

ONEIDA TRIBAL CEMETERY COMMUNITY MEETING NOTES
JANUARY 15, 2014 AT NHC-BCCR
5 - 7:25 PM

COMMENTARY :

1. There is historical information missing in the chronology and on the power point. Such as the significance of the first burial, motion to make someone a life long member of the cemetery board and missing engineering studies. John Breuninger was asked and offered to work with community members on updating the chronology. Historically there was a directive given to develop a Master Plan. It is crucial this be added to the history screen.
2. It was recommended that if an alternate cemetery site is considered that it be located on higher ground.
3. Concern over title on one section of the cemetery titled as non-denominational. It was expressed that the definition of non-denominational set the tone of the cemetery (expressly that it was for poor or indigent persons). Restore respectful intent of the cemetery. **Response: John Breuninger commented that he felt the section titled as non-denominational wasn't intended to be negative-just to allow for burial of persons who could not be buried elsewhere (Example: no room at church cemeteries).** Re-wrote this as "Can the cemetery section titles be removed?" & put it on FAQ.
4. Felt tribe followed the "no action" approach from the November 2008 GAS report.
5. Where is Pat Pelky? Questions have been asked, phone call messages left (like when the cemetery site was identified what was DOLM role?). Re-wrote this as "What was Department of Land Management's role in establishing cemetery? & put it on FAQ.
6. Felt DOLM information is missing from historical chronology.
7. Who determined where the water should be discharged to?
8. The only two government owned cemeteries known of are the federal government's Arlington (Veterans) and State Veteran's. It was felt there are other non-government managed cemeteries which are also non-denominational (specifically churches) such as Ft. Howard in Green Bay. So we are in a unique situation.
9. Requested statistical data on cemetery burials be available at community meetings.
10. Question came up on getting a guarantee that the work being done will fix the problems. Response: No one can guarantee anything. The Cemetery Working Group continues to work on the corrective measures identified in plan provided at the 12/18/2013 Community Meeting. No one is able to change history but what we are doing is to make corrective measures now and we feel confident that this strategy will work.
11. The OT/EC is charged with the responsibility of the cemetery and doesn't want to lose focus as a lot of long-term planning has been done.

12. Who is going to be liable if I pull my son out and move him? I brought up this question before.
13. Request made to ask how long (time frame) before we would know if the corrective measures worked?
14. Nancy Barton stated she was frustrated as she felt she was lied to. Lied to about where the water flooding was happening. Lied to that we were going to be able to change a swamp area. **Response: John Breuninger stated he was offended by referring that the cemetery was a swamp.**
15. Everyone wants to put the blame someplace else.
16. Feels the cemetery is a mess.
17. This whole situation is an atrocity.
18. Request to remove the prohibited items in law. Offended by letters sent identifying prohibited items. Offended by the English translation of the Oneida Name, feel it should be changed to read "Where we bury our loved ones". Making it kinder & gentler. We understand there are policy & procedure changes being brought to LOC. Request to change the name of the cemetery to Sacred Burial Grounds. **Response: LOC is venue to change or makes changes to the Cemetery Law. Land Commission is the venue to change Cemetery Name. If people don't like the laws that become adopted, there is a process for appealing after it's adopted.**
19. Nancy handed out copies an article on the Good Mind and how people are not following this practice.
20. Comment shared by one that she made a wrong choice in burying her son in the cemetery.
21. What if everything done doesn't work?
22. Offended that the questions asked at the 12/18/2013 Community Meeting were only focused on where the funding is coming from & that by stating the CFO or Larry's name inferred that Larry was responsible to find funding sources as he is her brother. **Response: it did not seem anyone thought that way. The Cemetery Working Group & OT/EC never held discussion or entertained that consideration. The Cemetery matter is a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) & CIP funding is being used to fund this project. It is necessary to use the CFO title since this position has the responsibility to identify where funding can come from.**
23. Reason for coming to meeting is to defend those who aren't here, that don't have a voice.
24. Encourage Cemetery Working Group to bring incidences that occurred at this meeting to the next OT/EC meeting. Need to look at who is presenting (at the table).
25. Is the cemetery salvageable?
26. Can list of families who have family buried in cemetery be provided for the purposes of contacting them to sign a petition? **Response: OT/EC membership information cannot be released. We're bound to confidentiality.**
27. Looking for answers to casino dumping & who is going to clean up the stuff out there?

28. Pissed off about the way the cemetery was treated-not maintained & want people held accountable. That's why we want the cultural component included.
29. Request Bruce Danforth be at future community meetings.
30. It was advised the community follow tribal processes to change the law & cemetery name. Work with the Cemetery Working Group.
31. Request community to think about what the Cemetery Working Group is trying to do. Maybe every solution isn't "the solution" but we need each other to make things better.
32. Feels Greg is wrong choice as OBC liaison.

Note: There were several verbal confrontations between individuals. The group ended the evening with some words of encouragement to move forward with a good mind.