



Cemetery Superintendent/BPRW Director: Cindi Wight
Chair: Jennifer Diaz
Vice-chair – Alexandra Millar

Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: June 23, 2025

Commissioners Present: Jennifer Diaz, Nancy Kirby, Alexandra Millar-House, Mary Wesley (Martha Dallas not present)

Staff Present: Holli Bushnell, Cindi Wight, Steve Bachand, Diane Hannigan

Meeting was called to order 4:34pm at by Chair Jennifer Diaz

I. Approval of Agenda

Diaz moved to adopt the agenda, Mary Wesley moved to second, all were in favor

II. Approval of minutes from 4/3/2025

Diaz moved to approve the minutes, Alexandra Millar seconded, all were in favor

III. Public Forum

Public forum was opened at 4:36pm, as no one was present or wished to speak, public forum was also closed at 4:36pm

IV. Section 8 update

Steve Bachand provided a brief update based on information from parks planner Sophie Sauve. The contract is signed and Griever and Ward are jumping into project. There is no timeline yet, but Bachand will be able to provide more info by next commissioners meeting. The architect, Dave, is really excited to jump in. Cindi Wight pointed out that the section will be really popular, so the commission might want plan for the excess funds and figure out the most equitable way to sell the spots. Millar asked if the commission could we start working on those guidelines now and Wight was generally positive on this idea. Bachand pointed out that there is an area allocated for large lot purchase already, so Section 8 will likely not be sold for large lots. He would welcome a maximum number of lots allowed to be purchased in section 8, but feels that the cemetery wide policy of first come first serve should be honored in Section 8 as well. Office assistant Holli Bushnell reiterated that all customers see all lots appropriate to their wishes.

Wight pointed out that Section 8 will include a green burial section which might require new rules as well. Bachand explained that the original idea was not to pre-sell green burial lots, and to use them as needed, but the commission could decide to do things different. Wight suggested having the commission make a ruling as an extra layer of support for each decision in



the new section as the commission establishes rules of the cemetery that go in the ordinances and sets the fees for all operations. Staff can make basic rules, but commission needs to approve ordinances. The commission is in charge of changing what's in the ordinances and, on things that could be contentious, it helps to have the commission's support. There is a bit of a gray area, but it's good to get multiple perspectives. Millar suggested putting the rules/guidelines for section 8 on the next agenda. Kirby and Diaz agreed. Wight asked Bachand to take some time to figure out where commission involvement and support would be the most helpful and Steve agreed to look into it

V. Ordinance Review

Mary Wesley wanted to get started on figuring out what the proposed change to the existing ordinance would be to allow for green burials. She noted that commissioner Martha Dallas was also part of green burial sub-committee along with Wesley and Millar, and Wesley took some time to look back at sub-committee notes.

The first idea was to say that the ordinance does not apply in the following sections and then list Section 8. If other areas allow green burial they can be added to that list of sections at a future date. The definition of green burial could be included there as well.

Diaz liked the simplicity of the change. Bachand asked if assistant city attorney for BPRW Hayley McClenahan looks at ordinances changes and Wight confirmed that she does. She explained that the Dog Task Force is dealing with similar ordinance changes so she is familiar with the process.

Wesley explained that the proposed ordinance is clear that green burial can only happen in specific area as determined by cemetery staff, and what a green burial is will be defined by cemetery staff. This will hopefully eliminate the need to change the ordinances every time we open a new area. Wesley asked what the next steps should be. Wight explained that during the time that she is transitioning out of the director position and while the city is hiring a new BPRW director we can take small steps like reaching out to McClenahan with the proposed language. Bachand explained that staff is not available to work on this project right now, but it's a great winter project for himself and Paul Morris. He asked that the commission allow him a few months to get through busy season, and then he would be happy to take a hard look at green burials once things slow down. Bachand genuinely has no clue what the timeline for Section 8 will be, but he does feel it's good to get the ball rolling now so when it's ready we can have the guidelines in place. We have time, but it's good were starting to work on it now. We have at least a year before we break ground.

Wesley added that the policy documents that we generate can be living docs (most current version of policies). We can move forward once we get the legal ok to work on the ordinance change. There is no rush to finish policies, and the ordinance change can go forward on it's own.



VI. No/Low Mow Update

Diane Hannigan, the temporary field coordinator for nature based solutions for BPRW shared that she is coming up to her first anniversary in this role, so she may be missing a few pieces. That said, she and the conservation team in conjunction with Grow Wild continue to work on the circle garden, and everything is filling in really well. She has been working with Paul Morris in regards to how the mowers move around the cemetery. The goal is to relieve mowing pressure for staff and increase biodiversity cemetery-wide, and it looks fantastic. They have been very intentional with their plant selection to work on erosion and passively manage weeds. A group comes on every other Monday to weed and maintain, but it's starting to be needed less and less. They expanded the no-mow area below the chapel that runs from the road to the South edge of the staircase last fall with the help of 20-25 volunteers. They have been experimenting with planting directly into turf in this area and everything they planted was pretty hardy and will continue to strengthen overtime. They have already seen significant native plant growth this year and are working on figuring out when mowing will take place in these areas to best encourage the natives to continue to grow. The meadow is being expanded to the North side of the staircase based on Morris's experience with challenging mowing areas. They've started scouting and have already found great native species already there that just need a chance to grow. This will be another passive restoration technique where we encourage the plants already there with small supplementation. Like the other areas, this new area will be managed by the conservation team and Grow Wild. There is some signage currently, and they are going to be adding more in the shadier areas as well. This signage includes QR codes with information on the project. They will be scheduling some tours of the planting through Grow Wild to give those interested background on plant selection and planting techniques. Hannigan will share details on the event with Bachand and see who wants to come. Bushnell asked for confirmation that the grass road below the new garden area in section A will remain and Hannigan confirmed that the road is staying.

Bachand asked if the team would have any interest in doing transplanting on the right bank of the entrance hill. Millar reminded the commission of the Storm water catchment tanks that will at some point be installed beneath the parking lot. Wight explained that those plans have changed and work could be done without needing to be disturbed again and Bachand confirmed that there will not be much of an impact on the bank.

Diane explained that they can easily plop native plants in when disruptions take place, making the construction work less of a concern. Morris is also interested in developing a native area on the entrance banks too, and the conservation team is interested, but they have to stagger the expansion of these projects because the more they expand the more they have to maintain. Once other sites stabilize they can take on some more sections. Those areas have nasty invasives (grape vine and bittersweet) which take longer to remediate. Both Wight and Diaz complimented Hannigan on the beautiful work they've done.



VII. Staff/Director Updates

Wight shared that she has started drafting a memo for the next director regarding the cemetery commission and she would like to have the commission look at it. She wants to be clear about guidelines around the roll of commission and asked if the next director should meet with vice-chair and chair to generate agenda in advance of the next meeting. Millar felt that could be really helpful as the process is still developing in terms of getting agenda items. She felt that it would be great to meet ahead before their first meeting especially. She suggested Wight include information regarding ongoing points of contention at the cemetery (dogs, drugs, unhoused, etc...) Diaz mentioned that there are differences in the way the cemeteries function versus the rest of the parks. The perception is different from the reality and it might be good to clarify those differences. Wight suggested that the commission and Bachand try looking at Chapter 9 in the ordinances as a whole to see what changes could/should be made. The parks commission has been working on trying to simplify their ordinances so it's not such a challenge to update. Diaz felt this was a good idea.

Bachand shared that staff had two loads of driveway material delivered to Greenmount and Lakeview. The cemetery department is now fully staffed for the summer, but we will be leaving the posting up just in case our new hires don't work out. So far so good. Crew is doing the best they can. Kirby was absolutely delighted to hear about the gravel and asked if the potholes would be filled in at Greenmount. Bachand explained that this work has been a long time coming and the department could finally afford it this year.

Bushnell let the commission know that the Veteran's flag project was completed on time. We were short flags for a couple of areas of the cemetery and Bushnell, as a private citizen, took it upon herself to purchase a gross of flags and crowd fund their cost. Bushnell also informed the commission about an accident that took place in the last week that took out a good part of the North Ave fence. The status of the driver is unclear.

VIII. Commissioner Items

Before commissioners shared their items, Wight shared that this commission has been awesome to work with. She thanked Diaz and Millar for running again for commission, and is very glad to have them back. Wight always looks forward to these meetings and wishes us the best moving forward.

Diaz shared that she and Millar are really relieved and excited to continue with the commission. She expressed her hope that Commissioner Martha Dallas could be more involved but real life has gotten in the way. She feels we have a great group of commissioners who are very passionate about the work and it has been lovely and a pleasure to work together with Cindi these past 6 years. Diaz is excited for Wight in her next steps and hope everything goes well. Kirby shared that a "No Baseball Parking" sign has been posted next to bike rack at Greenmount. Unfortunately 22 cars parked all over Greenmount for the game last weekend. The sign is now



helping. At the weekend game, Kirby handed out candy and thanked the parents for moving the cars. Later, two unhoused folks used her Adirondack chairs and had pizza and beer on her back porch then slept in the cemetery. She has had to shut her outside spigot off so they wouldn't use the water for drinking and bathing. Kirby took the belongings they left in garbage and placed it by bike rack. She asked Bachand for a pick up. Kirby shared that these unhoused folks had a party and she ended up picking up needles and narcan. She took two tents down last year. She's had to put up signs and motion lights to try and keep safe. Kirby asked if staff was able to purchaser D-2 for Jason Stuffle to continue cleaning stones at Greenmount. Bushnell was happy to report that we were able to purchase several cases. Bachand asked Kirby to please reach out to the office for any problems. Staff will take care of any dangerous refuse like needles, and while he's grateful for her help, he rather she stay staff. All the commissioners shared their thanks for Director Wight's hard work over the last 8 years. They wished her the best in her next endeavor. Millar asked when the new director might start and Wight confirmed it will likely not be until September at the earliest.

IX. Adjournment

Kirby moved to adjourn, Wesley seconded, and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:07pm. The next meeting will be held on in September.