

**GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING AGENDA
THURSDAY JULY 9, 2020 AT 10:00 AM
ZOOM MEETING**

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/99431866143>

I. CALL TO ORDER

Darlene Gehringer, Chairperson

II. ROLL CALL

Alex Bingham, Acting City Clerk

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of meeting minutes of April 15, 2020

IV. NEW BUSINESS

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Items under Unfinished Business will be presented as a status update to the Board and may not require action at this time.

- A. Cemetery Database Development – Staff Presentation
- B. Ground Penetrating Radar - RFP

VI. FINANCIAL REPORT

- A. 3rd Qtr. Financials

II. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

IX. ADJOURN

Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board:

The powers and duties of the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board is to provide the following recommendations to the City Commission:

- 1. Modifications: As to modifications of the rules and regulations governing Greenwood Cemetery.*
- 2. Capital Improvements: As to what capital improvements should be made to the cemetery.*
- 3. Future Demands: As to how to respond to future demands for cemetery services.*

Section 34-30 (g) of the Birmingham City Code

NOTICE: Individuals requiring accommodations, such as mobility, visual, hearing, interpreter or other assistance, for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at (248) 530-1880 (voice), or (248) 644-5115 (TDD) at least one day in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.

Las personas que requieren alojamiento, tales como servicios de interpretación, la participación efectiva en esta reunión deben ponerse en contacto con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal al (248) 530-1880 por lo menos el día antes de la reunión pública. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

NOTICE OF VIRTUAL MEETING

NOTICE DATE: July 2, 2020
MEETING DATE/TIME: July 9, 2020 10:00 a.m.
MEETING PLACE: Virtual Meeting

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the scheduled Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board meeting for the City of Birmingham will be conducted virtually (online and/or by phone), due to health concerns surrounding Coronavirus/COVID-19 under the Governor of Michigan's Executive Orders 2020-15 and 2020-21.

Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board Zoom Meeting Invitation

Tiffany Gunter is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board
Time: Jul 9, 2020 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/99431866143>

Meeting ID: 994 3186 6143
One tap mobile
+13017158592,,99431866143# US (Germantown)
+13126266799,,99431866143# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location
+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
888 788 0099 US Toll-free
877 853 5247 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 994 3186 6143
Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/j/99431866143>

NOTICE: Individuals requiring accommodations, such as mobility, visual, hearing, interpreter or other assistance, for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at (248) 530-

1880 (voice), or (248) 644-5115 (TDD) at least one day in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.

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Real time closed captioning can be viewed live when watching the meeting from the City of Birmingham's Vimeo channel: www.bhamgov.org/watch or the Birmingham Area Municipal Access local government cable channel. If participating in the meeting through the Zoom platform the user must select "view subtitles" in order to see the captions.

**GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 2020 AT 8:30 AM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, ROOM 205, 151 MARTIN**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Darlene Gehringer, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.

II. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Darlene Gehringer, Chairperson
Linda Buchanan, Vice Chairperson
Kevin Desmond
Linda Peterson
Laura Schreiner
Margaret Suter
George Stern

ADMINISTRATION: Assistant City Manager Gunter, Assistant to the City Manager Gallagher, DPS Director Wood, and Parks and Recreation Manager Laird

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 3, 2020

Ms. Buchanan asked to remove her comments under Mission Statement and Core Values since there was no action taken.

Assistant City Manager Gunter expressed that content could be added but not retracted from what went into the record.

Chairperson Gehringer agreed with Assistant City Manager Gunter.

Mr. Stern felt it valuable to keep the comments in the minutes. The topic could be brought back in the future.

Ms. Suter agreed that Vice Chair Buchanan's comments should remain in the record because it was part of the meeting.

Mr. Stern, relative to the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) felt the minutes were inadequate. He went on to say that the discussion led by Mr. Desmond was the best that this board has had in five years. Mr. Stern also introduced two pages of notes that he felt would be helpful when the board establishes KPI's in the future. He distributed the document and asked that it be attached to the meeting minutes of March 6, 2020.

Chairperson Gehringer agreed with Mr. Stern.

Mr. Desmond expressed that he did not want the notes distributed by Mr. Stern included in the record due to inaccuracies in how Desmond & Sons Funeral Directors were characterized.

Ms. Schreiner expressed that the GCAB should have an opportunity to review the document before entering it into the record.

Ms. Suter supported having bullet points of Mr. Desmond's discussion being reflected in the meeting minutes of March 6, 2020.

Approval of the minutes were postponed until the next meeting by consensus.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. CEMETERY DATABASE DEVELOPMENT

Brooks Cowan, City Planning Department, presented this item.

- Desktop Mapping will link to an online database.
- Names or lot numbers will link the online database to GCAB's website to search for gravesites.
- It will have the capacity to display photos.

Chairperson Gehringer was pleased to hear that the website has the capacity to use photos and suggested that photos be taken at Greenwood, beginning in historical Section B of the cemetery, of the headstones or monuments to be used on the website.

Mr. Desmond commented that he had just become aware that Mt. Kelly Cemetery in Dearborn, which is associated with Sacred Heart Church, is using the above referenced technology.

Ms. Schreiner asked if the database would be linked to other websites, such as Find A Grave, etc.

Assistant City Manager Gunter explained that at this time it would be a standalone application. She expressed that once all of Greenwood's information is available and accurate, staff would be able to work with an outside contractor for that specific type of connectivity.

City Planner Cowan expressed that right now the goal is to acquire all of the appropriate data.

Mr. Stern asked which GIS system was used and City Planner Cowan replied ArcMap 10.6.

Mr. Desmond expressed that this is an awesome start. He also advised that with some of the more recent burials it would need to be thought through to consider multiple burials in some of the graves.

Mr. Stern asked were other cemetery mapping systems considered when ArcMap was chosen, and how did staff decide on ArcMap; because he knows there are other GIS mapping systems that are common to the cemetery industry.

City Planner Cowan expressed that ArcMap is what the City currently hosts and Assistant City Manager Gunter added that Mr. Cowan is an expert in ArcMap.

Ms. Suter asked would the system be updated regularly. City Planner Cowan affirmed that when notice of a burial is provided the system would be updated.

Mr. Stern asked if ArcMap would integrate with other standard cemetery databases. City Planner Cowan affirmed that it does integrate across other platforms.

Mr. Stern asked about an anticipated completion date because the GCAB is waiting to use this data in moving forward with a more generalized cemetery database. He would like to understand what might happen during this calendar year.

Ms. Steiner reminded everyone that it seems like there are some staffing issues and the project may take longer than initially anticipated.

Assistant City Manager Gunter concurred and expressed that the City has to get an intern on board to handle the project before a schedule could be established.

Chairperson Gehringer thanked Mr. Cowan for his presentation and complimented him on the quality and completeness of his work. She said it was outstanding.

Mr. Stern expressed that he had all of the information in Excel and hoped that City Planner Cowan saw his report on GIS Mapping.

No action was taken.

B. CEMETERY OPERATIONS EVALUATION – DISCUSSION

Assistant City Manager Gunter led the discussion with respect to Creative Collaborations, LLC as interim manager of Greenwood Cemetery.

- The contract expires in May of 2020.
- Key Performance Indicators have been discussed.
- Performance Expectations are established.
- City Clerk has control of all record keeping of burials and sales.
- Financials have been submitted to and remitted from the City of Birmingham with respect to internments, inurnments, and monthly management fee.
- DPS maintains landscaping and snow removal on the property.
- The City receives 100% of all sales proceeds.
- Creative Collaborations, LLC is the City's coordinator and customer service representative for Greenwood Cemetery.
- Feedback from meetings with other public and private cemeteries for sexton consulting include:

-
- ✓ Collaborating with neighboring cemeteries (found not to be viable).
 - ✓ Work with an expert in the death care industry.
 - ✓ Direct contract with an experienced sexton (not viable because Greenwood does not have the required volume to receive priority burials).
 - ✓ Quality of burial that is expected at Greenwood today would be compromised if management were shared with neighboring public cemeteries.
 - Based on the above feedback, the question became what would it take to bring operations completely in house with the same level of service being provided today.
 - ✓ Cost estimates for DPS and the City Clerk's office to manage in-house would be \$580,000 for the first year; with an on-going cost of \$450,000 annually, which includes labor and initial equipment startup cost. The estimate does not include on-going maintenance of equipment.

Chairperson Gehringer expressed that she does not understand why there would be a need for three full time employees in the City Clerk's office to handle cemetery operations when, prior to the Elmwood contract, there was one person who did it without dedicating 40 hours per week to this task. She asked what changed.

Assistant City Manager Gunter replied that the addition of sales changed the time requirement to service the families at Greenwood.

Chairperson Gehringer and Mr. Stern both expressed that they did not agree with the analogy that sales changed the operating cost of Greenwood to the degree that was presented.

Chairperson Gehringer contended that the revenue from Greenwood was not considered in the analogy.

Ms. Shreiner expressed that prior to the additional graves being found by Elmwood, there were limited annual sales at Greenwood and burials tapered off. Since the graves were found, both burials and sales increased; which will taper off again in the future as the cemetery reaches capacity. While she agreed that the dynamics of the Clerk's office has changed in terms of staffing, she asked what would happen if the estimated costs were cut in half and compared to what is happening today. Ms. Shreiner further stated that whether it is outsourced or done in-house, it would still be cost neutral.

Chairperson Gehringer acknowledged that the upfront cost would be high; but felt the long-term benefit would be favorable due to the cemetery revenue stream.

Ms. Shreiner explained with respect to Chairperson Gehringer's analogy, that the cost of maintaining equipment and various structures would need to be added back in as operational cost used against revenues.

Chairperson Gehringer continued by asking how did the City manage cemetery operations successfully before outsourcing to Elmwood.

Assistant City Manager Gunter clarified that DPS staffing is down 12% since managing cemetery operations and the proposed additional staffing would not bring them back to the staffing levels that existed in 2012-2013.

Chairperson Gehringer referenced that the City Commission did not want the contract with Creative Collaborations, LLC to be the permanent solution per the City Commission meeting of 11/25/2019. Based on that observation, Chairperson Gehringer would like either to justify renewing the current contract for an additional six (6) months or to agree on something else.

Mr. Stern agreed with Chairperson Gehringer with respect to the City Commission not wanting the contract with Creative Collaborations, LLC to be the permanent solution to managing Greenwood.

Assistant City Manager Gunter shared her recollection of the abovementioned commission meeting that instructed staff to evaluate alternatives to insure that Creative Collaborations, LLC was the best option available.

Vice Chairperson Buchanan expressed that the increase in burials are due to increased sales, both in categories of preplanning and at-need services. She suggested offering options to the City Commission and let them decide how the City would proceed. Vice Chair Buchanan also suggested that vault companies be included in the evaluations and/or recommendations; considering cost would be an in and out expenditure.

Mr. Desmond clarified that vault companies do not open and close graves; that would be someone else or a sexton. The vault company supplies the vaults and actually stage the committal site with tent, chairs, carpeting, and casket lowering device.

Mr. Stern concurred with Mr. Desmond, and added that vaults are usually bought in bulk to increase profits for the cemetery; therefore others must be used to open and backfill the grave.

Chairperson Gehringer asked Mr. Stern what other cemeteries do in the case when they do not have their own equipment to excavate the gravesite.

Mr. Stern expressed that the cemeteries that he works with are complete but further stated that any contractor with a backhoe could do this work. He further commented that, if needed, cemeteries would rent a backhoe to complete an interment.

Ms. Suter does not agree with using an inexperienced backhoe operator to perform an interment. She would prefer someone who has the finesse navigating around cemeteries; specifically older cemeteries.

Assistant City Manager Gunter interjected that the people who host the expertise that is expected at Greenwood, are the same people that have been contacted. She also noted that the sexton business is a closed industry and require volume burials to become a

priority contract. Therefore, staff built the cost estimate based on housing the entire operation including sexton services.

Mr. Stern countered that the City has a sexton; per City Code, the City Manager is the sexton. He went further to ask Assistant City Manager Gunter how many additional people were added to staff to do the record keeping work currently being done by the Clerk's office.

Assistant City Manager Gunter replied that she would not be able to answer accurately because currently the Clerk's office is borrowing staff from every City department in support of operations during the current election cycle.

Mr. Stern suggested deferring this item until additional detail and support for the documents presented are available for review, specifically labor costs and equipment inventory. He feels that the document presented is political in nature. Mr. Stern went on to refer to the City Manager's membership in the Rotary Club and expressed concern that if the current report is presented to the City Commission that the City Manager would spend the next two years sitting at home tending his children. He went on to express that the staffing cost estimates for the Clerk's office are overstated for someone to do clerical work; and overstated for someone (untrained) in DPS to help lower a casket and attend to parking. He maintained that the task do not require full time people. Mr. Stern also reminded everyone that Director Wood still has two employees that were a part of managing the cemetery before the services were outsourced to Elmwood. He went on to reiterate that the report in front of him is not in a form that could be forwarded to the commission without being a laughing stock and the City Manager retiring to his home with his children.

Assistant City Manager Gunter empathetically commented that the City Manager's children do not play a role in this discussion and should not be referenced. She went on to say that his comments were offensive.

Chairperson Gehringer agreed that the document is not presentable for the City Commission in its present form and requested comment from Director Wood on the viability of DPS providing sexton services at Greenwood.

Director Wood expressed that Mr. Stern made her case as to why DPS should not do the sexton services in-house. She went on to ask why she would hire additional staff and equipment to work approximately seven (7) hours per month. Director Wood does not recommend that the City put themselves in a position requiring additional staff to be on call or notice to service this specialized task in-house.

Mr. Stern contended that the decision is not for the GCAB to make the decision again lies with the commission. He sympathized with staff members for not wanting to take on the task; and further suggested that the political document was offered to justify staff wishes.

Director Wood agreed with where the decision lies and continued that there are no advantages to running this business in-house. While she is able to hire people and run

the cemetery as DPS has in the past, the decision for the City rest on ***should*** the department do it. It is a very specialized task and there is no room for error. She went on to confirm that she had two staff members that were referenced before, but they have been out of the business for a long time. Currently there are teamsters and collective bargaining units to consider, and 80% of the DPS staff are new since 2013. She went on to say that after the recession of 2008 people were not replaced so the entire City reduced staff and that is today's reality. The function of DPS changed since 2013; responsibilities have increased, in all departments demand is higher, and investing in cemetery operations would not be worth the cost. Director Wood further stated that the City is overseeing the current contract and the agreement is working. She went on to say that this is the best that she has ever seen the cemetery operate, specifically the level of customer service that is being provided under the existing contract.

Mr. Stern, again, requested detail to support the proposed cost of in-house management, and asked why \$1400 is not considered an adequate rate of return for a single burial.

Mr. Stern was excused for a prior commitment.

Director Wood agreed that alternatives are needed for this critical decision, but went on to say that this is an important service offered to the community at a very sensitive and emotional time. She expressed that there has to be agreement among the commission, administration, and boards to trust the firms and contractors that have expertise in this area. She finally noted that the families and funeral homes experience should be an extension of the City's commitment to excellence and reflect the values of the community. Director Wood established that staff is in place to help the GCAB advise City Commissioners through research and guidance and are happy to continually serve in that capacity.

Chairperson Gehringer commended Director Wood on the points made in her discussion. She expressed support for extending the existing contractor's agreement to keep continuity in the level of service provided at Greenwood and contain cost.

Mr. Desmond commented that whether persons have space reserved in a public City owned, relatively inactive cemetery like Greenwood or a larger corporate cemetery like White Chapel and Acacia that are active and busy; they would still be treated the same.

Parks and Recreation Manager Laird addressed Mr. Stern's concern about the need to purchase new equipment if the City managed the cemetery. She went on to say that during a recent snowstorm, all DPS equipment was being utilized to clear away snow from City streets and walks; based on that type of demand, there would have to be designated equipment specifically for the cemetery.

Mr. Desmond agreed with Parks and Recreation Manager Laird and reiterated that other cemeteries are not interested in collaborating due to the increase in risk and cost.

Ms. Suter pointed out that sales are very important and the City does not have the resources to accommodate that activity. She went on to say that, Cheri Arcome and

others in the industry are much better at sales and customer service. She is in support of extending the current contract.

Ms. Schreiner agreed with the risk involved in collaborating with other cemeteries.

Chairperson Gehringer asked if there is an association of small cemeteries like Greenwood that would share in the economies of scale. Ms. Schreiner expressed that it is a great suggestion, if the association existed, but currently Ms. Arcome is the cemetery's answer to realizing economies of scale.

Mr. Desmond expressed that he is not aware of an association, but rather, of a person like Ms. Arcome who oversee services to multiple cemeteries.

No action was taken.

C. NORTHWEST CORNER OF CEMETERY (YAMASKI CORNER) – UPDATE

Assistant City Manager Gunter consulted Ms. Arcome and DPS about this situation and asked for reports from both to bring back to the next meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Items under Unfinished Business will be presented as a status update to the Board and may not require action at this time.

A. GROUND PENETRATING RADAR - RFP

Chairperson Gehringer lead with asking about the status of this approved, budgeted project. While she acknowledged that the City Clerk position had not been filled, she wondered if there was any word on when it would happen.

Assistant City Manager Gunter updated the board on the status of hiring a City Clerk. She also noted that the acting City Clerk, Cheryl Arft is interested in retiring soon.

VI. FINANCIAL REPORT

None

II. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

- After learning of Acting City Clerk Arft's pending retirement, everyone agreed that she would be dearly missed and much appreciation was expressed for her years of service.
- Vice Chair Buchanan reminded everyone of the Biannual Cemetery Tour scheduled for May 9th. The tour will celebrate 100 years of women's right to vote and honor all the historical women of Birmingham. Alice Hagerman-Thurber 1871-1954 (a Thurber relative and prolific painter) will be featured.

IX. ADJOURN

Chairperson Gehringer adjourned the meeting.

Fund 150 GREENWOOD CEMETERY PERPETUAL CARE FUND

GL Number	Description	Balance
*** Assets ***		
150-000.000-005.0000	CASH AND INVESTMENTS	23,838.81
150-000.000-017.0000	INVESTMENTS	769,386.18
150-000.000-017.0006	MARKET GAIN (LOSS)	57,854.88
150-000.000-028.0000	MISCELLANEOUS	9,058.00
150-000.000-028.1000	MANUAL ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	0.00
Total Assets		860,137.87
*** Liabilities ***		
150-000.000-202.0000	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	0.00
150-000.000-202.1000	MANUAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	11,760.00
150-000.000-257.0000	ACCRUED PAYROLL	0.00
150-000.000-260.0000	COMPENSATED ABSENCES	0.00
150-000.000-261.0000	SICK LEAVE	0.00
150-000.000-367.0300	DEFER. INFLOWS - MISCELLANEOUS INV	9,058.00
Total Liabilities		20,818.00
*** Fund Balance ***		
150-000.000-370.0000	ENCUMBRANCES	0.00
150-000.000-391.0000	RETAINED EARNINGS	791,940.71
Total Fund Balance		791,940.71
Beginning Fund Balance		791,940.71
Net of Revenues VS Expenditures		47,379.16
Ending Fund Balance		839,319.87
Total Liabilities And Fund Balance		860,137.87

05/05/2020 10:24 AM
User: MGerber
DB: Birmingham

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORT
PERIOD ENDING 03/31/2020

Page: 1/1

ACCOUNT	DESCRIPTION	ACTIVITY FOR QUARTER 03/31/2020	YTD BALANCE 03/31/2020
Fund 150 - GREENWOOD CEMETERY PERPETUAL CARE FUND			
Revenues			
CHARGES FOR SERVICES			
643.0000	SALE OF CEMETARY PLOTS	2,702.00	31,442.00
CHARGES FOR SERVICES		2,702.00	31,442.00
INTEREST AND RENT			
664.0000	INVESTMENT INCOME	4,474.13	15,780.60
665.0002	GAIN (LOSS) ON INVESTMENT	0.00	156.56
INTEREST AND RENT		4,474.13	15,937.16
TOTAL REVENUES		7,176.13	47,379.16
Fund 150 - GREENWOOD CEMETERY PERPETUAL CARE FU			
TOTAL REVENUES		7,176.13	47,379.16
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		0.00	0.00
NET OF REVENUES & EXPENDITURES		7,176.13	47,379.16

