

## Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** February 19, 2026

**Commissioners Present:** Jennifer Diaz, Martha Dallas, Nancy Kirby, Alexandra Millar, Mary Wesley

**Staff Present:** Holli Bushnell, Steve Bachand, Sophie Sauve

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 1/15/2026**

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

**III. Public Forum**

Public forum was opened at 4:35pm. As no one was present or wished to speak, public forum was also closed at 4:35pm

**IV. Commissioner questions and comments on Section 8 plans (from last meeting) –**

Martha Dallas shared that she took some time to look through the renderings with the understanding that we will be sending them back for another round of drawings. She asked if anyone has worked out a projection as to when we are likely to be full based on rate of current sales. Steve Bachand answered that it's hard to project just how many years of space remain. Staff handles 130-150 burials a year, but that doesn't necessarily equate to full grave space. We often are asked how long we have left, and honestly we don't know. Bachand explained that when he started with the department our burials tended to break down to 80% full casket and 20% cremation. Now that's flipped, which slows things down a lot.

Dallas continued with sharing that she recalled from last meeting that the extension of the Muslim section is going to be green burial which requires slightly larger lots so they can do burial without vaults. From Dallas' understanding, it looks like the section in general has 978 traditional lots and 100+ green ones. Could Section 8 have a larger number of green burial lots in exchange for traditional lots to accommodate more green burials in SW corner of section? Bachand conceded that adding more green burial lots could be discussed. That said, the department is pretty close to finalizing the plans. Bachand then introduced Sophie Sauve, the



planning director for BPRW. Sauve is spearheading the section 8 development process in addition to handling planning for all other city parks projects. Before turning things over to Sauve, Bachand added that he's unsure if we can afford to go back and redo the plans again to add more green burials, but we can discuss it.

Sauve shared that if we're going to put more green burials on the table we'd have to re-conceptualize the section. She realizes that desires are changing from original concept. When we first began the development process, green burials were not included at all. Green burial lots are larger, so it would reduce the amount of lots we'd have available. Sauve conceded that it is hard to anticipate how desires will continue to change while we expand the section. The maintenance for the section would also be different. Basically, adding more green burial lots would require a full re-think. Ultimately, Sauve was not sure what to advise particularly as what currently exists is an accepted concept, it's hard to go back and make changes, and the need to get this area developed is high.

Dallas felt that Sauve answered her questions pretty well. She noted that there are around 5 times as many traditional graves in the current plan, and that makes sense based on interest from a few years ago. Her sense is that interest in green burial at Lakeview would be greater than what we're planning for. That said, green options are expanding everywhere.

Sauve shared that it would be helpful to have the ordinances developed as we move forward. She reiterated that trying to anticipate changing desires makes planning really hard, especially in this particular work. She offered to ask consultants regarding green trends and see if there are other areas that could be a flexible option should desire increase.

Millar felt that green burial was a conversation when the first design came out, but the staff wasn't ready to develop practices at that time. She felt it would have been nice to see design before last revision and to have this discussion without the pressure of the budget or having to fully redesign.

Sauve shared that the design hasn't changed that much from the conceptual plan, but it does include input from staff on ground conditions and what we're capable of. It's a tricky subject. Sauve reiterated that if more green burial is desired we can look at it. Millar reiterated that she would have liked to have the commission more included in the development process before things were locked in. She feels the commission should be part of planning. She asked if accessibility has been considered in design process.

Sauve shared that she's not sure about topography and will check. She did share that the paths are planned to be compacted crushed stone and wide enough for vehicle passage (a wheelchair as well).

#### **V. Ordinance Language Update (requested by Mary) -**

Wesley shared that she sent the drafted language to Hayley McClenahan and Steve Bachand. McClenahan will come to a future meeting to discuss. The next few meeting dates have been



shared. Bachand shared that he hasn't really had a chance to talk to Phil Lewis about it, and is waiting for McClenahan's feedback before getting some input from Lewis.

Wesley asked to put a pin in this item for next meeting agenda. Dallas asked if Wesley can share the language with commission, and Wesley confirmed she will email it if it's OK.

**VI. Green Burial Update -**

See previous discussion

**VII. Year Ahead Update (requested by Alexandra) -**

Millar requested that staff and commissioners have a conversation about what's coming up ahead this year – the ways commissioners can support staff, projects commissioners are interested in, etc.... She wonders what is on folks' radar.

Bachand shared that soon we'll ask for perpetual care fund interest to be provided for the seasonal staff budget. He will also be chatting with Phil when he can regarding an ongoing list of things for that need the new director's attention. Steve reiterated that the perpetual care interest funds really helps a lot in keeping us staffed for summer. Otherwise, we are plugging along. We are still developing lots in section 6 (the field), creating new rows of saleable lots. Holli Bushnell shared that she is starting to work on the veteran's flag project for 2026. She did confirm that there is not enough money in the budget to replace every flag. She is looking for leads of folks who might donate. Bushnell will get the exact number of flags needed by next the meeting. Diaz offered to do outreach, and Bushnell will try to get Diaz the amount of money needed before the next meeting.

Millar asked if there was an update on the old, currently defunct, fountain in the Pinegrove section. Bachand shared that he contacted the Friends of Lakeview and they have some interest in potentially renovating the fountain in the future. So for now, it's going to stay the way it is for now.

Millar asked if there was a Cambrian Rise update regarding the accessible path on the SW side of the cemetery heading to the bike path. Sauve shared that there is no timeline for that currently. The agreement with the developer has expired and the city is working on a new agreement that will also include stormwater run-off tanks and Lakeview office improvements as well as traffic lights. It current in negotiations, which, unfortunately, is not the best news.

Millar asked if the agreement is something that might get settled this year, and Sauve admitted that she has no clue. This is a multi-departmental project. Right now CEDO is in charge of negotiations, but BPRW is still part of conversations. Bachand added that because of stall we haven't done any landscaping on the building or finished installing a formal entrance way. Now we're planning to put in a temporary accessible ramp to be ADA compliant.

Bushnell interjected that Lakeview needs a new Black Lives Matter flag. It's been flying since 2020 and has simply worn down. Bachand can assist with this.



Millar shared that there are a number of Ash trees at Lakeview as you come down the hill to the right. The city has been removing Ash trees because of emerald ash bore. She wondered if there is anything commission would like to do regarding this impending removal. Millar has been walking around with VJ Comai to talk about the trees. Our ash trees are not that healthy, so other trees have been planted nearby. Millar is setting up walking time with VJ, and commissioners can let her know if they want to join in on the walk. Removal of the Ash trees will likely happen at the end of summer or early fall. Millar felt that we might want to let the community know that the removal is happening.

**VIII. Adjournment**

Diaz moved to adjourn the meeting. Wesley and Millar seconded, and all in favor. Happy 90<sup>th</sup> birthday to Jennifer's mother! The meeting was adjourned at 5:07pm. The next meeting will be held on 3/19/2026 at the Lakeview office and via zoom.