

STAFF REPORT

AGENDA ITEM #: 19-06
COUNCIL MTG OF: February 5, 2019
FROM: D. Caron, Town Administrator
OFFERED BY: M. Fowler, Public Works Director
PREPARED BY: M. Fowler, Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Cemetery Trustees – Non-resident Cremation Plot Purchase - Exemption Request

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to request approval by the Town Council for the sale of a cremation lot to a non-resident.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS:

The Town Council is encouraged to adopt Resolution #2019-002.

BACKGROUND

The Forest Hill Cemetery Policies and Procedures document, as adopted by Town Council states, "Burial lots shall be sold exclusively to current residents of the Town of Derry; however, exceptions may be granted and/or reviewed by the Cemetery Trustees." As noted in the attached letter, Ms. Houston is a not a current resident of Derry, making her ineligible to purchase a cremation plot unless an exemption is granted.

DISCUSSION

The general rationale behind restricting lot sales to residents stems from a period prior to 2007 when the cemetery was running out of available plots. At one point, there were under 100 plots available for sale. A major expansion in 2007/2008 added capacity for approximately 1500 additional burial plots. This provision has remained in effect without any change to the policy.

Requests for non-resident plot purchases are very infrequent. The most recent request was approved in 2017. Since 2007, there have been three approved exemption requests for plot purchases. In those cases, past residency and/or property ownership within Derry were cited as supporting reasons to approve the exemption.

Ms. Houston states she is a Derry native and attended Pinkerton Academy. She also states that she is a 20-year U.S. Navy veteran and she shares ownership in a property in Derry located at 39 Island Pond Road.

FISCAL IMPACT

If the exemption is granted, the regular fees adopted by Town Council for a cremation plot would be collected at the point of sale.

RECOMMENDED ACTION BY COUNCIL

Staff recommends that the Town Council (acting as Cemetery Trustees) approve this exemption based on past precedent of permitting non-residents with some past residency history to purchase a plot.

RECOMMENDED MOTIONS

See Attached Resolution #2019-002.