

**GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 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
Linda Peterson
Laura Schreiner
George Stern
Barbara Thurber

Absent: Darlene Gehringer

Administration: City Manager Pierce Valentine, Clerk Pierce and Deputy Clerk Arft

Guests: Cheri Arcome of Elmwood Cemetery

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**A. Review of the Rules and Regulations
(Recommendation Checklist Items #4 & #7)**

Mr. Stern said this meeting is needed today to complete the rules and regulations as people are trying to buy space in the cemetery.

Ms. Pierce noted that a definition for memorials was added on page 1 and the Board agreed with the definition. On page 6 under Section VII, Interments, two paragraphs were combined into one for continuity, and a sentence was added to the end of another paragraph on that page.

Ms. Schreiner suggested the following change to language in the Disinterment section of Section VII:

Disinterment of a burial shall be facilitated by a Michigan licensed funeral director. Said funeral director shall obtain a permit for such removal from the local health officer of Oakland County. Said funeral director shall complete the removal form as required by the City or its designated contractor. Disinterment shall not commence until after issuance of the Oakland County permit is presented to the City or its designated contractor, approval for removal is granted by the City or its designated contractor, and all applicable fees are paid. Such interments shall only be scheduled between June 15th and October 15th each year. The grave space where the disinterment occurred shall immediately be returned to a safe condition.

Mr. Stern asked for any objections to adding the words unless approved by the City, at the end of the sentence, "Such interments shall only be scheduled between June 15th and October 15th each year". There were no objections.

Ms. Pierce explained that under Section VIII, Burial Rights Policy, the allowed number of occupants per grave was broken out for clarity. The Fee Schedule will need to be amended by the City Commission for this section as there is space for graves that could hold one or two cremains.

Mr. Desmond noted that it is a generous policy to include up to three interments at time of purchase. It is a very common practice to have to purchase a second or third right of interment for additional urns. Ms. Pierce clarified that this applies to only graves purchased after October 1, 2014. Lots purchased prior to that date require purchasing additional rights of interment.

Mr. Stern would like to add the word "each" for clarification in the section regarding full graves purchased prior to October 1, 2014. Ms. Schreiner suggested a change to read "must purchase ~~a second right of interment~~ each additional right of burial in the grave." It was agreed to add the language to the cremation portion as well.

Ms. Pierce stated Section IX, Lot Resale Policy, limits the sale of new available graves to immediate family according to the Rules of Consanguinity. Mr. Valentine offered that it might be helpful to the administrative process to add with supporting genealogical documentation.

Ms. Schreiner suggested limiting the number of transfers within so many years. Ms. Arcome noted that there has only been one transfer within a family since she has been with Greenwood. Usually just permission is given. Mr. Desmond agreed.

The difference between transfers of graves and permission to be buried in a grave was explained.

Mr. Stern asked if we need to define the word "immediate" when referring to immediate family and define the concept of authority or assignment, because we have said we are only restricting transfers and not restricting permissions to be buried. He believes it may put the City in an untenable position because it is not specified or defined.

Ms. Schreiner agrees that the word "immediate" should be removed and add "with supporting documentation". Adding "permissive use" might create more confusion. Mr. Desmond reminded that the section discusses lot resale policy. Ms. Thurber said permissive use cannot be limited.

Mr. Stern asked what the City receives in writing regarding permissions. Ms. Arcome and Ms. Pierce said that we usually receive a letter from the owner. Elmwood Cemetery has a form for permissions with ownership verification.

Ms. Pierce stated that Section X, Schedule of Fees and Charges are contained in the Schedule of Fees, Charges, Bonds and Insurance. These are reviewed by the City Commission on an annual basis.

Mr. Stern suggested a future discussion on restriction of sales to residents and non-residents, stating that it is quite common to have a non-resident fee schedule as well.

Mr. Stern asked if the Board wanted to consider multiple lot purchases and placing limits on them. Ms. Pierce suggested amending today's agenda to add a discussion of the Grave Interest list at the end. She said the Board may then wish to revisit the Rules and Regulations after that discussion.

MOTION: Motion by Ms. Schreiner, seconded by Mr. Desmond:
To adopt the Rules and Regulations as discussed.

Mr. Stern suggested three grammatical changes for continuity:

Under Section II, Conduct of Persons, change Section e to, Bring any dog or animal into the cemetery grounds, unless in compliance with applicable leash law.

Eliminate the word "use" in Section h, and change sentence to, No person shall advertise on cemetery grounds, unless permitted by the City.

In Section VI, Monuments, change Section e to read, No monuments shall be allowed in the flush sections.

Mr. Stern believes the City does handle the casket(s) referred to in the second paragraph of page 6, under Section VII, Funerals, Interments and Disinterments, Interments. Mr. Desmond stated the vault company comes to the cemetery to install the vault and lower the casket into the vault.

Mr. Stern believes the cremated remains container is installed by the contractor or the vault company, not the funeral director. Mr. Desmond suggested any statement not be too restrictive in order to permit the family to install the container when requested, and asked if the City needs some kind of policy. Ms. Arcome suggested that the statement should remain. Mr. Stern suggested adding the word "contractor" to the sentence.

Mr. Stern said he thought requiring 10 hours was too long for notification to prepare the grave for burial. Ms. Arcome and Mr. Desmond did not see this as an issue. Mr. Valentine suggested that this language was inserted when the city personnel handled the burials. It was suggested changing the word "will" to "may" regarding overtime charges.

Ms. Arcome said, as a practical matter, overtime is rarely charged. Mr. Valentine said there are ways this situation can be addressed without being problematic. Mr. Desmond said he has not experienced this. Ms. Pierce added calls have been received after office hours from a funeral director asking for a burial the next morning, and city personnel had to be called in early to prepare the grave.

Ms. Schreiner expressed concern about the word "may", because it may create a situation for favoritism. Since it is been this way for a long time, we should leave it as is. It can be dealt with in the future if needed. The consensus was to leave the statement as it is.

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

Ms. Pierce asked that the agenda be amended to add the discussion of the Grave Interest List.

MOTION: Motion by Ms. DeWeese, seconded by Ms. Schreiner:

To amend the agenda to discuss the Grave Interest List.

Ms. Pierce referred to the May 29, 2015 report, and explained it details the process for selling graves. The first 20 individuals on the list would be contacted by mail and appointments would be scheduled after receiving a response. Then the next 20 individuals would be contacted in the same manner. The contractor has paid for the Ground Penetrating Radar service in the green space of Sections B, C, D, K, L and O, and we are waiting for the final report.

She suggested this would be the time to discuss limiting the number of grave spaces that may be purchased.

Mr. Stern asked if we have to wait for the City Commission to approve this. Ms. Pierce stated that on June 29th, the Commission will consider the Rules and Regulations, an amendment to the Fee Schedule for the sale of the cremation spaces, and the sale of the grave spaces. The administration will send the letters as described in the report.

Mr. Stern clarified that the motion is to recommend sending letters to the individuals. He asked if the City is prepared to explain the difference between an interest list and a reservation list, since the public was never notified by the City that they had to be on the interest list to purchase graves in the future.

Ms. Pierce stated that it was made very clear to the public that the list was an interest list. Ms. Schreiner asked that when the people respond, are they simply confirming their location on the list. Ms. Pierce explained that we will make appointments to discuss with them the purchase of a grave(s), not just to determine whether or not they wish to remain on the list.

Mr. Stern asked whether the City is committing to sell a grave or whether the City is committing to sell a specific grave. Reselling graves would not be permitted.

Ms. Pierce suggested that the Board consider whether to limit the number of graves that a family or individual may purchase. She stated that the City hopes to begin selling graves on July 1st. She explained the suggested resolutions.

Mr. Valentine noted that the constraints already in place, and also advising prospective purchasers of the new regulations that prohibit the sale of the spaces, may or may not deter someone from purchasing multiple spaces with the intent of reselling graves.

MOTION by Mr. Desmond, seconded by Ms. DeWeese:

To recommend that the City send letters to the individuals on the Interest List, as of May 31, 2015, once grave space is available and to follow the proposed schedule to sell the new graves.

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

Ms. Pierce asked that the meeting scheduled for July 10th be moved to either July 24th or 31st. It was agreed that the next meeting will be held on July 24, 2015.

Mr. Valentine recognized Elmwood for its action to arrange and pay for the Ground Penetrating Radar service.

VIII. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 9:58 AM.

Respectfully,

Cheryl Arft
Deputy City Clerk