

MINUTES
CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
CITY COMMISSION ROOM
April 15, 2021 - 4:00 P.M.

Present were the following members of the Cemetery Advisory Board: Ms. Melanie Nord, Chair; Mr. Richard Akins; Mr. Pat Gormely; and Mr. Mike Carlson.

Absent: Ms. Janet Dean; Mr. Nicholas Dyer; and Mr. Brian Waddington.

Employees Present: Mr. Mike Mohler, Cemetery Sexton; and Mr. Casey Smithson, Park Superintendent.

A. MINUTES

Ms. Nord called the meeting to order. It was moved by Mr. Gormely, seconded by Mr. Akins, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on January 16, 2020. On vote, motion carried 4-0.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Mohler stated he did not receive any public comment prior to the meeting.

C. SEXTON'S REPORT

Mr. Mohler stated that revenue for the current year were as follows: Sunrise Cemetery \$14,925 to include sales and burials; Sunset Cemetery \$3,500 to include sales and burials. Mr. Mohler provided an annual report for January – March 2021 burials.

Ms. Nord asked if the Cemetery was backed up due to Covid-19. Mr. Mohler answered that the Cemetery was in fact backed up.

D. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Mohler stated the Natural Burial Section was plotted and opened in 2020. So far there have not been any purchases.

Mr. Mohler shared there have been 11 spaces sold in the Columbarium section. There were 12 sales, but one was sold back.

Mr. Carlson asked if the public could be notified that they can sell their spaces back in Sunset. Mr. Mohler stated the public should be aware that they can do that. The lot owner has to sell the space back. The City cannot reclaim a lot space unless the deed sold with that space is also reclaimed. Mr. Mohler commented if there is no deed, he cannot sell the lot space.

E. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Gormely emailed a few questions to Mr. Mohler prior to the meeting. He asked when Sunrise Cemetery opened and when the first interment took place. Mr. Mohler answered that it opened in 1960 and the first interment was in 1966. Mr. Gormely asked when Sunset Cemetery closed. Mr. Mohler stated Sunset Cemetery was full sometime in the late 1970's. Any areas that are not plotted for sale has rock.

Mr. Akins wanted to clarify that there is nothing that can be done about unused lots belonging to someone else. Mr. Mohler answered that is correct. Mr. Akins asked if a bush could be planted. Mr. Mohler answered no, because that lot is not owned by the City and has been purchased for the sole purpose of burials.

Ms. Nord asked Mr. Mohler to help the Board understand the staffing situation. Mr. Mohler stated the Cemetery is understaffed, there are no seasonal workers, but Parks Staff has been helping out to keep things going. He commented the Cemetery will be behind again this year as there are not very many applicants applying for the seasonal positions. There is not enough staff right now to explore the vacant lots and complete extra projects. Mr. Smithson stated there are 8 open full-time staff positions open in the Parks Department with 1 of those positions being for the Cemetery. Ms. Nord wanted to thank the Parks Staff for everything they have been doing on such short staff and that the services have maintained a really high quality.

A few Board members expressed their concerns regarding Sunset Cemetery being sold out. Ms. Nord suggested possibly leaving this item on old business and to discuss it further when the Cemetery has had the Staff and the time to check out some of the deeds and unused lots.

Mr. Carlson presented a Memorial Day promotion to the Board and had the idea of doing a sale on Memorial Day where if you buy a lot you get a lot free. He passed around a questionnaire/survey handout as an example of something that could be given to people when they enter the Cemeteries on Memorial Day to have them fill out and return.

Ms. Nord shared she liked the thought and the goal of raising awareness and suggested maybe having an information sheet available to the public or a QR code that people could scan to give them information about the Cemeteries so it wouldn't take any Staff away from their normal duties. She asked if a survey could be created by Cemetery Staff by the next Board meeting to provide feedback or ask questions on the Cemeteries. Mr. Mohler said yes, but it would have to go through City Commission first to be approved. Mr. Smithson suggested having a sign put up at the entrances that would provide a phone number, an email address, or a physical address to send a letter to if people wanted to provide feedback or ask questions regarding the Cemeteries rather than having a physical form for people to fill out. Mr. Mohler stated his name and number are already out there for the public to contact him.

Mr. Akins commented instead of giving the public ways to give the Cemeteries information that the Cemeteries should provide more information to the public. Mr. Mohler agreed. Mr. Smithson shared his Staff could take a look at the signage already up and see if improvements could be made and bring feedback to the next meeting.

Ms. Nord suggested the Board members themselves should go out to the Cemeteries on Memorial Day and visit social media pages and come prepared to the next meeting to provide feedback regarding awareness and signage. She commented to keep this item on old business for the next meeting to have the feedback discussion.

Meeting Adjourned.