

Emanuel Cemetery Committee

Annual Report

July 1, 2021 through June 20, 2022

Opening Remarks:

The Emanuel Cemetery Committee members feel that the cemetery is running well. Yes, there are problems and complaints and we are working hard to resolve these issues and trying to find measures to prevent them from recurring (see “Cemetery Problem Resolution Form” below). Please read through this report to see what we are confronted with in managing the cemetery. Also see for yourselves by visiting the cemetery and see how good the cemetery’s overall appearance looks (grounds, the chapel building and monuments).

Emanuel Synagogue Cemetery, 1361 Berlin Turnpike, Wethersfield, CT:

-Established 1921

-44 acres (33 acres are woods)

-Chapel building on cemetery grounds

-About 3,400 graves

-For the last five years, there were 24 to 31 burials per year (See “Emanuel Cemetery Funerals” below).

Note: The Emanuel Cemetery, like all Connecticut cemeteries, are governed by state and town laws.

Emanuel Cemetery Funerals:

Emanuel Cemetery Funerals are the number one priority and responsibility of the Emanuel Cemetery Committee:

-July 1, 2021 thru June 20, 2022: 23 funerals

-July 1, 2020 thru June 30, 2021: 24 funerals

-July 1, 2019 thru June 30, 2020: 31 funerals

-July 1, 2018 thru June 30, 2019: 29 funerals

-July 1, 2017 thru June 30, 2018: 29 funerals

NOTE: One or two members from the Cemetery Committee attend each funeral.

NOTE: When each grave is dug, we verify the grave location before each funeral.

Please note, in managing funerals this year, we interacted with:

-Four different funeral homes (Weinstein Mortuary, Hebrew Funeral Association (Len Holtz), Ascher-Zimmerman Funeral Home, Springfield, MA and Gallagher Sholom Chapel (Stamford, CT)

-Seven Rabbis (Small, Pincus, Rosen, Kosofsky, Pleasant, Gopin and Wiederhom)

-The deceased families

-US Cemetery LLC (Grave diggers)

Note: The Emanuel Cemetery funerals are the primary responsibility of the Cemetery Administrator with the Cemetery Chairperson as her backup.

Emanuel Synagogue Cemetery Committee Members:

Judy Brown, Joyce Flescher, Meyer Frankel, Alan Goodman, Peter Graber-Lipperman, Faith Helene, Peter Mehlman, Don Miller, Joanne Pasternack, Jeff Rudolph, Jay Smith

Chairperson Meyer Frankel (Since 01-01-18)

Note: The Cemetery Chairperson is now reporting to the Synagogue's Executive Director. For the past several years the Cemetery Chairperson was reporting to the President of the Synagogue.

-Cemetery Administrator Position: In November 2021, Kobi Benita (Executive Director) announced that we hired **Karen Piacenta**, starting December 1, 2021 replacing Jeff Rudolph who retired from this position after 12 years of service. Karen reports to **Meyer Frankel (Cemetery Chairperson)**.

Note: The Cemetery Administrator is a Synagogue employee that is paid from cemetery funds.

Annual Service at the Cemetery was held September 17, 2021. This year the services will be held Sunday Oct. 2, 2022 (The Sunday between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur).

Note: We hire a company to place speakers throughout the cemetery so that attendees can be next to their deceased's graves and be able to hear the Rabbi and Cantor conduct the service.

Cost: \$600

Lead: Meyer Frankel / Peter Mehlman

Cemetery Problem Resolution Forms:

To keep track and document all cemetery calls, complaints, questions, issues

Status: Ongoing project where each month a summary report of all cemetery issues is published.

Lead: Cemetery Administrator Karen Piacenta

Note: Since November 2021, we have been averaging 9 to 15 issues per month concerning the cemetery. All cemetery issues are documented and the proper people are notified.

Cemetery Repairs/Replacements:

NOTE: The Cemetery Committee is working with the Synagogue's House Committee (Howard Smith, Rick Lasker, Alan Goodman) on most of the repairs/replacements to the cemetery. The costs were determined by the House Committee with the approval of the Cemetery Committee Chairperson. The following is a status of the cemetery repairs/replacements:

NOTE: The Cemetery Committee has been working on most of the projects listed below for 2 to 3 years. Because of Covid and the lack of availability of products, a 2-to-3-year delay in was caused completing these projects.

1. The replacement of the cemetery stairs (across the road from the chapel building) and the repairs to the cemetery entrance gate (stone wall).

Contractor: R & J Home Improvements LLC (Ricardo Mariqueo, West Hartford, CT)

-Status: Work completed August 2021 Cost = \$5,200

-Lead: Peter Mehlman

2. New insulated chapel windows: Installed four windows in the chapel and one window in the chapel bathroom.

Contractor: Chase Glass Company Inc, East Hartford, CT

-Status: Work completed September 2021 Cost = \$5,900.

Note: The windows in the chapel were metal. To install insulated windows required new window frames to be constructed.

-Lead: Rick Lasker

3. Painting the cemetery flag poll and replacing the US Flag

Contractor: "Flagman of America," Avon, CT.

Status: Work completed October 2021 Cost = \$1,484.

New Flag (Based on the proper flag size for a 50-foot flag pole) Cost = \$85

-Lead: Rick Lasker

4. Replacing outside (four) doors of the chapel building with insulated doors

Contractor: "BMR Enterprises" Bloomfield, CT Cost \$5,700

Status: Completed February/March 2022

-Lead: Rick Lasker/Karen Piacenta

5. Chapel ceiling damage due to water leaking from upstairs/roof.

Contractor: 'Dzen Sheet Metal" East Hartford, CT Cost = \$185

Status: Pending

-Lead: Rick Lasker/Karen Piacenta

6. Repairs to the Cemetery's Entrance Gate

Contractor: 'Dzen Sheet Metal" East Hartford, CT Cost = \$650

Status: Pending

-Lead: Rick Lasker/Karen Piacenta

Cemetery Projects in Progress:

Power Washing Cemetery Monuments

Note: Moss is growing on many cemetery tombstones and they are starting to look ugly. We plan to power wash the cemetery monuments by cemetery sections.

Contractor: US Cemetery LLC.

Status: In Progress

Section 1 of the cemetery (across from the chapel building) has been completed (June 2022).

Next Sections 2, 3 and 7 are scheduled to be completed at end of June 2022.

Project Target Date: TBD. It may be best to spread the cost of power washing of all cemetery grave markers over a period of time (1, 2 or 3 years).

Lead: Karen Piacenta

Reverification of Cemetery Records

Cemetery Committee members will again walk the cemetery matching monument notations (names, dates and locations) with cemetery records to ensure accuracy.

Status: In Progress. Section C completed.

Project Target Date: October 1, 2022.

Lead: Jeff Rudolph / Karen Piacenta

Placing photographs of all cemetery monuments on the free App “Find A Grave”

Cemetery Committee members and volunteers will go to the cemetery and photograph and then place the photos and Emanuel Cemetery grave locations onto ‘Find A Grave.’

Status: In Progress. About 2,500 of 3,400 monuments are on “Find A Grave”

Project Target Date: October 1, 2022.

Lead: Jeff Rudolph / Peter Graber-Lipperman / Meyer Frankel

Search for Cemetery Financial Broker to help manage the cemetery’s investments:

The Cemetery Committee plans to meet with:

-**Jewish Committee Federation’s** Kathryn Gonnerman

-**Stifel’s** Mark Hammond (Manages JCSO’s investments)

-**Fidelity Investments.**

Status: In Progress.

Project Target Date: TBD.

Lead: Michael Kamins / Meyer Frankel

New Three-year Contract with US Cemetery LLC and Emanuel Cemetery

Status: In Progress.

Project Target Date: July 1, 2022

Lead: Karen Piacenta / Meyer Frankel / Alan Goodman

Search for Cemetery Computer Software Facility that best fits the Emanuel Cemetery’s needs.

We investigated two software packages with a product demo and cost estimates:

-**CemSites software:** Cost \$17K to \$20K upfront cost and \$1,500 per month service fee.

-**ShulCloud’s Cemetery Portal.**

Note: Since the Emanuel Synagogue has purchased ShulCloud’s Synagogue Management Facility the ShulCloud’s Cemetery Portal is included in the product. Therefore, the cost of the cemetery portal to the Emanuel Cemetery is \$0.

ShulCloud’s Cemetery Portal: Cost is \$0.

Status: In Progress.

Project Target Date: TBD.

Lead: Meyer Frankel / Don Miller / Alan Goodman

Submitted by,

Meyer Frankel

Emanuel Cemetery Committee Chairperson