

**GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2019 AT 8:30 AM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, ROOM 205, 151 MARTIN**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Darlene Gehringer, Chairperson at 8:30a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Darlene Gehringer, Chairperson
Linda Buchanan, Vice-Chairperson
Kevin Desmond
Linda Peterson
Laura Schreiner
George Stern
Margaret Suter

Absent: None

Administration: Assistant City Manager Gunter, Assistant to the City Manager
Gallagher, and Administrative Transcriptionist Chapman

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 8, 2019

MOTION: Motion by Mr. Stern, seconded by Ms. Schreiner:
To approve the minutes of November 8, 2019 as amended or corrected:

- Ms. Suter noted that she was absent from the November 8, 2019 meeting.
- Ms. Schreiner noted that on Page 3, second to last paragraph: Linda Peterson should read Ms. Peterson.
- Mr. Stern noted on Page 4, under Motion: Move to recommend a resolution should read Move to submit a resolution recommending sending contract amendment to the City Commission.

VOTE: Yeas, 6
 Nays, 0
 Recusal, 1 Ms. Suter due to absence.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. TRANSITION FROM ELMWOOD TO CREATIVE COLLABORATION

Assistant City Manager Gunter presented this item.

- A contract was fully executed with Creative Collaboration to continue operations at Greenwood without disruption.
- Greenwood Cemetery Records were successfully transferred from Elmwood to the City

of Birmingham.

- Financial reports are in the process of being transferred and expected to be available early next week.

Ms. Peterson requested clarification about Ms. Arcome's relationship with Elmwood.

Mr. Stern asked if the City knows the subcontractors that Ms. Arcome would be contracting with to operate Greenwood.

Ms. Suter asked if the City has documentation on Ms. Arcome's company, the LLC that she set up.

- Assistant City Manager Gunter clarified the relationship for Ms. Peterson and affirmed Mr. Stern and Ms. Suter's questions.

B. CEMETERY DATABASE DEVELOPMENT – DISCUSSION

Assistant City Manager Gunter presented this item.

- Ms. Peterson asked about the database; Assistant City Manager Gunter explained that the records are electronic.
- A GIS team is in-house and in place to:
 - Work with Ms. Arcome to geocode the current map of Greenwood.
 - Develop an additional layer of technology to allow for electronic location look-up.
 - Establish a well thought-out list of fields so that the database could be easily searchable, published on-line, and used for other purposes.
- Ms. Schreiner suggested that the City look at what others have done to accomplish the same goals; example www.findagrave.com and www.ancestry.com
- Mr. Stern brought a system in 1987 called Cemetery Management. While he does not recommend this particular system, he viewed Clover Hill's system, Pontim, and wondered how to integrate it into BSA. He provided Assistant City Manager Gunter with information, and recommended that she use a system that is already established, and purchase the package. Mr. Stern suggested another popular system called CemSites claims that it is compatible with BSA. He also asked Ms. Gunter if she had spoken to anyone at Clover Hill Park Cemetery in reference to cemetery management. She responded that she had not.
- Mr. Desmond asked if the database fields would be made public. Ms. Gunter replied no.
- GCAB's list of fields:
 - Suffix
 - Maiden Name
 - First
 - Middle
 - Last
 - Prefix
 - Veteran Status/Military Service
 - Next of Kin contact information
 - Upload Obituary
 - Soundex or Exact to narrow a search
 - Link to funeral home
 - Most recent place where a person lived.
- Mr. Desmond confirmed that persons doing family history research, genealogy

searches, etc. often call the funeral home for detail information.

- Ms. Schreiner suggested that the City look at www.familytreemaker.com and www.ancestry.com for ideas.
- Mr. Stern assured Ms. Gunter, if additional work fell onto the City Clerk, GCAB is not saying that the clerk has to absorb this responsibility without additional resources. He went on to say, let the board know what is needed to support the administrative efforts of the cemetery and the board will help identify those resources. Mr. Stern asked to have a voice at the planning and budget meetings held by the City, and perhaps manage their own budget.
- Ms. Gunter expressed that before the next meeting, Geocoding will begin and is on a 6-8 week timeline and is looking for a robust conversation for an actionable plan for an outcome that may be seen in the near future.
- Ms. Schreiner suggested that staff look for all of the overlap from other historical organizations tracking the same information for the highlight of what the City should hone in and focus on. She expressed that there is no need to reinvent the wheel.
- Mr. Stern further suggested that Ms. Gunter focus on a management system as opposed to an information system. He pled for the administration not to spend a lot of money and time developing an information system.

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. GROUND PENETRATING RADAR

- Ms. Gehringer asked about the status of the Ground Penetrating Radar project.
- Ms. Gunter explained that the project is on hold until the new City Clerk is appointed.
- Mr. Stern informed the GCAB that the person, who manages Franklin Cemetery, spoke very highly of the results that they received from GPR at the last commission meeting. He further expressed that Commissioner Hoff urged City Manager Valentine to move forward with the contract.
- Ms. Suter felt that the money budgeted would run out this year.
- Ms. Gunter assured the board that the budget would not run out.

VI. FINANCIAL REPORT

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

VIII. BOARD COMMENTS

- Ms. Buchanan commented that she researched cemetery management companies that are managing historical cemeteries. She found that most are private, in-house, and owned by Midwest Memorial Group. Ms. Buchanan would like to have additional discussion about what is available to Greenwood moving forward.
- Ms. Buchanan is in the process of updating the Greenwood Cemetery Walking Tour.
- Ms. Buchanan also expressed that the Museum is updating their database.
- Mr. Stern expressed that the board was invited to the spring long-range master-planning meeting in 2019, but did not see any particular reference to Greenwood in the report.
- Mr. Stern noted that one of the most important items on the agenda at the last Commissioners Meeting was the discussion about the level of service that Greenwood

provides to the community. The City Manager, Ms. Woods, and Commissioner Hoff all spent time speaking about service. Finally, Commissioner Nickita made an impassioned summation of the discussion and further stressed the necessity to establish key performance indicators to actually measure service. Mr. Stern referred to Mr. Desmond, the resident expert in service, to show the board what the indicators should look like to facilitate future discussion.

IX. ADJOURN

Ms. Gehringer adjourned the meeting at 9:43a.m.

Next meeting, Friday, January 3, 2020.

Cheryl Arft, Acting City Clerk

/vc

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