

MINUTES OF CEMETERY PRESERVATION COMMISSION MEETING
CITY OF KENNESAW
City Hall Training Room
(2529 J.O. Stephenson Avenue, Kennesaw, GA 30144)
February 8, 2024
4:00 PM

1. Call to Order / Roll Call

Chair Lewis Bramlett called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Members present were Chair Lewis Bramlett, Vice Chair Lizz Gray, Commissioner Judi Burrell, and Commissioner Jim Poole. Absent from the meeting was Commissioner Rebecca Carlson. City liaisons present were 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 Kennesaw Cemetery Foundation member Andrew Bramlett were also present.

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

- A. Approval of January 11, 2024, Cemetery Preservation Commission meeting minutes

Commissioner Burrell moved to approve the January 2024 minutes. Commissioner Poole seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously (3:0).

3. Financial Report

- A. Receipt of January 2024 Financials

Ms. Alvarez presented the January 2024 financials. Commissioner Burrell inquired about the accrued interest. Ms. Alvarez advised the interest comes from the type of account. Commissioner Gray moved to accept the financials as presented. Commissioner Poole seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was approved unanimously (3:0).

4. Cemetery Preservation Foundation Update

Cemetery Foundation President Stephen King reported for the Foundation. The cemetery tour in 2023 raised just over \$5200. This year the Foundation would like to add three more tours and an extra night, increase shirt sales, keep the tour to no more than one and a half hours, and limit the actor presentation time to 10-12 minutes with actors staying on script. The Foundation has added three new members, and with Joyce Yung leaving, Michelle Newman may become the new Treasurer. Andrew Bramlett became a member of the Foundation in January and has offered to be their Secretary as well as manage the social media. Commissioner Burrell asked about videos of the performances; Mr. King advised they hoped to place the videos of Facebook.

A. Section III - Lot Markers

Ms. Alvarez presented information for cemetery rebar markers which would cost \$1619. Public Works would stamp the lot numbers on the markers. Mr. King asked if there were any extras with the amount given. Mr. Cox advised there were approximately 20 additional markers. Mr. King advised the Foundation would be able to provide up to \$2000 for this project.

5. Old Business

6. New Business

A. 2024 Cemetery Commission Events Planning

This item was heard last at the request of Chairman Bramlett. Chairman Bramlett opened the discussion by reminding the commission that Decoration Day is held in May and Clean Up Day is held in October and asked what Public Works roll would be on those days. Mr. Cox advised the cleaning products and water would be brought to the cemetery. Mr. Cox reminded the commission that the Public Works building is undergoing renovations and the products that are stored there may have to be moved. Commissioner Gray volunteered to put together a list of needed supplies. Further discussion held about what the future of Decoration Day would be with no new tree dedications. It was agreed to keep Decoration Day a family event, and use it to clean up the cemetery. Ms. Alvarez advised with the dates she could go to the Events Committee. Commissioner Gray moved to send two events to the Event Planning Committee; Decoration Day, May 4th and Clean Up Day, October 5th. Commissioner Poole seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved unanimously (3:0).

B. Review of Kennesaw City Cemetery Survey

Ms. Alvarez presented a cemetery survey done in 2021 which shows the city does not own the property on which the gazebo sits, nor does the city own the south side of Cemetery Street where it was planned to place memorial trees that were originally by Section III. The city manager was made aware of the gazebo issue and will discuss with Cobb County as they are the property owners. Discussion held regarding possible ways to allow the gazebo to stay in its current location. Ms. Alvarez advised the commission that the planned relocation of the memorial trees from Section III to south of Cemetery Street could not take place until an agreement was reached with the current owner of the property. Commissioner Gray asked for clarification as to why the memorial trees were not going back to Section III. Ms. Alvarez advised that with the closing of the gravel drive, funeral homes would need paths to do burials. Further discussion held regarding possible alternate locations of replacement trees, different types of flora to replace the trees, the time frame for replacement, and what type of notification the families would receive. Ms. Alvarez reminded the commission that it was not a requirement that the city replace the memorial trees as stated in the agreement the families signed at time of purchase. Mr. Cox advised that Public Works will be removing the diseased trees as soon as possible and can replace the trees along the road by the gazebo as the city has agreed to fund the replacement trees. Ms. Alvarez requested the

commission send suggestions to her before the next meeting regarding immediate solutions for the 17 trees along Section III that will be waiting replacement along Cemetery Street.

C. Discussion: Maintenance Plan Quotes

Ms. Alvarez presented information regarding maintenance plan quotes. Staff met with three companies regarding a list of seven maintenance projects at the cemetery (gazebo, bridge, pergola, wood posts, handrails, iron fence, and retaining wall. Two companies submitted quotes. Mr. Cox suggested the pergola as the highest priority since the gazebo is not on cemetery property. Building Services advised any change (other than cosmetic) to the stairs or rails at the cemetery would cause them to change to ADA standards. Commission members stated they would like to visit the cemetery to decide on which maintenance projects should come first.

D. DAR Event Schedule

Chairman Black presented the DAR proposed schedule of events for 2024; May 19 Veteran Flags for Memorial Day, November 3 Veteran Flags for Veterans Day, and December 14 Wreaths Across America. If the schedule is approved, Ms. Alvarez can present to the events committee and the DAR can secure the needed liability insurance. Councilmember Ferris asked for clarification on what the city would provide for the events. The city would provide chairs, a podium and the sound system, while the DAR would provide tents, tables and portable restrooms. Commissioner Burrell asked for clarification for the commission's financial support of the events. Ms. Alvarez reiterated that the city would cosponsor for the Event Committee and furnish chairs, a podium and the sound system. Commissioner Gray asked if the DAR events would be on the city calendar. Ms. Alvarez advised that the DAR flag events seemed to be more geared to DAR members only, while the Wreaths Across America could be possibly advertised with the city if requested. Commissioner Poole moved to approve the schedule and cosponsor the events to the Events Committee. Commissioner Burrell seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved unanimously (3:0).

E. Temporary Grave Markers

Ms. Alvarez presented three options for temporary grave markers. Staff is hopeful that these markers will assist families looking for their newly interred loved ones, while cutting back on the number of trinkets that are left at new graves. These markers are re-usable and can last up to eighteen months. Further discussion held regarding display size and which recent burials would receive the marker. More can be ordered if these are effective. Commissioner Gray moved to approve Option 3 Lynch Supply 25 Markers for \$165.50 and not to exceed \$250. Commissioner Burrell seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved unanimously (3:0).

7. Staff Comment

Ms. Alvarez presented the story board which will be placed in the cemetery. Further discussion held regarding diversity on the boards and the origins of the photos used.

A. Update: Letters sent to next of kin regarding flora removal

Ms. Burgner updated the commission on the letters sent from the Clerk's office regarding removing trees, shrubs, and flora from sites. Of the four letters that were retrieved by the recipients, there were no calls regarding the information provided. There are six more letters to be sent to next of kin. Public Works intends to remove the flora as soon as possible.

8. Adjourn

Chairman Bramlett adjourned the meeting at 5:09 p.m.