The Distressed Cemetery Fund was established in 29 Del. C., c 79A on July 1, 2009 for the maintenance and preservation of any land or structure used or intended to be used for the interment or entombment of human remains and is administered by the Delaware Cemetery Board. To date, the board has awarded 13 cemeteries a total of $120,169. Four of the thirteen cemeteries received awards twice. Awards were used to repair tombstones and monuments; repair or replace fences, stone walls, and gates; provide landscaping; remove trees and brush; purchase or repair lawn equipment; purchase sheds, topsoil and seeding; provide perimeter surveys and plot plans.

The photos to the right show before and after fencing was replaced at St. Peter’s Cemetery in Smyrna.

Frequently Asked Questions

Questions and answers from the April 2015 public meeting:

* Are cemeteries that are located on State or federal property eligible for Distressed Cemetery Funds? **They may apply but it would need to be explained why the cemetery lacks the funds needed to maintain or restore it.**

* Can the Distressed Cemetery funds be used for ground penetrating radar (GPR) to locate unmarked graves and/or mapping of a grave if they have the required written vendor quotes for the work? **Yes.**

* Can a cemetery use all volunteer hours for the required match up to the maximum award of $10,000? **Yes, but it must be properly documented using an average total per project per year. The board will review each case on an individual basis.**

* Can a volunteer do the work instead of submitting vendor quotes if they document the work? **Yes, but the volunteer must provide proof of his/her qualifications, and the reason a vendor is not needed, so the board can determine if it is reasonable. The board will review each case on an individual basis.**

Questions? Contact Candace Casto, Chief Administrative Officer, Delaware Cemetery Board, Division of Public Health, Health Statistics Center, at 302-744-4763 or candace.casto@state.de.us.