

BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS

The Board of Cemetery Commissioners herewith files our annual report of activities for the calendar year 2005, our 145th year of operation. We are grateful to have Robert Gardiner, Superintendent of Belmont Cemetery, working in partnership with the Board.

Highland Meadow Cemetery Activities

2005 was a momentous year. In June of 2005, McLean Hospital Corporation transferred to the Cemetery Commission of the Town of Belmont the ownership of 13.9 acres of land for use as the new public Highland Meadow Cemetery. While we awaited the transfer of land, the team from Halvorson Design Partnership completed the contract documents for their award-winning design. The construction of the project was bid in August, the contract awarded to Green Acres Landscape Company of Lakeville, Massachusetts. Groundbreaking for Highland Meadow Cemetery took place October 27, 2005 and proceeds on schedule as of this writing.

Our activities also included working with the Town's Telecommunications Committee to relocate the public safety/commercial communications tower out of the active phase 1 four acres of cemetery zone. We look forward to the final relocation of the Town's communications equipment so that the cemetery road development will not be impacted. Ongoing activities revolve around operations management, pricing and marketing. Lastly, our chairman has acted as our representative to the McLean Land Management Committee, which we believe has benefited both the cemetery and open space interests.

Belmont Cemetery Activities

Although new burial lots for traditional interments have not been available at Belmont Cemetery since 1988, 102 interments were made to existing plots in 2005 including 30 cremations. (This compares to 90 total in 2004, including 24 cremations). Of the 102 total, 53 (52%) of the interments were non-residents of the Town, to whom extra fees were assessed totaling \$15,900. Total fee receipts for the calendar year 2005 were \$103,820 up from \$90,075 in calendar 2004.

Staff and Organization

Belmont Cemetery continues to be a truly beautiful and pastoral place. We know that the expertise and dedication of our employees will create the same feeling at the new Highland Meadow Cemetery. We are deeply grateful for their attitude of compassion as well as for their expertise.

Progress against Goals

We are pleased to report the following progress against our goals for Fiscal Year 2006:

- **Acquire and develop land for a new cemetery.** Land deeded to Town June 2005. Construction now underway, planned opening summer of 2006.
- **Develop pricing structure and marketing brochure for Highland Meadow.** Pricing plan in final stages as of this writing. Marketing plan in progress. On schedule for sales in March 2006.
- **Continue to promote and improve the Annual Planting Program for individual lots that was established in 1997.** Program continues to thrive and enroll new participants.
- **Continue tree planting program originally established in 1996 and enhance landscape areas to beautify Belmont Cemetery.** Exploring cooperative funding opportunities with community organizations and community service hours for Belmont students.
- **Develop new ways to inspire and reward long-term employees and encourage newer employees to remain.** No staff turnover again this year. Opening of Highland Meadow will represent significant challenges to staff over the next year and we will continue to include them in operational decision-making.
- **Develop new revenue opportunities and identify cost-savings opportunities.** To date, we have not seen any cost savings attributable to the consolidation into a DPW. As we prepare to open a second location, we will be emphasizing efficiency of operations and employ strict cost controls on both labor and equipment and initiate new revenue programs.

Calendar Year 2005 Operational Statistics

Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 490,577
Interest Income from Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 18,743
Annual Planting Fund (includes H. Smith Fund)	\$ 72,996
Total Fee Receipts	\$ 103,820
Total Expense Budget Appropriation for FY2005	\$ 323,814
Actual Expended against FY2005 Appropriated Budget	\$ 308,303
Full Time Employees of Cemetery Division	4
Part Time Employees of Cemetery Division	1

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen O'Brien Cushman, Chairman

Charles R. Johnson and Alexander E. Corbett, III