

**GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2015 AT 8:30 AM  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, ROOM 205, 151 MARTIN**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Cheryl Arft, Deputy Clerk, called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Pamela DeWeese  
Darlene Gehringer  
Linda Peterson  
Laura Schreiner  
George Stern  
Barbara Thurber  
Kevin Desmond (arrived at 8:33 am).

Absent: None

Administration: City Manager Valentine, Deputy City Clerk Arft, Management Analyst Thomas, and Larry Sloane and Cheri Arcome of Elmwood Cemetery

**III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**

**B. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

**MOTION:** Motion by Ms. Gehringer, seconded by Ms. DeWeese:  
To appoint George Stern as Chairperson.

**VOTE:** Yeas, 6  
Nays, None  
Absent 1 (Desmond)

**MOTION:** Motion by DeWeese, seconded by Ms. Gehringer:  
To appoint Laura Schreiner as Vice Chairperson.

**VOTE:** Yeas, 6  
Nays, None  
Absent 1 (Desmond)

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 9, 2015**

Mr. Desmond arrived at 8:33 am.

**MOTION:** Motion by Ms. Schreiner, seconded by Ms. DeWeese:  
To approve the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board minutes of January 9, 2015 as corrected.

**VOTE:** Yeas, 7  
Nays, None  
Absent, None

**B. SPACE AVAILABILITY – UNPLOTTED PARCELS**

**C. REVIEW OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS &**

#### **D. GRAVE INTEREST LIST**

Mr. Valentine explained that the space availability report provided by Larry Sloane, following the Advisory Committee's discussion about identifying additional spaces within the cemetery. Mr. Sloane stated there are about 530 potential spaces available.

Ms. Gehringer asked why the Board is not addressing priorities first. Mr. Valentine explained this is an opportunity to address several issues at once in a short period of time. Ms. Gehringer asked about the method of verifying if a grave is actually empty. Mr. Sloane explained how they determine if a grave is empty.

Mr. Stern stated that the Advisory Committee made an assumption that 100% of proceeds from sales from unused plots would go into a reserve fund and 0% would go to the contractor. Mr. Sloane explained that is not in the contract and it never has been. Mr. Sloane explained the contractor receives 25% of sales and the city endowment fund receives 75%. Mr. Stern expressed that the Board should re-examine the contract.

Mr. Valentine explained the contractor is operating under the guidelines set forth in the contract. They are proposing a solution to the issue of finding additional capacity in the cemetery that was raised by the advisory committee. It utilizes existing space and avoids creating any additional space, which was of concern to some.

Mr. Desmond said the report is good news and addresses the concerns of the community.

Ms. Gehringer stated that she wants to follow the recommendation to use ground-penetrating radar approved by the Advisory Committee and the Commission.

Mr. Desmond stated ground-penetrating radar is extensive. The contractors are professionals and he trusts they know what they are doing.

Mr. Sloane explained the process to determine if anyone is buried in a particular area. There was some follow-up discussion regarding the process. He explained that the city has very good records of the cemetery and a great deal of time was spent verifying locations previously when reclamation was initially discussed. Measurements are easy and clear and these areas were obviously left open and never plotted. Most of the burials in the cemetery have memorials and are verified in the cemetery records. He feels that they have approached this with a very high level of good cemetery practices. Ms. Arcome added they probe a grave from the head to the foot for every burial.

Mr. Sloane explained that the contract began in July and the Contractor was asked to wait to begin this kind of work until the Board was appointed and the endowment fund was established. During that period, the Contractor was actively measuring and probing the areas and now is presenting the findings to the permanent Board.

Mr. Sloane stated that with the proper regulations in place, they can move forward to assist those on the interest list. This will build up the cemetery endowment fund. He explained that Elmwood is a not-for-profit organization, but still need to have more revenues than expenses to operate.

There were further questions and discussion about the locations of new graves and spacing.

Ms. Gehringer asked how they would explain to the public the sudden surge of available grave space in the cemetery. Mr. Stern commented that the Commission talked about canceling the

contract, and now there is a surge of activity to sell plots. He said he believes the advising committee only approved Elmwood to make a commission on reclaimed plots and not new plots. He further stated the Board has not advised as to how they want the sales of new plots to be made.

Mr. Valentine commented that the board is seeing Elmwood's research coming to light.

Mr. Desmond stated that the contract should not be left up to interpretation. ~~There was discussion about the contract.~~

Automation of the records will have to be coordinated with the City. The contract does not specifically require the Contractor to automate the records but the Contractor would like it to be done. Mr. Sloane does not anticipate an additional cost, but if the City wants to buy a certain software, that would have to be purchased or leased by the City. The Contractor currently has a state of the art, automated system that is web based that the City and Contractor can access.

In response to a question from Mr. Stern, Mr. Sloane explained that their ultimate goal is to automate the records. Mr. Sloane stated he would be able to present information on the automation process if the Board requests him to do so.

Ms. Gehringer stated it would be in the best interest of the Board to follow what they have been recommended to do. She thinks the Board needs to address the interest list and do ground-penetrating radar.

Mr. Valentine explained that this is an advisory board with the purpose of reviewing the recommendations for the ongoing care and management of the cemetery. It is to provide advisory opinions as to what direction the cemetery should take going forward. There is a list of recommendations that still require some decision making.

Ms. DeWeese said they still need to address the interest list. Mr. Sloane said they would address the interest list by communicating with those on the list and offer appointments with Elmwood staff.

Mr. Valentine reviewed the process of requesting funding from the Commission. He explained that normally there is a budget process that budget requests go through.

Mr. Stern expressed concern with the report from the contractor. Mr. Sloane explained that they did the plotting and now they need to do the recording of the plots.

Mr. Sloane said the next step is to follow Clerk Pierce's recommendation of taking this to the Commission. Ms. Gehringer does not agree with moving forward to the Commission. Ms. Gehringer would like a copy of the contract with Elmwood for the Board to review again, and for the Board to review the recommendations that were made to the Commission in May.

Mr. Valentine explained that there have been conversations with Elmwood prior to the establishment of this Board. Elmwood has been handling the day-to-day care of the cemetery, but nothing more. Now they are coming to the Board with their recommendations. He explained the objective was to address the interest list. There should be discussion on how to move forward. Ms. Schreiner said she believes these issues could be addressed simultaneously.

Ms. Arcome explained that there have been deaths that have occurred, and the city has allowed for the sale of unused graves. Ground-penetrating radar was not used prior to the burials.

Mr. Sloane commented that the process to sell graves needs to be addressed and should not be delayed any further. Ms. DeWeese explained that the Board feels this is all new information and needs to be addressed. Ms. Gehringer said she feels that the City Clerk should not be making recommendations to the Board to make a motion to the Commission on behalf of Elmwood. After some discussion, she further stated that she does not remember any of these discussion items from the last meeting. Mr. Stern agreed and said everything was new. Mr. Stern said the Board said the highest priority that was set at the last meeting was to digitize records and there would be a report at this meeting.

Mr. Desmond stated he believes that making a decision on the 500+ graves is more important than digitizing records. He does not believe the ground-penetrating radar is necessary.

Ms. Gehringer would like to see a map that compares the former plot map with the new plot map.

Mr. Stern stated that they will discuss rules for the sale of graves at the next meeting, and that Mr. Sloane will discuss digitizing records.

**E. MEETING SCHEDULE DISCUSSION**

Mr. Valentine explained that the board needs to have one standing date per month that they agree to meet. They may set special meetings if necessary. Ms. Gehringer suggested there be two meetings per month for the first few months. There was discussion about the meeting schedule.

**MOTION:** Motion by Ms. Gehringer, seconded by Ms. Schreiner:  
To hold a special meeting on February 23 at 4:00 pm to discuss the newly plotted graves.

The Board agreed to the proposed motion. No vote was taken.

**V. CONTRACTOR REPORT**

- A. CURRENT SPACE AVAILABILITY**
- B. ENDOWMENT FUND CONTRIBUTIONS**

**VI. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

**VII. ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 am.

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