

**GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2018 AT 8:30 AM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, ROOM 205, 151 MARTIN**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Gehringer called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

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

Administration: City Clerk Mynsberge

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of meeting minutes of September 7, 2018

Ms. Schreiner asked that "pulley wall" be corrected to "pony wall", which means a half-size wall, on page 6.

Ms. Gehringer asked that on page 6, in the sentence preceding the bullet points, "work both on mobile and on computers" be changed to "work on both mobile phones and computers".

Ms. Gehringer also asked that, on page 6, the third statement from the bottom be changed from "City Clerk Mynsberge stated that Elmwood does not charge an administrative fee for their work" to "City Clerk Mynsberge stated that Elmwood does not charge an administrative fee for their work on their current payment plan agreement".

MOTION: Motion by Ms. Buchanan, seconded by Ms. Suter:
To approve the minutes of September 7, 2018 as amended.

VOTE: Yeas, 4
Nays, 0
Absent, 3

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Second Quarter 2018 Financial Report
City Clerk Mynsberge conveyed Ms. Arcome's apologies for not being able to attend the meeting, noting an appointment came up at the last minute as routinely happens in the funeral business.

Ms. Gehringer commented, that although Ms. Arcome, Elmwood Historic Cemeteries, reported in July that there were no more than two contiguous plots available at Greenwood, the chart on the last page of the Second Quarter Financial Report shows grave numbers 5, 6, 7, and 8

together in Section O, Lot 20-B. Ms. Mynsberge clarified that consecutive numbering does not necessarily mean plots are contiguous because they could be head to head. Ms. Schreiner pointed out that the plots referenced by Ms. Gehringer are not available because they are under contract.

B. Second Quarter 2018 Greenwood Cemetery Perpetual Fund Report
Ms. Gehringer expressed pleasure with the fund balance of \$634,274.08.

C. Deferment of tree planting(s) in Greenwood Cemetery.

City Clerk Mynsberge reported:

- At the GCAB's September 7, 2018 meeting, Ms. Buchanan reported she and Ms. Suter met with a representative of the Department of Public Services and an arborist from J.H. Hart to discuss adding more trees within Greenwood Cemetery.
- Because the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board (GCAB) is a recommending Board to the City Commission, plans for tree plantings at the cemetery would be appropriately discussed and voted on as a Board.
 - Other parties with knowledge and interest in the cemetery should be consulted, such as the Department of Public Services and our contractor, Elmwood Historic Cemetery.
 - Consequences, such as possible loss of burial spaces, would need to be considered before making a recommendation.
- On March 17, 2017 the City Commission directed the GCAB to develop a Master Plan for the cemetery including a map. That direction is still the Commission's active objective for the GCAB. Recommendations on tree plantings in the cemetery should be an item that comes out of the Master Planning process as a goal.

Ms. Suter expressed:

- Concern that potential tree locations will be purchased as plots if the GCAB defers tree plantings.
- Trees in Greenwood Cemetery are necessary, that the GCAB is not considering adding many trees at this point, and that some currently unhealthy trees could be removed to make room for more trees.
- Awareness that this is ultimately a decision for the Commission, and that the financial impact must be considered.
- Desire that the Cemetery not look like White Chapel, with all open space.

Ms. Buchanan said the City had originally put in a number of trees knowing it would lose revenue, but the landscaping was prioritized. She explained that it takes a long time to grow a tree to maturity. She also mentioned spots in the Cemetery that get intolerably hot without the shade provided by trees.

The GCAB noted that some of the trees being considered would be replacement trees.

Ms. Schreiner acknowledged potential issues with waiting on trees or planting them soon. She pointed out that the GCAB would need expert advice for the tree planting process, and that she was not sure how to reconcile the need for haste with the Master Plan and the need for careful consideration of tree plantings.

Ms. Buchanan said her goal was to begin exchanging information with the arborist about possibilities and recommendations, but not to rush the process.

Ms. Schreiner said the arborist needs to work in conjunction with Elmwood. She suggested the GCAB recommend to the Commission tree plantings in the near future, for the beautification and longevity of the Cemetery.

Chairperson Gehringer acknowledged the trade-off between planting trees or selling plots but asserted the Cemetery is there to accommodate the owners, not profit off of plot sales. She expressed desire to see the Cemetery remain bucolic and to that end suggested the City plant two or three trees in the Cemetery to start.

Ms. Suter and Ms. Buchanan concurred.

Chairperson Gehringer proposed a potential meeting with DPS, any members of the GCAB who would like to attend, the arborist, and Elmwood, to discuss potential locations for trees, where they would flourish, where they would not interfere with gravesites. Then those recommendations could be forwarded to the City Commission for their approval. In this way the GCAB accomplishes some of its goals without continuing to wait on the Master Plan.

Ms. Buchanan noted that the trees can be planted largely in blank spaces instead of plots.

Ms. Suter noted that old roots disintegrate, which might open up other spaces about ten years hence.

Chairperson Gehringer said trees would be useful for shelter from both the winter and the sun.

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

To recommend to the City Commission a meeting of the appropriate people, likely including members of the GCAB, the City Arborist, a representative from Elmwood, and representatives from DPS, to look at maps of Greenwood in order to formulate a general plan for the basics of a tree planting regime.

VOTE: Yeas, 4
 Nays, 0
 Absent, 3

City Clerk Mynsberge said she would submit it for consideration for the second City Commission meeting in October 2018.

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. Payment Plan Policy

Chairperson Gehringer opined that the payment plan policy was submitted to the City Attorney without direction from the GCAB or the Commission. She noted that she would like to have been notified the policy was going before the City Attorney, even though she did like the City Attorney's changes.

Ms. Schreiner noted that she was not surprised the payment plan policy went before the City Attorney, as everything the GCAB does is subject to review by the City Attorney. She said the City Attorney's revisions have been beneficial to the payment plan policy. Ms. Schreiner said "For purchase agreements issued in 2018 and subsequently" in the second-to-last paragraph should be changed to include future policies, and not extant ones. She also explained that the part of the policy referencing forfeiture was from previous text provided by the City Attorney.

Chairperson Gehringer said that on September 7, 2018 the GCAB suggested the policy apply to “purchase agreements initiated on or after October 1, 2018.”

The GCAB concurred to change it to “purchase agreements initiated on or after (effective date),” empowering City Clerk Mynsberge to fill in the appropriate date once the payment plan policy is approved by the Commission.

City Clerk Mynsberge told the GCAB:

- Back payments do not need to be included in the payment plan policy as they are a one-time issue being addressed between City Management and Elmwood.
- All pending City policy changes have to go before the City Attorney before being presented to the City Commission, and she was remiss in not doing so.

The GCAB consented to changing a section of the first paragraph to read “a payment agreement may be entered into to allow for the purchase price of a plot(s)”.

MOTION: Motion by Ms. Buchanan, seconded by Ms. Schreiner:
To accept the payment plan policy as amended.

VOTE: Yeas, 4
 Nays, 0
 Absent, 3

B. Discussion of Master Plan Process

City Clerk Mynsberge reviewed the Board’s previous consensus to determine Cemetery projects and formulate a five-year plan for the Cemetery in lieu of a Master Plan. She also:

- Reminded the GCAB that the Plan is subject to Commission approval, and that once approved anything requiring expenditure still needs to go through the budgeting process.
- Stated that her impression is the GCAB is being given the go-ahead to plan as they believe appropriate.
- Recommended the GCAB come to a consensus on their long-range goal, and then begin planning how to begin moving towards that.

Ms. Buchanan said Maintenance and Landscaping should be considered as an addition because it is a large part of the Cemetery’s attraction.

Chairperson Gehringer, Ms. Buchanan and Ms. Suter said the GPR would be a worthwhile expenditure, especially because it could help guide the tree plantings.

Chairperson Gehringer said everyone should refresh their memory and be prepared to discuss in December.

VI. CONTRACTOR REPORT

None.

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

No members of the public were present.

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

None.

IX. ADJOURN

Chairperson Gehringer adjourned the meeting at 9:20 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: DECEMBER 7, 2018

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).