

**The following are the highlights of the April 20, 2022 cemetery weekly zoom meeting:**

**Date:** April 20, 2022

**Time:** 10 AM

**Duration:** One Hour

**Attendees:** Karen Piacenta, Meyer Frankel, Joanne Pasternack, Peter Mehlman

**AND**

**The following are the highlights of the April 27, 2022 cemetery weekly zoom meeting:**

**Date:** April 27, 2022

**Time:** 10 AM

**Duration:** One Hour

**Attendees:** Karen Piacenta, Meyer Frankel, Jeff Rudolf, Don Miller, Jay Smith

## **Topics:**

### **1. Legal separation: Emanuel Cemetery from the Synagogue.**

Joanne stated that this issue was brought up about 10-15 years ago where **this separation protects both entities from being liable from one entity being sued.**

Meyer stated that he asked other members of the Cemetery Committee and other Synagogue members about this proposed legal separation and most seemed to be in favor of it. **But others were not:**

A. Don Miller was very opposed to it stating this was reviewed many years ago and it went nowhere because it was found that it does not quite give the legal protections that it proposes.

B. There are reasons why the synagogue and the cemetery were one entity when Synagogue/Cemetery was first established.

C. Separation would be a very costly (lawyers) and lengthy process.

D. People do not want or like "change," stating things worked well for 100 years, why make a change now.

This topic will be presented at the next full cemetery committee meeting where all/most members would be attending.

**Note: This issue was brought to the forefront because of the recent issues confronting the Cemetery Committee (See #4 below).**

### **2. Search for a "Broker" for the Cemetery Investment Funds.**

#### **The Synagogue's March 23, 2022 Meeting with the JCF:**

**Attendees:** Michael Kamins, Ken Simon, Mickey Libbin, Alan Goodman, Meyer Frankel and JCF's Kathryn Gonnerman:

**Meeting's Objective: To see if Jewish Community Federation (JCF) should manage the Emanuel Cemetery investments and some of Emanuel Synagogue's investments.**

**The meeting's attendees decided that the Cemetery Committee must first review and then approve this proposal.**

At the next Cemetery monthly meeting, we will invite JCF's Kathryn Gonnerman as a guest speaker.

#### **Please note:**

At the above March 23, 2022 meeting:

-Since January 1, 2022, it was noted that the JCF funds lost 10% of its value or if the cemetery had invested in the JCF over that time, the cemetery would have lost over \$100,000.

-Over the last several weeks, the market suffered more losses.

-JCF charges a yearly fee of 1% of the value of the cemetery funds or \$10,000 per year.

-Meyer suggested that we explore other options before we decided to go with JCF. For example "Stifel" a broker used by JCSO, charges a yearly fee that is a lot less than JCF.

### **3. Power washing of cemetery monuments:**

**Moss is growing on the cemetery's monuments and things are starting to look ugly.**

We got bids from two companies that perform power washing MR. T's Power Wash INC and US Cemetery, LLC.

US Cemetery LLC was by far the lower bid.

We plan to engage US Cemetery, LLC to perform the power washing by cemetery sections:

Section 1 first (across from the chapel building). Then if all goes well, power wash three Sections 2, 3 and 7 all at the same time.

**Note:** The Emanuel Cemetery does not have a water source and **a water tanker would need to be hired.**

**Note:** The monuments facing North and East had severe moss problems and those monuments facing South and West had less or no moss problems.

**Note:** Power washing cemetery monuments have been discussed last year and at every Weekly Meeting since February 2022. **It was agreed at all these meetings that power washing cemetery monuments is something that must be done.**

### **4. Major issues confronting the Cemetery Committee:**

**A. In April 2022,** The Cemetery Administrator received a directive from the Executive Director that she was to take over and run the Synagogue's Yizkor Book. The Cemetery Chairperson sent a strongly worded note to the Executive Director stating that Karen was hired to work only on cemetery matters and that she reports directly to the Cemetery Committee Chairperson. Upon receiving this note, the Executive Director rescinded his directive.

**B. The unauthorized November 2021 deduction of \$3K from the cemetery account:**

**In November 2021, \$3,000** was taken from the Cemetery Account and placed into a Synagogue account. This was done **without notification or approval by the Cemetery Committee.**

**C. For the 2021-2022 fiscal budget, another \$3,000 is to be taken from the Cemetery**

**Account.** Again, without justification of the amount to be taken and without notification and permission from the Cemetery Committee.

**It was agreed that Meyer would request that the Synagogue Treasure and the Chairperson of the Finance Committee (creates the Synagogue budget):**

1. Why was the Cemetery Committee ignored?

2. How they took and how they plan to take money from the cemetery account without justification and without the approval of the Cemetery Committee.

3. Cemetery's goal is to not have the Cemetery Committee overlooked again and if the funds taken cannot be justified then all or most of these monies should be returned to the Cemetery Account.

**Note: It behooves the Emanuel Synagogue to preserve, protect and defend the cemetery funds. For in 20, 40 or 100 years from now the Emanuel Synagogue may not be a viable organization, but the Emanuel Cemetery will always be there.**

**Note: The Cemetery Committee is not like any Synagogue Committee simply because it is a cemetery and cemeteries are governed by state and town laws.** For example, burials and disinterment require town notifications (forms) filled out every month and the state requires cemeteries to have a **Perpetual Fund. The Perpetual Funds are the oversight of the State of CT.**

## **5. Arthur Silverman's Unveiling:**

Rabbi Silverman's son, Arthur (96 years old) died January 15, 2022 and the family wants to place a footstone in his memory in the Silverman family plot at the Emanuel Cemetery.

Generally, **the Cemetery Committee does not get involved with unveilings.** The family, a monument company and/or a Rabbi handles the unveiling. But the Silverman family asked us (Karen) for help (location of the plot and other miscellaneous questions). Karen has had several conversations with the family (Arthur's son Jonathan) and she plans to attend the Silverman unveiling in May 2022.

**Note:** Arthur Silverman was cremated and the family wanted to spread his cremains over the family plot. We told them that this is not allowed (Cremains) at the Emanuel Synagogue Cemetery.

## **6. Emanuel's chapel bathroom to be used by other funerals:**

**Requests were made to use the Emanuel's chapel bathroom by other synagogue's cemetery funerals (United Synagogue and Beth David).** The Cemetery Committee Chairperson said **no** to this because of Covid concerns and other reasons. This will be reviewed by the Cemetery Committee.

## **7. The popularity of the Weekly Committee Meetings:**

**These Cemetery Committee Weekly Zoom Meetings with Karen, Jeff and Meyer have become very popular with Cemetery Committee members and are preferred over nightly "full" cemetery meetings:**

- Scheduled to meet on Wednesdays at 10 AM for one hour.
- Maximum number of attendees is five committee members (only).
- Scheduled to meet 3 or 4 times per month.

**Most Committee Members have attended these weekly meetings at least 2 times.**

Meyer plans to reduce the "full" membership meetings from 4 to 5 times a year to 2 or 3 times a year on Wednesday night at 7:30 PM.

## **8. Other Cemetery Issues:**

### **A. Praises for The Emanuel Cemetery Committee**

Meyer has received emails and comments **on how well the cemetery is running** from many sources.

This is due in part to:

- Karen's monthly cemetery updates.
- Meyer's monthly "Consent" reports to the Board of Trustees (BOT).
- The popularity of the cemetery committee's weekly meetings.

### **B. The Cemetery's "Perpetual Fund"**

-Meyer has admitted that he is **not sure what cemetery costs are to be paid by the Perpetual Fund.** Soon a list of all cemetery costs will be presented, detailing which costs are for the "Perpetual Fund" and which costs are considered Operational.

-The **Perpetual Fund is funded by taking 25% of all monies from the sale of Cemetery Plots and placed into the Perpetual Fund,** but for the last 4 or 5 years this was not done.

**C. Cemetery vault covers** should have the name of the deceased on it.

**D. Memorial "Emblems"** to be placed on monuments of **Holocaust Survivors** and of **Veterans of US wars**