

**GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2015 AT 8:30 AM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, ROOM 205, 151 MARTIN**

I. CALL TO ORDER

George Stern, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Kevin Desmond
Pamela DeWeese
Darlene Gehringer
Linda Peterson
George Stern
Barbara Thurber

Absent: Laura Schreiner

Administration: Clerk Pierce and Deputy Clerk Arft

Guests: Cheri Arcome of Elmwood Cemetery

MOTION: Motion by DeWeese, seconded by Gehringer:
To amend the agenda by moving item New Business item A. Approval of minutes from April 10, 2015 to this point in the meeting.

VOTE: Ayes: 6
Nays: None
Absent: 1 (Schreiner)

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 10, 2015

Ms. Pierce confirmed that Elmwood contracts with Birmingham Lawn for the cemetery lawn care.

Mr. Stern questioned the statement made by Mr. Valentine regarding new grave spaces and the contractor's commission. Ms. Pierce offered to listen to the tape of the meeting to confirm what was said.

MOTION: Motion by Gehringer, seconded by Thurber:
To approve the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board minutes of April 10, 2015, as corrected.

VOTE: Ayes: 6
Nays: None
Absent: 1 (Schreiner)

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. SPACE AVAILABILITY

(Recommendation Checklist Item #8)

Mr. Stern informed the members of recently enacted legislation. He spoke with attorney Jerrold Bigelman who advised Mr. Stern that Public Act 398 legislation permits cemetery plot reclamation in as little as 60 days under certain conditions. Public Act 422 legislation permits an endowment and perpetual care fund to be invested with a community foundation. Local legislators are planning to introduce alternative legislation regarding municipal cemetery investments. Mr. Stern said it is important to make money for the city as well as take care of citizens' needs. Ms. Pierce confirmed that the staff will review the recent laws and report back to the Board in the future. She confirmed that any money designated for the cemetery can only be used for the cemetery.

Ms. Pierce provided background for the space availability using the green space. She noted the Board has already recommended the Request for Proposal be issued for ground penetrating radar on the entire cemetery. Staff is requesting a Board recommendation today on whether or not to use the green space. Thereafter, the Board will consider revisions to the rules and regulations and the interest list. She pointed out that no graves in the green space will be sold until it is presented to the City Commission.

Mr. Desmond asked Ms. Arcome about the amount of mature landscaping in the green space. She said that can be worked around.

Ms. Pierce confirmed for Mr. Stern that all of the Board's recommendations will go the City Commission at the same time.

Ms. DeWeese said the Board should focus on the motion that failed at the last meeting and decide whether to offer the green space for graves and the conditions for sale.

MOTION: Motion by Desmond, seconded by DeWeese:

To recommend that the City offer the graves located in the green space of Sections B, C, K, L, and O for sale, with the following conditions:

1. No existing headstones or grave sites are moved;
2. No existing trees or mature landscaping is removed;
3. Flush mounted headstones are used for all newly created grave sites so as not to provide any visual disruption;
4. The structural integrity of all of the historic markers and the landscape is maintained;
5. Contractors that do work in the cemetery must be bonded and insured to ensure that if any damage is done the cost to repair is covered; and fixing any damage that may occur;
6. Advertise the opportunity for people that have space in the cemetery; and work with families that have lots adjoining green space so that they are aware of the opportunity as well.
7. Pending the results of Ground Penetrating Radar.

Mr. Stern expressed concern that since nothing is in the recommendation making it dependent upon our other considerations, it seems that the city could take this resolution and start selling graves immediately.

Ms. Pierce said this has to go before the Commission and will be part of the package consisting of ground penetrating radar, rules and regulations, and the grave interest list.

In response to a question, Ms. Pierce noted that restricting sales to Birmingham residents only is illegal.

VOTE: Ayes: 5
 Nays: 1 (Gehring)
 Absent: 1 (Schreiner)

IV. NEW BUSINESS

B. REVIEW OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS (Recommendation Checklist Items #4 & #7)

Ms. Pierce suggested going through the rules and regulations by section and noted that the sections have been re-numbered for clarity.

Ms. DeWeese asked about the fee schedule and Ms. Pierce stated that fees are set administratively by staff.

The following sections were discussed and the changes were made by the Board:

II. Conduct of Persons

No Person shall:

- Item e. ~~Bring any dog or animal into the cemetery grounds, except by permission of the Superintendent.~~ Leash law applies to any dog or animal brought into the cemetery grounds.
- Item g. Carry ~~any refreshments or~~ intoxicants into the cemetery grounds, or consume such while in the cemetery.
- Item d. Break, injure, remove, or deface any monument or marker on the cemetery grounds. This does not include family members cleaning, repairing or restoring their family monuments or markers.

IV. Maintenance and perpetual care

The Board discussed whether the city should be responsible for damage to historical markers. It was agreed that Ms. Pierce will bring language for the Board to consider.

V. Operational regulations

In response to Mr. Stern's request, Ms. Arcome explained what corner markers are and how they are used.

- Item h. As soon as flowers, floral pieces, potted plants, ~~artificial flowers,~~ flags, emblems, etc., used at funerals or placed on grave at other times, become unsightly or faded, they will be removed, and no responsibility for their protection will be assumed, except for special groups upon notification to the city.

It was agreed to replace the word "urn(s)" with the word "planter(s)" throughout Section V.

- Item d. Ironwork, seats, vases, and ~~urns~~ planters shall be allowed on lots, providing that the same shall be kept in good repair and well painted. If not kept in good repair and painted, the Superintendent shall have power and authority to remove same from cemetery, and shall not be liable for any such removal.
- Item e. ~~Urn~~ Planters of iron or granite for the planting of flowers will be removed from lots and put in storage if not filled by July 1st. ~~Urn~~ Planters so removed will be sold for cartage and storage charges, or destroyed, if not claimed within a period of one year.
- Item i. The Superintendent reserves the right to remove from beds, graves, vases, ~~urns~~, planters, or other containers, all flowers, potted plants, or other decorations, that are set out and then not kept properly watered, trimmed and free from weeds, and to do so as soon as they become objectionable.

VI. Monuments, Grave Markers and Foundations

The Board agreed to the following revision:

Monuments

Monuments will be permitted only on lots ~~having 90 or more square feet of area~~ two adjoining graves under one ownership. No more than one monument shall be erected on any lot.

V. CONTRACTOR REPORT

A. CEMETERY UPDATE

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

Mr. Buchanan questioned if the size of a lot in the green space is the same as what the City is selling. Mr. Stern explained that a plot in the green space is 3 x 10 feet. The existing plots are 4 x 11 feet. Ms. Arcome advised that a standard size plot in most cemeteries is 3 x 8 feet.

Ms. Pierce noted that the changes to the rules and regulations will be made and a copy provided to the members.

The next meetings are June 5th and July 10th at 8:30 AM.

Ms. Andrews asked for clarification of burial practices which will be addressed after the meeting by the Clerk.

VIII. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM.

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