

**Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Friday, May 7, 2021, 10 A.M.  
Virtual Meeting**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Linda Buchanan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Present: Chair Linda Buchanan (location: Birmingham, MI)  
Pam DeWeese (location: Birmingham, MI)  
Linda Peterson (location: Birmingham, MI)(arrived 10:07 a.m.)  
Laura Schreiner (location: Bloomfield Township, MI)  
George Stern (location: Birmingham, MI)  
Margaret Suter (location: Birmingham, MI)  
Joseph Vercellone (location: Rochester Hills, MI)

Absent: None

Administration: City Clerk Alex Bingham; Museum Director Leslie Pielack

Guests: None

**III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

A. Review of the Minutes of April 5, 2021

In the second to last paragraph on page two, Ms. Suter recommended 'this' be changed to 'the' in the first line and that 'of obstruction' be added after 'issue' in the same line.

Ms. Suter also asked that the statements in the fourth paragraph on page four be verified in terms of content and speakers.

Chair Buchanan noted that her name was misspelled on page two of the minutes and asked that it be corrected. On the same page, Chair Buchanan asked that 'and Chair Buchanan' be removed from the first line of the fourth paragraph from the bottom.

**MOTION:** by Suter, seconded by Schreiner:

To approve the minutes of April 5, 2021 as amended.

**VOTE:** Yeas, 6  
Nays, 0  
Abstain, Vercellone

#### **IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

#### **V. NEW BUSINESS**

##### A. Review of Goals

City Clerk Bingham reviewed the item.

After discussion, the Board recommended that their goals be sorted into short-term and long-term, with additional designations of the goals being 'critical' or 'desired'. They decided these classifications would better reflect their work than a simple ranking.

The Board also concurred to add their work on the Cemetery's Rules and Regulations, the supervision and coordination of grave releases, and their other current projects. They decided to retain GPR as a goal, but said it might be more of a 'desired' goal than a 'critical' one at this point.

Ms. DeWeese suggested that the Board should have an industry expert in GPR give a presentation on the potential uses of the technology sometime in the future, since there might have been changes since the last time the Board spoke to someone in the industry.

City Clerk Bingham said she would sort the goals accordingly and would return with the sorted goals for further Board feedback.

##### B. Greenwood Cemetery Rules and Regulations Discussion

City Clerk Bingham reviewed the item.

#### Overall Language and Definitions

The Board stated:

- 'City' should be used to mean any City Staff;
- 'Contractor' should be used to mean both the contractor and various subcontractors;
- Monuments, markers and memorials should be removed from definitions and included, with dimensional specifications, in the appropriate sections;
- All gendered language should be replaced with they/their/them as appropriate;
- 'Person driving' should be changed to 'Driver or operator';
- All units of measurement should be written out (e.g., 'inches', not in. or ");
- Numbers up to nine should be written out, and numbers 10 or more should be written with numerals (with some exceptions, such as numbers describing time or measurements); and,
- 'Outside' should be changed to 'outer burial'.

#### Lot Sales

This topic was tabled to the July 2021 GCAB meeting.

C. Locating Unmarked Burial Areas and Cemetery Terminology

Museum Director Pielack reviewed the item.

After Board discussion, Museum Director Pielack concurred with Dr. Vercellone that it would be worthwhile to consider the similarities and differences between the unmarked graves Birmingham has and a traditional understanding of a 'Potter's Field' since Birmingham kept more records of the burials than was typical.

She said it would also be worthwhile to consider some kind of recognition of those who were buried in the unmarked graves.

D. Planning for Future Meetings

The Board decided to discuss trees and landscaping, gravestone inventory, and goals at their June 2021 meeting.

**VI. REPORTS**

- A. Financial Reports
- B. Cemetery Sales & Activity
- C. Clerk's Office Update
- D. Grave Release Update
- E. Tree Update
- F. City Managers Report (March)

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

There were no public comments.

**VIII. BOARD COMMENTS**

City Clerk Bingham confirmed that she would verify that the payments for the second and third rites of burial go into the perpetual care fund.

Ms. DeWeese commended both the Staff and the Board on their progress towards the Board's goals.

Chair Buchanan:

- Offered thanks for the completed obstruction notation list;
- Noted that there are grass seeds that grow well under trees and that the City should look into using them in the Cemetery;
- Asked that statistics for private grave sales be included in the agenda packets moving forward; and,
- Updated the Board on the Pewabic pottery tile for Mary Chase Stratton.

Ms. Schreiner verified that the owner of Ms. Stratton's grave had been asked for permission for the installation of the tile.

Chair Buchanan said that she was not aware of any direct descendents of Ms. Stratton and so no owner or descendent had been contacted.

Ms. Schreiner clarified that since graves are privately owned, permission must be obtained from the owners to make permanent changes to a grave. She said exceptions tended to be Cemetery-wide changes, like lot pins ~~the numbers used to identify people in Greenwood~~<sup>1</sup>, or temporary items, like Veterans' Day memorial items.

After further discussion, the Board asked City Clerk Bingham to seek clarification from the City Attorney regarding the legality of installing the tile from Pewabic at Ms. Stratton's grave. They also asked that the City Attorney provide the Board guidance on similar memorial acts more generally.

It was noted that the the tile could also be installed elsewhere in the Cemetery or elsewhere in the City as appropriate.

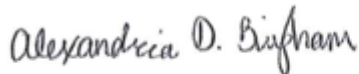
The Board then discussed the upcoming Cemetery tour on May 15, 2021.

Museum Director Pielack said she had consulted Emergency Manager/Fire Chief Paul Wells regarding the appropriate Covid-19 cautions for the outdoor tour and that he had said the tour could host as many attendees as desired with masks and social distancing.

<b>IX. ADJOURN</b>
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Chair Buchanan adjourned the meeting at 12:04 p.m.

Next Meeting: June 4, 2021



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Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk  
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<sup>1</sup> As amended at the June 4, 2021 meeting.