

MINUTES OF CEMETERY PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
City Hall Training Room
August 31, 2023
4:00 PM

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Bramlett.

- Roll Call: Lewis Bramlett, Lizz Gray, Judi Burrell, Andrew Bramlett – Honorary Member
- Staff present: Lea Alvarez (City Clerk), Lily Smith (Deputy City Clerk), Tim Cox (Assistant Public Works Director), and Pat Ferris (Council Liaison)
- Guests present: Stephen King (Cemetery Foundation President)

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

3. Financial Report

4. Cemetery Preservation Foundation Update

5. Old Business

6. New Business

A. Section III Survey and Long-Term Plan

City Clerk Lea Alvarez gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Section III survey and suggestions for a long-term plan. Ms. Alvarez explained parts of the city code that allowed the City Clerk to sell city lots according to an engineered map created by the city engineer back in 1998. The surveyor who did the original survey, Ruhling and Ruhling Land Surveyors, came back and did some additional work locating the pins at the request of staff. It was discovered that there were some survey pins missing due to weather erosion and burials. Ms. Alvarez spoke with city leadership and decided to follow best practices and produce a legal description for every lot that was sold but is not yet occupied, as well as for any lot still available for purchase. She also suggested that the legal descriptions be done in numerical order to ensure that everything is easily tracked.

Vice Chair Gray asked if Ms. Alvarez had received her grave audit and updated data. Ms. Alvarez replied that she had received it, and she would use the information before the surveyors started their work.

Ms. Alvarez continued her presentation by stating there were two hundred and twenty-one unoccupied lots, and her goal was to issue legal descriptions seven at a time. The

price will be \$30 per lot for a legal description. This will equal \$8,520 to survey all unoccupied and unsold lots along with any pin resetting if needed.

Ms. Alvarez then moved on to the issues involving the gravel road along the back of Section III. Ms. Alvarez presented two options: close down the road or reseed the area in order to reclaim the lots that were removed to create the road. The Commission discussed these options heavily while incorporating various scenarios with the current budget funds. Councilmember Ferris suggested that the Commission remove the trees near the plots along the tree line. Vice Chair Gray inquired about how much land would be reclaimed, and the Assistant Public Works Director Tim Cox answered that it would reclaim everything along the road, which was approximately 93 lots. He also noted that Public Works would pay to remove the crush and run rock on the road as well as the sod. Ms. Alvarez moved the conversation back to various budget scenarios and added that Winkenhofer Funeral Home advised that the families along the road may be upset due to the road being reclaimed. Vice Chair Gray added that since the Commission is doing Section III, they should do all of the other sections as well. Ms. Alvarez answered that it would be fine to do it on a case-by-case basis, but there is not nearly as much activity in the other sections. The Commission turned its attention back to the gravel road and the logistics of removing it. Mr. Cox added that road removal could start as early as November.

Ms. Alvarez moved on to the lot price portion of her presentation while giving a brief overview of the City of Acworth's lot prices and Winkenhofer Funeral Home's lot pricing. She then suggested the lot prices increase by \$500 for residents and non-residents. Vice Chair Gray agreed with the change in prices, but wanted a few more examples in order to make more changes in the future. The Commission went back and forth about its priorities, finances, and citizens' needs until they came to an agreement of a \$500 increase for lots and an additional \$100 increase for scattering services.

Ms. Alvarez moved to the last part of the discussion regarding making the cemetery road one-way. Chair Bramlett shared a brief story about how the road is currently being navigated by the public. Vice Chair Gray advised making the road one-way by going counterclockwise down by the flag poles. She inquired about other roads to which Ms. Alvarez answered that the Commission could choose to keep them closed. Mr. Cox said that Public Works could create signage to assist in the transition and insisted that the older roads be closed for the safety of the graves. He then led a conversation about getting rid of those older paved roads and just grassing those over as well to help with erosion. Mr. Cox then noted that Public Works would pay to re-sod both roads due to Public Works already having to buy so much sod for other projects. The Commission then moved to the timing of the tree project to be completed this year alongside other events.

1. Motion by Vice Chair Gray to approve raising the Kennesaw City Cemetery fees to \$1,500 for residents, \$2,000 for non-residents, and \$600 for Scattering Garden services. Seconded by Commissioner Burrell.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 2-0. Motion passed.

2. Motion by Vice Chair Gray to approve closing the Section III access road and reclaiming the lots removed to create it. Seconded by Commissioner Burrell.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 2-0. Motion passed.

3. Motion by Vice Chair Gray to approve making the Kennesaw City Cemetery roadways one-way counterclockwise. Seconded by Commissioner Burrell.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 2-0. Motion passed.

- B. Approval to co-sponsor the Daughters of the American Revolution's Wreaths Across America event.

City Clerk Avaarez began this item by briefing the Commission on the Daughters of the American Revolution's upcoming event details and what they would like from the commission. Chairman Bramlett inquired about the use of toilets and the expectations of payment by the Commission. The Commission discussed the item at length and decided to only sponsor the event but not give any additional resources at this time.

Motion by Vice Chairperson Gray to approve co-sponsoring the Kennesaw Chapter Daughter of the American Revolution's 2023 Wreaths Across America event with the condition that there will be no other additional financial support provided. Seconded by Commissioner Burrell.

Vote taken, motion unanimously approved 2-0. Motion passed.

7. Staff Comment

8. Adjourn

Chair Bramlett adjourned the meeting at 5:08 p.m.