetery