

**MINUTES OF CEMETERY PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
City Hall Training Room
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)
February 13, 2025
4:00 PM**

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Lewis Bramlett called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Commission members present were Rebecca Carlson, Judi Burrell, Jim Poole, and Lizz Gray. City liaisons present included City Clerk Lea Alvarez, Deputy City Clerk Christie Burgner, Assistant Public Works Director Tim Cox, and Councilmember Pat Ferris. Kennesaw Cemetery Foundation President Stephen King and Foundation Secretary Andrew Bramlett were also in attendance.

A. 2025 Officer Election: Chair and Vice Chair

Consideration to elect the Chair and Vice Chair for Calendar Year 2025.

Commissioner Burrell moved to re-elect Lewis Bramlett as Chair and Lizz Gray as Vice-Chair for 2025. Commissioner Poole seconded the motion. Vote taken, motion unanimously approved (4-0). Motion passed.

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

A. Minutes: January 9, 2025

Consideration to approve the January 9, 2025, Cemetery Preservation Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Burrell moved to approve the January 2025 Cemetery Preservation Commission draft minutes. Commissioner Poole seconded the motion. Vote taken, motion passed unanimously (4-0). Motion passed.

3. Financial Report

A. Financials: January 2025

Consideration to approve the January 2025 financial reports.

Commissioner Carlson moved to approve the January 2025 financials as presented by City Clerk Lea Alvarez. Commissioner Burrell seconded the motion. Vote taken, unanimously approved (4-0). Motion passed. Chairman Bramlett inquired about the price of sod, which is approximately \$12,000.

4. Cemetery Preservation Foundation Update

Cemetery Foundation President Stephen King stated that the Foundation is currently completing the administrative renewal paperwork necessary for their 501(c)(3) for 2025. Please visit the Foundation's website (<https://kennesawcemetery.org/>) to see the new updated look.

5. Old Business

A. Update: Cemetery Storyboard Installation

Update provided by Lewis Bramlett on the final installation of the storyboard in the city cemetery.

Chairman Bramlett advised that a new storyboard was placed in the Cemetery on February 3. Andrew Bramlett provided the information for the storyboard, and it seems to be a good addition. He would like to see a veteran's storyboard in the cemetery when storyboards are purchased again.

B. Decoration Day: Event Planning

Discussion led by Lizz Gray regarding Decoration Day event schedule and activities.

Vice-Chair Lizz Gray shared her thoughts on Decoration Day [Exhibit A] to be held May 3 from 9a-12n. Discussion held with each member of the commission providing input. The consensus was to have a short, formal ceremony at the beginning of the day with Chairman Bramlett as the speaker, drinks and a breakfast sandwich or equivalent to be provided by Commission, volunteers will attempt to use the remaining D2 from Public Works (approximately 10 gallons) to clean monuments throughout the cemetery, and Andrew Bramlett will lead a cemetery tour at 11a. Further discussion held regarding promoting the event. Councilmember Ferris would like the Clerk's office to mail a letter, the Foundation advised they would have some email addresses staff could utilize, and the City will promote the event on social media. Further discussion held about legacy families, the possibility of the Commission/Foundation having a tent at the Big Shanty Festival, and if people interested in Decoration Day should sign up.

Foundation Secretary Andrew Bramlett reminded the Commission of the Cemetery Walking Tour scheduled for March 22 in conjunction with the Atlanta Preservation Center. Registration is free on Event Brite with a 20-25 person limit.

C. Update: Memorial Tree Plaque Replacements

Update provided by Clerks Office on memorial tree plaque replacement options, including art installation.

Ms. Alvarez advised that she spoke with Arts Programming Coordinator Vanita Keswani who spoke with the Master Craftsman program at Kennesaw State University. The cost for an art installation would be around \$9500. Ms. Alvarez reminded the Commission that to place plaques on the Tribute Wall was \$7200. Both options are cost-prohibitive. Discussion held. While there was an idea to sell leaves/birds for the art tree to create revenue, it seems unlikely the CPC would recoup a \$9500 investment. Ms. Alvarez suggested placing plaques on the tribute wall on a case-by-case basis (when requested by the family). Commissioner Burrell stated she has a contact who might provide the 52 plaques at a much less expensive cost. The Clerk's Office will provide Commissioner Burrell with information on current plaques including: wording, dimensions, materials, coating, thickness, and finish. Ms. Burrell stated she would be willing to fund the plaques if her source was utilized. Mr. Bramlett would like to see names only. Councilmember Ferris suggested one large plaque with all names; individual plaques

are preferred. Ms. Burrell will provide information at next meeting.

6. New Business

7. Staff Comment

Assistant Public Works Director Tim Cox invited commissioners to the cemetery to view the newly placed mulch. Some of the mulch areas have large rocks placed around them; if the commission would like to line all the mulch beds this way, the cost would be approximately \$900. Public Works is monitoring the plants at the cemetery. Should any of the flowering plants perish, they will be replaced with azaleas.

Councilmember Ferris reminded the commissioners that budget talks start in April. Review the spreadsheet and make a request. Chairman Bramlett inquired about the paving project. Discussion held. Mr. Cox stated that the sod project would come before paving. The internal road between Chalker and Historic A will be the first to be removed and sodded. The portion of road in Historic B will be next. Paving will be last. Councilmember Ferris advised that the cemetery paving project is in the City's long term master plan.

8. Adjourn

Chairman Bramlett adjourned the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

1. Opening Ceremony

- Welcome speech by Cemetery Preservation Commission representatives
- Brief history of Decoration Day and the cemetery
- Recognition of volunteers and special guests
- Instructions on proper cleaning methods and grave etiquette

2. Cemetery Cleanup, Beautification & Decoration

- **Grave Cleaning Stations:**
 - Provide cleaning supplies (D-2, soft brushes, water, and mild soap)
 - Assign volunteers to clean headstones respectfully
 - Educate participants on how to safely clean markers without causing damage
- **Landscaping Assistance:**
 - Raking leaves, trimming overgrown grass, and clearing debris
- **Bring Your Own Bouquet:** Encourage attendees to bring flowers to place on graves

3. Historical Walking Tour

- Guided tour highlighting notable graves, historical figures, and cemetery symbolism
- QR codes at certain graves linking to online historical information

4. Closing Reflection & Appreciation

- Thank-you speech and recognition of volunteers
- Moment of silence
- Light refreshments for attendees

Additional Considerations

- **Volunteer Coordination:** Assign groups to different sections for efficiency
- **Supplies Needed:** Gloves, cleaning tools, trash bags, flowers
- **Promotion:**
 - Flyers in community centers, social media posts, local news outreach
 - Partner with schools, historical societies, and scout groups