

MINUTES OF CEMETERY PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
City Hall Training Room
September 14, 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)
- Guests present: Stephen King (Cemetery Foundation President)

[Councilmember Ferris arrived at the meeting at 4:05 PM]

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

- A. Approval of the August 10, 2023 regular meeting minutes.

Motion by Commissioner Burrell to Approve. Seconded by Vice Chairwoman Gray.

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

- B. Approval of the August 31, 2023 special called meeting minutes.

Motion by Vice Chairwoman Gray to Approve. Seconded by Commissioner Burrell.

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

3. Financial Report

- A. Receipt of the August 2023 financial reports.

Motion by Commissioner Burrell to Approve. Seconded by Vice Chairwoman Gray.

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

[Councilmember Ferris arrived at the meeting at 4:05 PM]

4. Cemetery Preservation Foundation Update

Foundation President Stephen King started this item by stating that the Foundation was looking to expand its membership at its next meeting. He updated everyone on the rehearsal schedules for their Life in the Cemetery Event. President King then added that tickets would be \$15 and there would be a maximum of 15 people per tour. He noted that Kenensaw State (KSU) students would like to participate and the Life in the Cemetery Team is working to possibly accommodate up to 20-25 students a tour by

adding additional tours. Councilmember Ferris inquired as to why they were interested in this program. President King answered that it was part of student life bolstering its activities for its students. President King moved on to outline the fundraising for next calendar year.

5. Old Business

- A. Approval of the three bench installation locations, which include location #1 behind Horned Owl, location #2 along Cemetery Street, and location #3 in front of the Cremation Garden as indicated by the cemetery map included in the agenda packet.

City Clerk Alvarez gave a brief presentation showing where the benches are currently and where the proposed locations for the new benches would be. The locations were behind Horned Owl, along Cemetery Street, and in front of the Cemetery Cremation Garden. Vice Chairwoman Gray inquired if the bench on Cemetery Street was on city property and City Clerk Alvarez assured her that the location would not be an issue. Chairman Bramlett added that there were additional benches by the pergola and near the pauper section. He suggested that the bench near the pergola be replaced and the one in the Pauper section be removed but not replaced when the time came later on.

Motion by Vice Chairwoman Gray to Approve. Seconded by Commissioner Burrell.

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

- B. Approval of the proposed storyboard installation location to the right of the Cemetery Foundation Memorial Wall.

City Clerk Alvarez went over the options and suggestions that Downtown Manager Miranda Taylor gave at the last meeting about the placement of the storyboards. She gave recommendations about the placement and suggested next to the Tribute Wall. Chairman Bramlett suggested behind the flag poles and the intersection of Cemetery Street and Magnolia Lane, in addition to the flag court, being up for discussion as well.

Assistant Public Works Director Tim Cox advised that any placement of the storyboard near the flag poles might hinder the Public Works' ability to get through that passageway. Commissioner Burrell noted that she had a vested interest in the Tribute Wall and she did not want to obstruct any views near it. Vice Chairwoman Gray, Chairman Bramlett, and President King conversed about the possibility of putting the storyboard outside the flag poles. Chairman Bramlett reminded the Commission that there will be more opportunities to place storyboards and they should perhaps consider particular themes for each section. The Commission continued the discussion until Vice Chairwoman Gray noted that she liked City Clerk Alvarez's suggested placement near the Tribute Wall as well. Councilmember Ferris added that the storyboard in that location would add to the established view. After further discussion, the Commission decided to have Public Works set out a model and go out to view the possible placement locations. This item was postponed until a meeting could be arranged for the Commission to go and see the locations.

- C. DISCUSSION ONLY: Clean Up Day

Foundation President King announced that he was working on arranging for the Boy Scouts at his local church to participate next year. He added they usually schedule events six to eight months in advance. He also let the Commission know that he would put the link for the Life in the Cemetery event on the Cemetery Foundation Website.

6. New Business

A. DISCUSSION ONLY: 2024 Cemetery Events led by Chair Lewis Bramlett

Chairman Bramlett started this conversation with the topic of Decoration Day. He informed the Commission that traditionally, Decoration Day was about tree dedications but there is no longer room for any more trees. He suggested changing the event to a grave-cleaning workshop instead. He went on to explain how people could sign up for the event and the Commission could prepare for the event accordingly instead of just having two clean-up days. Commissioner Burrell expressed her excitement over the suggestion of a workshop and suggested that Vice Chairwoman Gray do a class. Chairman Bramlett added that these types of events are very popular in Marietta and Cartersville. Foundation President King also liked the idea of a historical aspect being included. Honorary Member Andrew Bramlett informed the Commission that Kennesaw State University had an archive with various gravestone types that could be used in a class of this kind. Chairman Bramlett suggested having a picture day event with another Commission such as the Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission continued to brainstorm ideas about future events such as yoga, various tours and maybe taking the flag and poppy events from the Daughters of the American Revolution(DAR). Chairman Bramlett explained that the DAR hosts events that are not public enough and he would like to have events that are more inclusive. Vice Chairwoman Gray made it known that she was not opposed to the new ideas for Decoration Day but, she reminded the Commission that this is a regional event and that the Commission should keep options open for those who have people in the cemetery and want to honor them.

B. DISCUSSION ONLY: Kennesaw City Cemetery Audit Plan and Process led by Vice Chair Lizz Gray

Vice Chairwoman Gray gave an in-depth presentation on the cemetery audit process. She went into detail about what she found, what needed to be done, and what was already completed. City Clerk Alvarez also contributed information about the various systems that are utilized by the public and the systems that are used by staff. Councilmember Ferris inquired as to what is available to put on the website. Vice Chairwoman Gray and City Clerk Alvarez answered by giving examples of what could be put on the website, such as photos and personal information about those who have passed.

7. Staff Comment

A. UPDATE: September 11, 2023 City Council Work Session Recap

City Clerk Alvarez gave a description of the September 11, 2023 Work Session. She mentioned the fee schedules, lot prices, and the site of a new mixed-use development that will be placed next door.

B. UPDATE: Chapter 30 Amendments

City Clerk Alvarez noted that she sent the code amendments to legal to be red-lined. She expected that the changes should be ready for review by the October meeting. The Commission then spoke about the benches.

8. Adjourn

Chairman Bramlett adjourned the meeting at 5:15 P.M. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 6:30 P.M. in the Council Chambers. The public is encouraged to attend or view via Facebook Live.

Lily Smith, Deputy City Clerk