



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

Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: November 20, 2025

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

Staff Present: Holli Bushnell, Steve Bachand,

Meeting was called to order 4:35pm at by Vice Chair Alexandra Millar

I. Approval of Agenda

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

II. Approval of minutes from 6/23/2025

Millar moved to make the following edits: remove the sentences “Should commission continue to work on coming up with language for the ordinance change?” and “Wesley explained that the subcommittee had generated language, but hadn’t shared with Wight. Millar added that the language is sort of done, just on hold. It’s not in its final form, but they taken the work as far as they can.” And add in “The commission tasked the green burial subcommittee to create language which was presented in the June commission meeting.” Where the previous edit was made. Also added was “via text” in Millar’s statement regarding Commissioner Dallas’s participation in meetings, and removed was “Millar thought that was great and asked what the process would be.” As this was not recorded correctly. Wesley, seconded, all were in favor

III. Public Forum

Public forum was opened at 4:48pm. Bren Alvarez with SAS architects came to speak about a possible use for Elmwood Cemetery. She has been working on memory care project that will adjoin Elmwood Cemetery on the Southeast boundary of the cemetery grounds. The exact address is 77 N Winooski (formerly Boucher and Pritchard Funeral Home) and 91 N Winooski Ave. Those existing buildings are going to be used for staff housing. The back yard of the proposed project aligns with Elmwood fence. Alvarez’s group is hoping that residents of the care facility can have access to Elmwood for recreation purposes. She asked if it would be possible to have a gate with an electronic lock so that patients and care givers can access cemetery. It would just be residents and staff and they would use electronic hardware that could maintain a use record.



Wesley asked if the proposed gate would only be accessible from the memory care facility's property. Alvarez confirmed that this would be a private gate. The benefit of using Elmwood is that it's already a fenced in space which is needed for the residents.

Millar asked how many people the facility intends to house and Alvarez confirmed it's between 50-60 beds. Kirby asked if this was also going to be a day care facility and Alvarez confirmed that would be offered. Millar asked who would have access through the gate and Alvarez stated it would only be residents and staff. Wesley asked if staff would always be present and Alvarez confirmed that that is their intention.

Wesley liked that idea and was curious about staff reactions. Current public access to Elmwood is really limited. She loves the idea of it being a green space, especially for this particular community as it feels very poignant. Given that there are rarely people in Elmwood the question is would controlled access would that invite other community access questions? Steve Bachand shared that he is taking in all the info from the proposal and feels it needs to be discussed internally. There are lots of liability issues to look at. If there are other questions we should ask them now. He asked what the timeline for construction of the facility is. Alvarez confirmed that they are only in concept design right now, and are going through permitting and zoning process. January 2027 is when they're hoping to break ground and another year before the building is occupied, so there is lots of time to plan and figure it out. And if it doesn't work out, they'll be good neighbors.

Bachand asked Alvarez to provide her contact information and Alvarez thanked the commission for their time and consideration.

Millar concluded by sharing that she loves the concept of having a safe space where these folks can walk. She did feel it brings up questions about Elmwood and public access. This is something that has come up multiple times over the years, and it may be time to look at it again. Are there other opportunities to open the public gate? More access for everyone.

Public forum was closed at 5:03pm

IV. Departmental Updates

Holli Bushnell shared that original Friend of Louisa Howard Chapel, Jane Ewing, has passed away and there is a card at the office for folks to sign. Bachand shared that there is not a lot to update. Phil Lewis is new BPRW director and he starts next Tuesday. In addition to his other titles he will be the new cemetery superintendent. The cemetery had a very nice donation from Robert Cooper and we have a thank you card for that too. All three cemeteries are in full blown fall cleanup mode. Bushnell reports that she continues to make good progress on the data entry project.



Millar asked if commissioners should sign both cards and Bushnell confirmed she will leave them on the porch in the mailbox for commissioners to sign.

Millar asked for an update on the status of the third fountain at Lakeview. Bachand reported that he is still researching it's history.

V. Commissioner Items

Millar shared that she took a look back at her notes from the June meeting. The commission discussed equity of sales in section 8. They also wanted to look ahead at the next year and make a plan for what the commission should work on. The concern is that Section 8 is the last remaining burial space we have. How do we want to handle people signing up for these lots?

Bachand shared that the section 8 lots will likely be set at the standard lot rate. In terms of the actual design, we just received new plans. The original plan was not space friendly, so we hired the same firm that designed section 5. The planners have reviewed this new plan as well as Steve and Paul. They are working on revisions now (including Islamic society). The initial amount of green burial graves presented were not enough, so the new plan increases the number of lots. Right now we are waiting for revisions. The next steps will be to work with Sophie Sauve and have her come in to share plans. There are lots of logistics to work out and work to do before the section could go live. It will likely take at least a year or so to put everything in place. Once plans are approved the site needs to be leveled, then pinned, then landscaped, etc. Funding is challenging right now, so we need to figure out what we can realistically do financially. Final development might be years down the road.

Diaz asked how many years we might be waiting for the section. Bachand stated that it's very dependent on a lot of different factors. Right now it looks like it will be at least two years. Also, there is no intention of pre-selling green burial sites – these will be as needed only. Diaz asked why we won't offer presales of green burial sites, and Bachand explained that the fear is people would just buy them all in 6 months and then we're out of space. That's why we're only selling one grave at a time as needed. Diaz asked why we don't allow a spouse to purchase an adjoining lot. Bachand explained that the plan is just to not allow presales.

Millar asked if the commission should look at the green burial policy this winter and Steve shared that there are already some policy ideas floating around, and we can create a draft for a future meeting. For example – have to stagger where we do burials so staff doesn't have to interact with decomposition. Spreading them out to let the natural process happen. This will help keep everyone happy and safe. When we're closer to opening it will come to the commission with what the policies and procedures are.

Bachand explained that the actual lots are going to be significantly larger, 5x11 so there is plenty of room to keep from disturbing decomposition. Wesley added that the Green Burial subcommittee did some research on this, but the committee has sort of sun-setted. There were



three community members as well as Wesley and Millar. It's been 3 years since they've been active, but they all cared a lot. They would revive the group if the commission wanted to. Bachand asked about the development of language regarding the ordinance change and Wesley offered to email it to Bachand and BPRW lawyer, Hayley McClenahan. They agreed that the next steps would be for McClenahan to approve the language and send it back to commission; then we can start ordinance change process. Now that we have a new director (hope he'll be at the next meeting) we can loop him in on a bunch of stuff. Wesley asked to put this on the next meeting agenda.

Bachand shared that he will be discussing this with Lewis when he meets him. He's comfortable introducing the ordinance change at next meeting, but notes that we have time and don't need to rush. It's better to be thorough and make sure all the I's are dotted and t's crossed. Bachand asked Wesley to send the language to him and McClenahan, and he'll forward to Lewis and we'll discuss at the next meeting. Bachand will also email Sophie Sauve and ask about section 8 plans and update at next meeting. If we get them before next meeting will ask Sophie to attend.

Bachand shared that 11/26 is the last day for DG Robertson. From here on out Lakeview will be getting vaults from Concord, NH. The good news is, they're planning to open a satellite location in Barre.

Nancy Kirby shared that there are a couple of limbs down in Greenmount near the bike rack and over by the Brown monument on East side of the cemetery. Otherwise, Greenmount is doing ok. She recently let 3 deer into the pedestrian gate.

Bachand shared that Tom Hughes, the President of the Vermont Society Sons of American Revolution, will be doing events in Burlington as part of a 4 stop tour to celebrate America's 250th independence day. There are no firm dates yet.

Diaz asked if the commission wants to cancel the December meeting. Wesley noted that if Lewis is available we should try to meet. Bachand said that if not, we should cancel. Diaz asked when we might know Lewis' availability and Bachand thought it would be the first week in December. Kirby brought up the ongoing issue of Martha Dallas being unable to attend meetings due to her changed work schedule. There was some frustration regarding her lack of ability to attend meetings when other community members would like to join the commission who *can* attend meetings. Bushnell suggested contacting Lori Olberg regarding guidelines for commissioners. The commission will continue to look into this issue.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:02pm. The next meeting date is TBD