

GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD AGENDA
Friday, October 3, 2025
151 Martin St. - Birmingham, MI 48009 – Room 205
8:30 A.M.

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board provides the recommendations to the City Commission:

1. *Modifications:* As to modifications of the rules and regulations governing Greenwood Cemetery.
2. *Capital Improvements:* As to what capital improvements should be made to the cemetery.
3. *Future Demands:* As to how to respond to future demands for cemetery services.

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board shall hold at least one public meeting in each quarter.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson, Linda Buchanan

II. ROLL CALL

City Clerk, Alexandria Bingham

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Approval of meeting minutes of September 5, 2025

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Draft 2024-2025 Annual Report
- B. Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board Ordinance Discussion regarding Board Composition
- C. Set schedule for 2026
- D. Future Business
 - a. December 5, 2025
 - i. Updates from Cheri Arcome, Creative Collaborations & David Carter, Carter Preservation
 - ii. Discuss goals/priorities and give input on recommended budget requests for the cemetery for the 2026-27 FY
 - iii. Follow up on columbarium opportunities
 - b. Other Items for Consideration

VII. REPORTS

- A. Update from Museum Director Leslie Pielack (when applicable)
- B. Update from Clerk's Office
- C. Financial Reports
- D. Cemetery Sales & Activity
- E. City Manager's Reports ([September](#))

VIII. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

IX. BOARD COMMENTS

X. ADJOURN

Next Meeting: December 5, 2025 at the Municipal Building – 151 Martin Street

You may also present your written statement to the City Clerk,
151 Martin Street, P.O. Box 3001, Birmingham, Michigan 48012-3001 prior to the meeting.

NOTICE: Individuals requiring accommodations, such as mobility, visual, hearing, interpreter or other assistance, for effective participation in this meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at (248) 530-1880 (voice), or (248) 644-3405 (TDD) at least one day in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.

Las personas que requieran alojamiento, tales como servicios de interpretación, la participación efectiva en esta reunión deben ponerse en contacto con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal al (248) 530-1880 por lo menos el día antes de la reunión pública. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

October 3, 2025

Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board Minutes
September 5, 2025
Municipal Building, 151 Martin
8:30 a.m.

I. Call To Order

Linda Buchanan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Chair Linda Buchanan, Vice Chair Linda Peterson; Board Members Laura Schreiner, Margaret Suter

Absent: None

Staff: City Clerk Bingham

III. 2025-2026 Organization

- A. Congratulations to reappointed and new members
- B. Nomination and Selection of Chair and Vice Chair

It was noted that the Board had the right to give different members the opportunity to be Chair or Vice Chair, and that it could help with continuity.

MOTION: Nomination by Suter:
Linda Buchanan has been nominated.

VOTE: Yeas, 4
Nays, 0

MOTION: Nomination by Suter:
For Linda Peterson to be Vice Chair.

VOTE: Yeas, 4
Nays, 0

IV. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION: by Buchanan, seconded by Schreiner:
To move that the minutes of the May 2nd meeting, 2025, be accepted as is.

VOTE: Yeas, 4
Nays, 0

V. Unfinished Business

VI. New Business

- A. Draft 2024-2025 Annual Report

The Chair and CC Bingham reviewed the item.

Board discussion was as follows:

- While there are many non-resident plot purchases, the ordinance currently does not allow a non-resident board member to serve on the Board.
- The report helpfully illustrated sales trends. Last year had the most sales of the last few years.
- Residents and non-residents were buried at comparable rates in the last year. Burials and inurnments also occurred at comparable rates in the last year.
- Staff should clarify whether unrealized/capital gain is part of the Cemetery's income. While the report should reflect the information accordingly once it is clarified, it does not need to return to the Board for review.
- In the past the Board has been told that unrealized/capital gain is not part of the Cemetery's income.
- Some felt that historic preservation in the Cemetery was generally being conducted well.
- There were some concerns that some of the gravestones were being over-cleaned, thus decreasing the legibility of the stones. It was recommended that these concerns be communicated to the contractor in charge of the cleaning.
- There was interest in learning more about the range of options available for cleaning the gravestones, as well as the range of options for preserving the information.
- Preservationists are very careful about avoiding the erosion of lettering on the gravestones.
- Under 'long term goals', the monument/marker inventory survey and the GIS mapping could be combined into one goal reflecting the preservation efforts, such as Find a Grave, that are already being carried out.

The Board took a brief recess, and returned from recess.

B. Future Business

a. October 3, 2025

- i. Finalize the 2024-2025 Annual Report
- ii. Follow up on columbarium opportunities consideration

Board discussion was as follows:

- The Board would like to discuss possibly lowering the number of Board members from seven to five at the next meeting, and also to discuss potentially modifying the ordinance in terms of who might serve on the Board.

b. Other Items for Consideration

Board discussion was as follows:

- December's meeting should include a presentation from Carter Preservation and Creative Collaborations before the preservation work resumes, and a discussion of future goals and priorities.

VII. Reports

- A. Update from Museum Director Leslie Pielack
- B. Update from Clerk's Office
- C. Financial Reports
- D. Cemetery Sales & Activity
- E. City Manager's Reports

VIII. Open to the Public for Matters Not on the Agenda

Paul Connell commented regarding a potential columbarium site and the attendant details.

IX. Board Comments

Board discussion was as follows:

- The posted March 7, 2025 meeting minutes should be double-checked.
- More information would be needed for the upcoming discussion about a potential columbarium.
- It would also be beneficial to determine whether there might be other locations for cremain interment.
- Google says Greenwood is open 24 hours. This should be updated if possible.
- The Cemetery's bicentennial was being celebrated.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist

GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD



2024/2025 **DRAFT** ANNUAL REPORT

September 2025

Linda Buchanan, Chair

Linda Peterson, Vice Chair

Laura Schreiner

Margaret Suter

Paul Connell

Jacquie Patt, resigned 12/7/2024

Joseph Vercellone, resigned 12/9/2024

INTRODUCTION

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board (GCAB) was established by the Birmingham City Commission on October 13, 2014. The board is charged with the duty of submitting a report to the City Commission on an annual basis of the general activities, operation and condition of the cemetery for the preceding 12-month period. The GCAB Annual Report includes a summary and update of the cemetery's status, related finances and the GCAB's planned activities for the next fiscal year.

In alignment with the City's fiscal year, the current GCAB report covers the period from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Meetings

The GCAB is required to meet at least quarterly. During the report period, the board met this requirement by conducting meetings on the dates listed below:

Q1

September 6, 2024

Q2

October 11, 2024

December 6, 2024

Q3

February 7, 2025

March 7, 2025

Q4

May 2, 2025

2024/2025 Accomplishments

- Produced the 2024-2025 Annual Report
- Recommended that ten more graves be released
- Evaluated grave prices, noting no changes were needed at this time
- Released 30 more graves
- Discussed opportunities for a columbarium in the cemetery
- Advocated for a budget expenditure request to the cemetery maintenance fund for cemetery preservation efforts that was adopted by the City Commission in the 2025-2026 FY Budget in the amount of \$17,500.

OPERATION

Sales and Financial Information

On December 1, 2019, Creative Collaborations, LLC became the transitional provider for cemetery services, with the exception of grounds maintenance, which is provided by the City’s Department of Public Services. On May 1, 2020, Creative Collaborations entered into a one-year renewable contract with the City to provide cemetery services on an ongoing basis. Grounds maintenance continues to be provided by DPS with ongoing communication and collaboration between Creative Collaborations, DPS, and the City Clerk’s office.

On January 14, 2019, the City Commission approved a payment plan policy for cemetery plots that requires full payment within 24 months. During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, no new payment plans have been initiated. The Clerk’s Office and Treasurer’s Office monitors active payment plans. Plots under a payment plan are considered sold for purposes of availability unless the plot becomes available again in the event of a purchaser default.

Beginning December 1, 2019, Creative Collaborations, LLC, remits 100% of revenue to the City, which then makes payments to the contractor for services performed.

Grand Totals				
Fiscal Year	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Sales in B	3	5	7	19
Sales in C	3	10	3	1
Sales in Other	0	1	0	0
Resident Purchases	2	4	2	9
Non-Resident Purchases	4	12	8	11
Payment Plans Initiated	0	0	3	0
Total Graves Sold	6	16	10	20
Transfer of Ownership Filed	6	7	5	5
Additional Burial Rights	5	6	3	1

Grave Releases

- 4/26/21 The City Commission approved the recommended release of Section B, Rows 17-C, 16-C, 15-C & 14-A for a total of 38 Graves (9 of which are obstructed)
- 12/23/21 The City Commission approved the release of one grave in section B, row 2-A for an at-need situation for a family with adjacent space.
- 8/15/22 The City Commission approved the release of one grave in section B, row 12-A, for an at-need situation for a family with adjacent space.
- 7/24/23 The City Commission approved the release of the 88 available graves suitable for burial in the flush rows in Section B, and directed Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board to evaluate the fee schedule again for plot costs after 20% of these plots have been sold which would equate to 18 spaces.
- 12/6/24 The Cemetery Board authorized the sale of 10 graves.
- 3/7/25 The Cemetery Board authorized the sale of 30 graves.

Notes on Obstructed Graves

- 1/29/21 Creative Collaborations noted that graves 1 & 2 in Section C rows 18-A & 19-A are not able to be used due to obstructions.
- 3/25/21 DPS noted that graves in row 19-A 1,2,13,14,16 are obstructed by trees.
- 4/23/21 DPS noted Row 17-C: Graves 9 and 11 are affected by a 16" Red Maple located at the east edge of both graves. Row 15-C: Grave 5 is obstructed by a monument on the east edge. Grave 10 has a 16" Cedar (Eastern Arborvitae) obstructing it. Grave 17 has a marker on the east edge that is encroaching onto the grave site. Row 14-A: Graves 15 and 16 have a large shrub located over both sites. Graves 17 and 19 are obstructed by a large monument located east of them.
- 5/31/23 A field survey was completed for the following lots: A-1, 2-D, 3-A, 4-A, 5-C, 6-C, 7-D, 8-C, 9-D, 10-A, 11-A, 12-A and 13-A.
Of the 312 graves surveyed 189 of them are sold. There are 8 graves unsuitable for burial due to historic memorials. At this time there are 43 graves unsuitable for burial due to trees and tree roots. These graves would become suitable when the trees are removed should the City wish to make them available for sale. There are a total of 72 graves suitable for burial.

Price Increases

- 4/12/22 The City Commission approved the grave price increase for plots that can accommodate one full burial from \$3,000 to \$4,000 per plot. All graves sold in the 2021-22 FY were at the rate of \$4,000 per grave.
- 7/24/23 The City Commission approved the grave price increase for plots that can accommodate one full burial from \$4,000 to \$6,000 per plot. All new sales after 7/24/23 are subject to the new rates as indicated in the fee schedule.
- 3/7/25 The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board affirmed the current fee schedule for the price of graves.

Grave Sales Detail, July 2024 - June 2025

Greenwood Cemetery Sales and Availability				
	Sec B	Sec C	Resident	Non-Resident
July 2024	4	0	2	2
August 2024	0	0	0	0
September 2024	0	0	0	0
October 2024	0	1	0	1
November 2024	1	0	0	1
December 2024	2	0	0	2
January 2025	1	0	1	0
February 2025	3	0	1	2
March 2025	0	0	0	0
April 2025	0	0	0	0
May 2025	2	0	2	0
June 2025	6	0	3	3
Total Sold	19	1	9	11
Available Under Current Authorization (20% of remaining inventory)	21			
Total Available	56			

Notes: Plots in Sections B and C sold under a payment plan are included in the number of sales made for the quarter in which the payment plan was initiated. The remittance to the Perpetual Care Fund of payment for the plots is recorded in total in the quarter in which the final payment is made.

Section (total plots)	7/2015 - 6/2019	7/2019 - 6/2020	7/2020 - 6/2021	7/2021 - 6/2022	7/2022 - 6/2023	7/2023 - 6/2024	7/2024 - 6/2025	TOTAL Number of Graves Sold To Date	Number of Graves Remaining (obstructed)
B (408)	214	32	10	3	5	7	19	290	56 (62)
C (72)	8	10	9	3	10	3	1	44	0 (28)
Other					1				
TOTAL	222	42	19	6	16	10	20	334	56 (90)

Burials and Inurnments, July 2024 - June 2025

Burials and inurnment activity during the period can be used to understand utilization of graves and assist in planning for future sales.

Cremation vs. Burial: According to the National Funeral Directors Association 2024 Cremation and Burial Report, the 2024 cremation rate is projected to be 61.9% and the burial rate is projected to be 33.2%, the remaining 4.9% may be due to alternative methods such as green burials and scatter gardens, which are not available in Greenwood Cemetery. U.S. cremation rates are projected to increase significantly, reaching 82.1% by 2045, while burial rates are expected to fall to 13.3%. The City of Birmingham’s 2024-2025 cremation rate is below the national average at 53% and the full burial rate is above the national average at 47%.

	Sec B		Sec C		Other		Total by Month	
	Full	Crem	Full	Crem	Full	Crem	Full	Crem
July 2024	2	0	0	1	1	1	3	2
August 2024	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	2
September 2024	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
October 2024	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	2
November 2024	2	0	0	0	2	0	4	0
December 2024	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
January 2025	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
February 2025	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
March 2025	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
April 2025	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	3
May 2025	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
June 2025	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
Totals	9	7	2	2	4	7	15	17

Perpetual Care Fund

Revenues from grave sales are used to increase the Perpetual Care Fund (PCF) for Greenwood Cemetery, with investment earnings remaining with the PCF. Currently all cemetery care and maintenance is funded through the General Fund. Eventually the goal is for the perpetual care fund to be able to take over the financial burden of cemetery maintenance through interest accrued.

Detail for July 2024 through June 2025:

2024 Q Ending September 30

Proceeds from cemetery plot sales and service fees	\$ 32,200.00
Investment income	<u>9,854.32</u>
Revenue for Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 42,054.32

2024 Q Ending December 31

Proceeds from cemetery plot sales and service fees	\$ 16,400.00
Investment income	<u>12,039.96</u>
Revenue for Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 28,439.96

2025 Q Ending March 31

Proceeds from cemetery plot sales and service fees	\$ 32,600.00
Investment income	<u>10,928.35</u>
Revenue for Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 43,528.35

2025 Q Ending June 30

Proceeds from cemetery plot sales and service fees	\$ 41,600.00
Investment income	11,160.25
Unrealized Gain	<u>120,639.97</u>
Revenue for Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 173,400.22

Notes

1. An account was created within the General Fund to better track cemetery expenses by differentiating cemetery maintenance invoices from the maintenance of other City properties such as parks. This will allow the City to get a better estimate of costs that the Perpetual Care Fund will need to cover in the future.
2. The focus of the PCF is long-term growth. To achieve this goal, the fund is invested in equity investments near the maximum allowed by State law with no more than 40% of the amount invested in equities in any one asset class (large cap, mid cap, small cap) as per our investment policy.
3. The PCF is generating approximately enough funds to cover basic lawn maintenance and tree service based on current charges, but not enough for snow removal or other improvements to the cemetery.

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
 PERPETUAL CARE FUNDS
 INVESTMENT REPORT
 6/30/2025

	PRINCIPAL	INCOME	TOTAL
BEGINNING BALANCE 6/30/2024	\$ 1,212,197.54	\$ 167,003.81	\$ 1,379,201.35
SALE OF GRAVES	84,400.00	-	84,400.00
CAPITAL GAINS (LOSSES)	-	-	-
INTEREST/DIVIDENDS	-	43,982.88	43,982.88
CHANGE IN MARKET VALUE	<u>120,639.97</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>120,639.97</u>
ENDING BALANCE 6/30/2025	<u>\$ 1,417,237.51</u>	<u>\$ 210,986.69</u>	<u>\$ 1,628,224.20</u>
<u>INVESTMENTS</u>			
BOND MUTUAL FUNDS	\$ 685,337.89	42.1%	
EQUITY MUTUAL FUNDS	<u>942,886.31</u>	57.9%	
TOTAL	<u>\$ 1,628,224.20</u>		

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
 PERPETUAL CARE FUNDS
 ANNUAL INVESTMENT REPORT
 6/30/2025

	PRINCIPAL (NONSPENDABLE)	INCOME (SPENDABLE)	TOTAL
BEGINNING BALANCE 6/30/2024			
Pooled Funds	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Bond Mutual Funds	480,851.99	113,528.08	594,380.07
Equity Mutual Funds	<u>731,345.55</u>	<u>53,475.73</u>	<u>784,821.28</u>
	\$ 1,212,197.54	\$ 167,003.81	\$ 1,379,201.35
SALE OF PLOTS			
Bond Mutual Funds	41,200.00	-	
Equity Mutual Funds	<u>43,200.00</u>	<u>-</u>	
	\$ 84,400.00	\$ -	\$ 84,400.00
CAPITAL GAINS (LOSSES)			
Pooled Fund	\$ -		
Bond Mutual Funds	-		
Equity Mutual Funds	<u>-</u>		
	\$ -		\$ -
INTEREST/DIVIDENDS			
Pooled Fund		\$ -	
Bond Mutual Funds		31,441.66	
Equity Mutual Funds		<u>12,541.22</u>	
		\$ 43,982.88	\$ 43,982.88
CHANGE IN MARKET VALUE			
Pooled Fund	\$ -		
Bond Mutual Funds	18,316.16		
Equity Mutual Funds	<u>102,323.81</u>		
	\$ 120,639.97		\$ 120,639.97
ENDING BALANCE 6/30/2025	<u>\$ 1,417,237.51</u>	<u>\$ 210,986.69</u>	<u>\$ 1,628,224.20</u>
INVESTMENTS			
BOND MUTUAL FUNDS	540,368.15	144,969.74	685,337.89
EQUITY MUTUAL FUNDS	<u>876,869.36</u>	<u>66,016.95</u>	<u>942,886.31</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 1,417,237.51</u>	<u>\$ 210,986.69</u>	<u>\$ 1,628,224.20</u>

CONDITION

During the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the City's Department of Public Services has overseen cemetery landscape maintenance, which has included:

- Oversight of lawn mowing contractor including weekly cuts and spring and fall cleanup
- Oversight of forestry contractor for tree maintenance as directed by DPS
- Maintenance of the tree inventory program
- Lawn fertilization twice a year
- Burial topsoil and seeding: spring and fall
- As-needed general clean up: grave blankets, old flowers, fallen branches
- Trash removal: 2 to 3 times per week
- Maintenance of water system: start up, winterizing, and repair as needed
- Repair of turf as needed
- Snow removal
- Building/fencing/road maintenance as needed
- Storage building maintenance: door repairs

- \$15,000 was allocated to restoring grave markers through Carter Preservation with oversight from the City Clerk and Creative Collaborations

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board adopted the following strategic plan on April 5, 2024:



Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board Strategic Plan Mission, Values, & 5-year Vision

Mission

The mission of the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board is to preserve, protect, and celebrate the rich historical, cultural, and natural heritage of the Historic Greenwood Cemetery. In respect to the ordinance establishing the parameters of the board, the board is committed to providing recommendations on modifying the rules and regulations as needed, recommending capital improvements to the Historic Greenwood Cemetery as needed, and examining future demands and making recommendations as to how to accommodate those demands. The board is dedicated to honoring the memories of those interred here, fostering an engaged and connected community, and ensuring the long-term sustainability and accessibility, while providing efficient and effective services that meet the current demands.

Values

1. **Preservation:** We value the preservation of Greenwood Cemetery's historical, architectural, and natural assets. We are committed to safeguarding its rich heritage, ensuring that future generations can appreciate its significance.
2. **Service:** Ensuring that exceptional service is available to plot owners and grieving families in Greenwood Cemetery is paramount as it not only honors the memory of their loved ones but also offers comfort, support, and a sense of dignity during their time of loss, fostering trust and lasting connections within the community.
3. **Sustainability:** We are committed to ensuring the long-term sustainability of Greenwood Cemetery. This includes responsible environmental practices, financial stewardship, and strategic planning to guarantee its continued role as a cherished community resource.
4. **Community Engagement:** We believe in actively involving the community in our efforts. We strive to engage with residents, local organizations, and stakeholders to promote a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for the cemetery's well-being.

What will the Historic Greenwood Cemetery look like in the next five years?

In the next five years, the Historic Greenwood Cemetery will continue to be beautifully maintained and well cared for. Visitors will encounter a serene landscape landscape, with preserved gravestones, monuments, and historical structures that tell the captivating stories of those interred here. Preserving the existing tree canopy is essential to maintaining the aesthetic beauty of our environment for future generations to enjoy. Educational programs and guided tours will offer immersive experiences, sharing the cemetery's rich history, cultural significance, and natural beauty with the community. Greenwood Cemetery will stand as a symbol of sustainability, with eco-friendly landscaping and energy-efficient amenities. Engaging community events will breathe life into the grounds, fostering a sense of belonging and remembrance. It will be a place where history thrives, where memories are honored, and where the spirit of preservation, education, and community truly flourishes.

What kind of accomplishments and projects will GCAB have made progress on in the next 5 years?

The accomplishments of the Historic Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board over the next five years could include:

1. Restoration and Preservation: Undertaking significant restoration projects to repair and conserve gravestones, monuments, and historical structures within the cemetery, ensuring the physical integrity of the site.
2. Increased Community Engagement & Educational Initiatives: Expanding efforts to increase awareness of the cemetery as a City treasure and involve more community members in cemetery tours, educational programs, and volunteer initiatives. This includes expanding online resources and communications to educate the public about the historical, cultural, and natural significance of the cemetery.
3. Enhanced Accessibility and Wayfinding: Improving the accessibility of Greenwood Cemetery by implementing signage, and facilities that accommodate visitors of all abilities, making it more welcoming to a diverse range of individuals.
4. Sustainability Measures: Implementing sustainable practices within the cemetery, such as environmentally friendly landscaping, and water conservation to reduce its environmental footprint.
5. Financial Stewardship: Ensuring the financial stability of the cemetery by implementing effective strategies, seeking grants, and exploring revenue-generating partnerships.
6. Collaborative Partnerships: Maintain and expand on existing partnerships with local schools, historical societies, and other organizations to foster collaborative initiatives that benefit both the cemetery and the community.
7. Maintenance and Security: Continuing regular maintenance and considering security measures as needed to ensure the safety and tranquility of the cemetery, including regular landscaping and regular review and updates to the Greenwood Cemetery Operational Procedures, Conditions, and Regulations.

In conclusion, these accomplishments would not only contribute to the ongoing preservation of Greenwood Cemetery but also promote its role as a valuable community asset, a place for reflection and learning, and a testament to the rich history of the City of Birmingham.

PLAN FOR 2024/2025

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board has prioritized the following action items for 2024-2025:

CRITICAL GOALS

Short Term

• ***Developing and Updating Policy***

- The GCAB is interested in streamlining policy documents to ensure that all policy is held in one document, the Greenwood Cemetery Operational Procedures, Conditions, and Regulations. This includes incorporating new policy regarding restoration efforts on monuments and incorporating the policy on installing monuments for persons of historic significance.

Long Term

• ***Monitor the continued growth of the Perpetual Care Fund***

- The GCAB monitors the growth of the Perpetual Care Fund and may propose strategies for increasing the funds growth in order for the fund to reach a point where the interest accrued can cover most or all of the general maintenance requirements of the cemetery.

• ***Monitor the demand for cemetery services***

- The GCAB members review cemetery data in regards to sales, interments and inurnments and consider trends in order to suggest ways Greenwood Cemetery may need to adapt in order to meet future demands.

• ***Continue historic preservation efforts***

- GCAB encourages efforts by the Museum Board, the Friends of the Birmingham Museum (a.k.a. the Birmingham Historical society) and other organizations to conduct projects that increase community engagement and preservation efforts.

DESIRED GOALS

Short Term

• ***Inventory of signs in Greenwood Cemetery***

- In order to update and streamline communication and wayfinding within the cemetery, the GCAB wishes to inventory and evaluate all signage in the cemetery to determine if updated signage should be budgeted for.

Long Term

• ***Support Preservation Efforts and the Availability of Public Information Regarding the Cemetery***

- GCAB supports the use of findagrave.com and the Museum's involvement with maintaining and updating records on the free public crowdsourced information platform. The findagrave.com platform is a sustainable and low impact way to make information available 24/7 regarding the location of individuals in the cemetery.
- GCAB supports ongoing efforts to clean and restore historic graves within the cemetery which involves recommending budget requests for this type of work annually through the City's budgeting process which includes the annual budget hearing held by the City Commission. GCAB also welcomes assistance from outside agencies such as the Friends of the Birmingham Museum in raising funds to support preservation efforts.

- **Determine Capital Outlay Projects**
 - The GCAB may discuss and study the potential benefits of a capital outlay project. The GCAB will provide a recommendation and report to the City Commission if a capital outlay project is identified.
- **Explore Above Ground Columbarium Opportunities**
 - With the limited space in the cemetery and shifting demand towards cremation and inurnments, GCAB wishes to explore the costs, benefits, and opportunities for installing a columbarium.
- **Review and update Greenwood Cemetery Operational Procedures, Conditions and Regulations**
 - The GCAB spent a considerable amount of time in the 2021-2022 FY reviewing and updating the rules and regulations. To keep the rules and regulations current going forward they will conduct an annual read through to maintain the document.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Grave sale activity primarily occurs in the newly laid out plots in B and C and is closely monitored by the City Clerk’s office.

480 Total Graves in Sections B & C	Section C	Section B	Total
Obstructed – Temporary (trees/roots)	2	50	52
Obstructed – Permanently (monument)	26	12	38
Owned	44	290	334
Available	0	56	56

The GCAB, Clerks Office, DPS, Museum, and Creative Collaborations, the city’s contracted cemetery service provider, continue to work together to preserve the historic charm and ambiance of Greenwood Cemetery while ensuring that the highest standards of maintenance and service are being provided. The GCAB will continue to monitor data as provided by the City Clerk, work on their goals as laid out in this document, and make recommendations for future grave releases and/or improvements for the preservation and operation of the Historic Greenwood Cemetery.

The cemetery is in a state of slow growth and preservation.

For the 2025-2026 FY, the GCAB is encouraged to continue working on the goals as identified in this report at their regular meetings which occur at least quarterly per city code. Recommendations made by the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board will be presented to the City Manager’s Office for further direction and implementation.



MEMORANDUM

City Clerk's Office

DATE: October 1, 2025

TO: Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board

FROM: Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk

SUBJECT: Membership and Participation Considerations for the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board

INTRODUCTION:

The City Code dictates the required composition of the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board (GCAB) as follows:

Chapter 34 – Cemeteries, Article II – Greenwood Cemetery, Sec. 34-30 – Establishment of the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board (a)

*(a) Composition. There is hereby established the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board for the city which shall consist of **seven members** who shall serve without compensation. **Members must be chosen from among the citizens of Birmingham** and, insofar as possible, represent diverse interests, such as persons with family members interred in Greenwood Cemetery; owners of burial sites within Greenwood Cemetery intending to be interred in Greenwood Cemetery; persons familiar with and interested in the history of Birmingham; persons with familiarity and experience in landscape architecture, horticulture, law or cemetery or funeral professionals. The city manager or his/her designee shall serve as ex officio, non-voting members of the board.*

Meeting times are not mandated by the ordinance but traditionally the meetings are held at 8:30 a.m. on the first Friday of the month.

The board is required to meet at least once per quarter.

BACKGROUND:

Two members of the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board resigned in December of 2024 and there has not been any qualified candidates to fulfill those roles in the past 10 months.

One of those members resigned due to attendance issues related to work schedule conflicts in respect to the majority of the board's preference to meet on Friday morning.

Additionally, at the September 5, 2025 GCAB meeting another member of the board was obligated to resign due to not being able to fulfill the residency requirement.

The current needed quorum for a board of seven is four members. Given the current state of the roster all four of the existing members must be present for the GCAB to be able to conduct business.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney will be consulted and assist in preparing any proposed ordinance amendments for the City Commission to consider.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None.

SUSTAINABILITY:

None.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

The GCAB may discuss the pros and cons of requesting a change to the ordinance or meeting schedule to increase participation and membership.

Options to consider:

- Changing the meeting date and time to potentially increase availability and participation of potential board members and members of the public
- Allowing no more than half of the board membership (three of seven) to consist of non-residents with an interest in the cemetery or skills/qualifications that would benefit the board
- Reducing the board membership to five members, leaving one vacancy for now and a new minimum for quorum of three members

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:

All meetings are noticed pursuant to the Open Meetings Act. Members of the public are welcome to attend and make comment at meetings in the public comment sections and as invited by the presiding officer.

SUMMARY:

GCAB should engage in a discussion to confirm their recommended meeting dates and times to best accommodate participation and consider potential ordinance changes that could be presented to the City Commission for Consideration that could improve the board's membership and ability to function.

ATTACHMENTS:

- City Code: Chapter 34 – Cemeteries, Article II – Greenwood Cemetery, Sec. 34-30 – Establishment of the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board

SUGGESTED BOARD ACTION:

Discuss the pros and cons of the options below:

Options to consider:

- Changing the meeting date and time to potentially increase availability and participation of potential board members and members of the public
- Allowing no more than half of the board membership (three of seven) to consist of non-residents with an interest in the cemetery or skills/qualifications that would benefit the board
- Reducing the board membership to five members, leaving one vacancy for now and a new minimum for quorum of three members

Board members are also welcome to present any other ideas and possible solutions at this time which are related to improving membership and participation.

Sec. 34-30. Establishment of the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board.

- (a) *Composition.* There is hereby established the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board for the city which shall consist of seven members who shall serve without compensation. Members must be chosen from among the citizens of Birmingham and, insofar as possible, represent diverse interests, such as persons with family members interred in Greenwood Cemetery; owners of burial sites within Greenwood Cemetery intending to be interred in Greenwood Cemetery; persons familiar with and interested in the history of Birmingham; persons with familiarity and experience in landscape architecture, horticulture, law or cemetery or funeral professionals. The city manager or his/her designee shall serve as ex officio, non-voting members of the board.
- (b) *Terms of members.* Each member shall be appointed for a term of three years ending on the first Monday of July of the third year after appointment, or upon the appointment of his successor, whichever is later, except that in the first instance three of the members shall be appointed for a one-year term and two shall be appointed for two-year terms. Vacancies occurring other than through the expiration of term shall be filled for the unexpired term by the city commission.
- (c) *Removal of members.* Members of the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board shall hold office at the pleasure of the city commission and can be removed at any time with or without cause.
- (d) *Organization.* The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from its membership annually at its first meeting after the first Monday of July.
- (e) *Meetings.* The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board shall hold at least one regular public meeting in each quarter on such date and at such time and place as may be established by resolution of the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board. The Greenwood Cemetery advisory board shall keep a written or printed record of its proceedings which shall be a public record and property of the city.
- (f) *Expenditures and assistance.* The Greenwood Cemetery advisory board may call upon the city manager for such services and data from the various departments as it may require. The Greenwood Cemetery advisory board may recommend to the city commission the securing of such professional and consulting services as it may require, however, the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board shall not have any authority to authorize or otherwise obligate the city to incur expenses and/or approve contracts. Requests for expenditures shall be routed through the ex-officio member(s) of the board to the city commission for consideration.
- (g) *Powers and duties.* In general, it shall be the duty of the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board to provide recommendations to the city commission:
 - (1) *Modifications.* As to modifications of the rules and regulations governing Greenwood Cemetery;
 - (2) *Capital improvements.* As to what capital improvements should be made to the cemetery;
 - (3) *Future demands.* As to how to respond to future demands for cemetery services; and
 - (4) *Day to day administration.* The day to day administration of the cemetery shall be under the direction and control of the city, through the city manager or his/her designee.
- (h) *Reports.* The Greenwood Cemetery advisory board shall make and submit to the city commission annually a report of the general activities, operation, and condition of the Greenwood Cemetery for the preceding 12 months. The Greenwood Cemetery advisory board shall, from time to time, as occasion requires, either in the annual report, or at any time deemed necessary by the Greenwood Cemetery advisory board, advise the city commission in writing on all matters necessary and proper for and pertaining to the proper operation of Greenwood Cemetery and any of its activities or properties.

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- (i) *Protection of property.* No person shall take, use, or occupy the Greenwood Cemetery except in accordance with such rules and regulations governing such as may from time to time be authorized by the city commission.

(Ord. No. 2146, 10-13-14)



Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board

2026 Meeting Dates

Fridays at 8:30 a.m.

Meeting requirement: once per quarter

January 2, 2026	DO NOT SCHEDULE (Near New Year Holiday)
February 6, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Rules and Regulations
March 6, 2026	
April 3, 2026	DO NOT SCHEDULE (Good Friday)
May 1, 2026	
June 5, 2026	
July 3, 2026	DO NOT SCHEDULE (Near 4 th of July Holiday)
August 7, 2026	DO NOT SCHEDULE (August 4, 2026 Election)
September 4, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair and Co-Chair Nominations • Review Draft Annual Report
October 2, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize Annual Report
November 6, 2026	DO NOT SCHEDULE (November 3, 2026 Election)
December 4, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan Budget Requests for FY 2027-2028


Columbarium concept submitted by Paul Connell on 9/5/25, member of the public



CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY

EDEN, NORTH CAROLINA

Columbarium Garden Concept Sketch

 COLUMBARIUM
PLANNERS, INC.

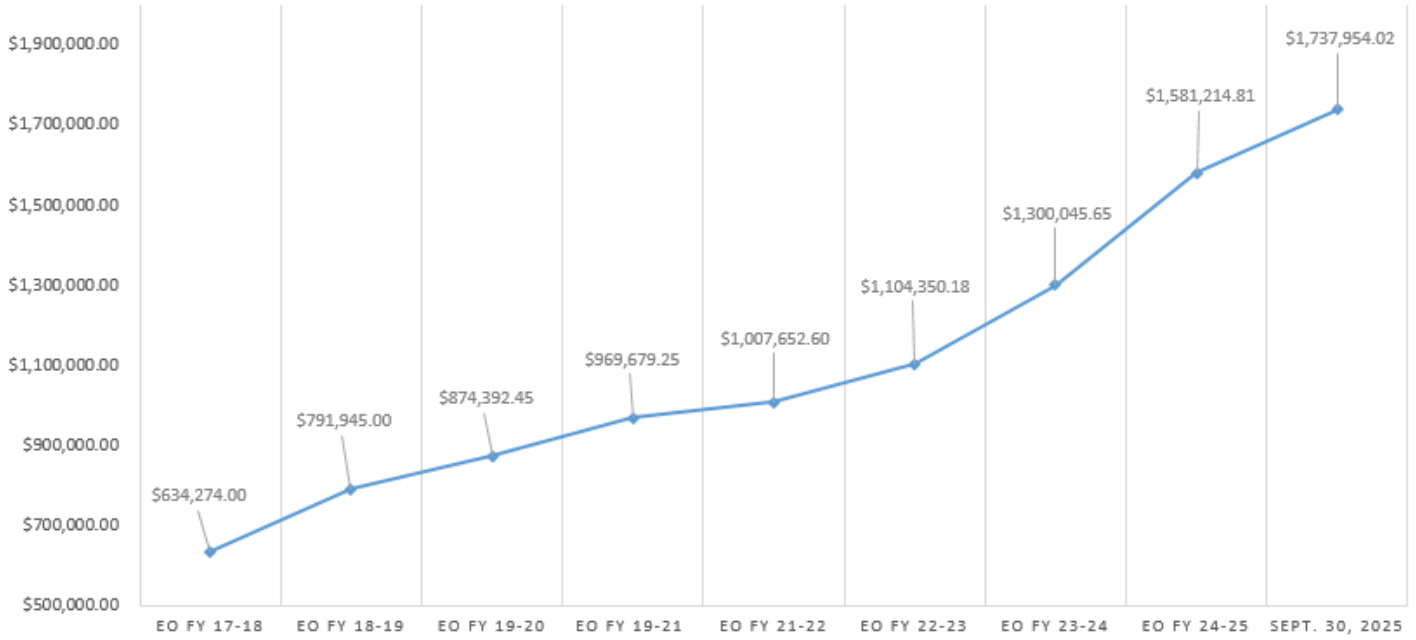
July 18, 2012

September Updates

Clerk's Office Update

Perpetual Care Fund Update

GREENWOOD PERPETUAL CARE FUND



FY 25-26 Grand Totals	
Sales in B	3
Sales in C	0
Sales in Other	0
Resident Purchases	1
Non-Resident Purchases	2
Payment Plans Initiated	1
Total Graves Sold	3
Transfer of Ownership Filed	2
Additional Burial Rights Purchased	4

Greenwood Cemetery Sales and Availability				
	Sec B	Sec C	Resident	Non-Resident
July 2025	0	0	0	0
August 2025	0	0	0	0
September 2025	3	0	1	2
October 2025				
November 2025				
December 2025				
January 2026				
February 2026				
March 2026				
April 2026				
May 2026				
June 2026				
Total Sold	3	0	1	2
Available Under Current Authorization	18			
<i>Total Available</i>	53			

Cemetery Burials								
	Sec B		Sec C		Other		Total by Month	
	Full	Crem	Full	Crem	Full	Crem	Full	Crem
July 2025	1	1	0	0	1	6	2	7
August 2025	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
September 2025	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	3
October 2025								
November 2025								
December 2025								
January 2026								
February 2026								
March 2026								
April 2026								
May 2026								
June 2026								
Totals	1	1	0	3	2	8	3	12