

**GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2016 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 AM.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Linda Peterson  
Margaret Suter  
Darlene Gehringer  
Linda Buchanan  
George Stern  
Absent: Kevin Desmond  
Laura Schreiner

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A. Approval of meeting minutes of September 30, 2016**

Mr. Stern requested changes to the minutes on page 1, page 2, page 3, and page 4.

Ms. Gehringer asked that the word "Board" be capitalized throughout the minutes.

**MOTION:** Motion by Suter, seconded by Peterson:  
To approve the minutes of the September 30, 2016 meeting, as amended.

VOTE: Yeas, 5  
Nays, None  
Absent, 2 (Desmond, Schreiner)

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Final Review of the GCAB Action List**

Mr. Stern discussed the lack of Unfinished Business on the agenda. Clerk Pierce noted that Unfinished Business is categorized as Pending Items on this agenda. Ms. Gehringer suggested it be called Unfinished Business.

Mr. Stern said that a report from the Commission, or for that matter, from staff should be discussed as a Board. He referenced the comments directed to him, Ms. Gehringer and Ms. DeWeese during the report presented to the Commission. He said the Board should not ignore the comments.

**MOTION:** Motion by Stern, seconded by Peterson:  
To amend the agenda to include the material sent to us from the Commission meeting on July 11, 2016.

VOTE: Yeas, 5  
None, None  
Absent, 2 (Desmond, Schreiner)

Ms. Pierce explained that at the September 2, 2016 meeting, the Board discussed and adopted the Action List. It has been included for a final review by the Board before submitting it to the City Commission.

Chairman Gehringer commented that under Item 3, the Board has to recommend an RFP for a Master Plan for Greenwood Cemetery. She would like to add a map for the cemetery to that item.

Mr. Stern commented that columbaria or above-ground burials in historic cemeteries are often included in low walls that are inclusive. He would not want to encumber someone doing a master plan from thinking about this way of accommodating those people who desire above-ground burial while maintaining the historic appearance and nature of our cemetery.

Ms. Buchanan asked what is being put in the master plan. Ms. Pierce said the recommendation was to request that the City Commission allow for an RFP Master Plan to be issued, so once it is approved, the funding through the budget is approved, and the Board will decide what the RFP will include. Ms. Buchanan confirmed that landscaping could be included.

Ms. Gehringer asked when the east entrance gate would be fixed. Ms. Pierce will contact the Department of Public Service to advise them of the needed repair.

Discussion continued about adding landscaping along the boundary next to the vacant lot. Ms. Gehringer suggested that the Department of Public Service look into the kind of plantings for that area. Ms. Pierce suggested that might be included in the Master Plan RFP. Ms. Pierce explained the City Commission may re-prioritize the Action List items that the Board discusses. Ms. Pierce said the Board will be notified when the City Commission is discussing this.

**MOTION:** Motion by Buchanan, seconded by Suter:  
To ask the Department of Public Services to recommend foliage to be planted on the west side of the cemetery.

VOTE: Yeas, 5  
Nays, None  
Absent, 2 (Desmond, Schreiner)

Mr. Stern explained that one of the reasons the Board suggested a Master Plan is due to the concerns about the river. He suggested that any Master Plan incorporate the river into the plan.

**MOTION:** Motion by Suter, seconded by Buchanan:  
To adopt the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board Action List as presented, and with the addition to Item 3 of a map for the cemetery, and request that the Action List be submitted to the City Commission for review.

VOTE: Yeas, 5  
Nays, None  
Absent, 2 (Desmond, Schreiner)

Mr. Stern requested that the Board discuss the Monumark QR code information included in the agenda packet today.

**V. PENDING ITEMS**

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

**A. National Historic Designation of Cemetery**

Chairman Gehringer noted the article about the cemetery which was published by Birmingham Living.

Ms. Buchanan has spoken with Mr. Christiansen to request information about the National Designation that can be provided to the City Commission. He indicated that he would provide that information to Ms. Buchanan. He added he would be coming to see the cemetery as well.

Ms. Pierce commented that we will present the request to the City Commission upon receipt of the information requested from Mr. Christiansen.

Ms. Buchanan explained that there are no additional limitations on the cemetery due to the national recognition than what is in place for the state recognition and to which the cemetery is currently adhering. The advantage to the national designation is the recognition itself. The state historic designation was given in 1991. It was agreed that the national historical designation will attract more attention to the cemetery and the city.

Ms. Buchanan hopes to be ready for May 2017 submission.

**B. Discussion of Monumark Information**

Ms. Pierce explained that the information was included as information only. Ms. Buchanan noted that she saw the small designation on relatively new markers. It is paid for by the family of the deceased.

Mr. Stern provided some background information about Monumark and QR codes. It is an archival tool. He suggested having a joint dialogue with the Museum Board and our Board. He thinks there is a desire of people in the community for archiving, and we should ask the Museum Board what their thoughts are about joint cooperation and meet what seems to be a need.

Ms. Suter said we are not notified when these codes are affixed to headstones, and asked if we should be notified.

Mr. Stern said the Board should discuss the fact that the city should be in the monument business. Discussion followed.

**MOTION:** Motion by Buchanan, seconded by Suter:

To review the cemetery rules and regulations in regards to the Monumark QR codes designation.

VOTE:           Yeas,    5  
                  Nays,    None  
                  Absent, 2 (Desmond, Schreiner)

Ms. Pierce cautioned the Board that any Boards that wish to work together on an item of interest must speak with the City Manager first. She suggested that the Board may want to recommend that the Board work with the Museum Board on this topic, if that is decided.

Mr. Stern said he will approach the Museum Board as a private citizen about this topic.

**C. Digitization of Cemetery Records (attachment)**

Ms. Pierce explained that Pontem and BS&A have been contacted by city staff and they were unable to attend this meeting. It is hoped to secure some kind of presentation for the November 18<sup>th</sup> meeting or a webinar.

**D. Donor Recognition Program**

Ms. Pierce said the City Manager has reviewed the program that the Board developed, and the City Attorney is currently reviewing it. The Board would like to review the program after the reviews have been completed, and before it is submitted to the City Commission for approval.

**E. Request for RFP for GPR and Master Plan Services in the Cemetery**

Ms. Pierce said she has spoken with the City Manager about the GPR and the Master Plan. The requests will be added to the budget for his review. The City Manager will make the determination whether to proceed. Ms. Pierce said the budget is approved in May of each year. The City Commission discusses it in April. The staff submits their requests to the City Manager and meets with him usually in February.

Mr. Stern noted that last year the cemetery was not included the long-range planning session or in the budget meeting of the Commission, and he asked if the cemetery will be included this year. Ms. Pierce did not have that information at this time. She noted that any presentation is prepared by staff. The Board is invited to attend, as both are open meetings.

**F. Amendment to the Cemetery Regulations regarding Payment Plan**

Ms. Gehringer suggested changing this to "Amendment to the Cemetery contract with Elmwood". She said the contract as a whole is something that the City Commission wanted us to get started on as soon as we could.

Ms. Pierce said that the Commission did not technically ask that the contract be reviewed by the Board. She said it is on the Action List, and the Board may want to wait until the Commission reviews on the Action List and prioritizes the list.

Ms. Suter said she thinks it should be kept on the Unfinished Business since it has been on the table for some time.

Mr. Stern considers what the contractor is doing is illegal. He said it is very clear in the regulations that nothing may be done that is not specified in the regulations, and that the contractor is responsible to the city. He said he is not opposed to the practice, but thinks that it must be in the regulations in order to be able to charge for something.

Ms. Gehringer recalls that City Attorney Currier said at the Commission meeting, that the contract does not say that the contractor cannot offer the service. Ms. Gehringer said she spoke with an attorney regarding the contact, who said if it is not in the contract, it is not permitted.

**VI. CONTRACTOR REPORT**

**A. Revised Contractor Reports with new format (to be distributed at the next meeting)**

Ms. Pierce distributed the sample report format and explained that it has been formatted differently for more clarity. She noted that 131 total graves have been sold to date. There are 435 remaining graves.

Mr. Stern pointed out the last statement on the second page has not been updated. Ms. Pierce noted that the contractor will be asked to update that statement on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report.

Mr. Stern would like the report to show how much money the contractor is making from burials.

Ms. Suter said that is part of the contract. The contract would have to be changed.

Ms. Gehringer said other cities have hired a part-time cemetery manager who is qualified as such. She said the salary certainly would not be what Elmwood is being paid.

Mr. Stern said in many cemeteries, much of this work is done by the backhoe operator, who is normally doing general work in the cemetery and is paid \$12-15 per hour.

Ms. Pierce suggested this should be discussed during the management agreement discussion on the Action List.

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

## **VIII. BOARD COMMENTS**

Mr. Stern asked to clarify if Ms. Gehringer wanted to add the Commissioners' comments from the meeting. Ms. Pierce said she could provide the date of the agenda so the Board can reference it.

**MOTION:** Motion by Stern, seconded by Peterson:

To add at the next meeting the commissioner comments from the July 11, 2016 City Commission meeting under New Business.

**VOTE:**           Yeas,    5  
                      Nays,    None  
                      Absent, 2 (Desmond, Schreiner)

## **IX. ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 9:36 AM.

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