



Agenda
Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board Regular Meeting
Friday, September 4, 2026 8:30 AM
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, MI
City Commission Room 205

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.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk

3. 2026-2027 Organization

- a. Nomination and selection of chairperson and vice chairperson

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Motion to approve the meeting minutes of June 5, 2026.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Request to review the refund policy
- b. Review the 2025-2026 Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board DRAFT Annual Report
- c. 2027 Proposed Meeting Schedule
- d. Future Business
 - i. October 2, 2026
 - Finalize Annual Report
 - Plan Budget Requests for FY 2027-2028
 - ii. December 4, 2026 - Cancel

7. REPORTS

- a. Update from Museum Director Leslie Pielack (when applicable)
- b. Update from the Clerk's Office
- c. Financial Reports
- d. Cemetery Sales & Activity
- e. City Manager's Reports

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

9. BOARD COMMENT

10. ADJOURN

Next Meeting: October 2, 2026

City boards and committees meet in person, and most have a virtual option available to the public. Members of the public may attend the Cemetery Advisory Board meeting in person at Birmingham City Hall or attend virtually.

Link to Access Virtual Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/98983856041>

Telephone Meeting Access: 929 205 6099 US Toll-free

Meeting ID Code: 989 8385 6041

City Hall is open to the public during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. The Police Department lobby entrance on the east side of City Hall on Pierce Street operates as the after-hours public entrance.

Individuals requiring assistance to enter the building should request aid via the intercom system at the parking lot entrance gate on Henrietta Street.

Persons who require mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance for effective participation in this public meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at (248) 530-1880, or (248) 644-3405 (TDD) at least one day before the meeting to request help.

Las personas con incapacidad que requieren algún tipo de ayuda para la participación en esta sesión pública deben ponerse en contacto con la oficina del escribano de la ciudad en el número (248) 530-1800 o al (248) 644-3405 (para las personas con incapacidad auditiva) por lo menos un día antes de la reunión para solicitar ayuda a la movilidad, visual, auditiva, o de otras asistencias. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)



Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board – Regular Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2026 – 8:30 a.m.
City Commission Room 205, 151 Martin Street, Birmingham, MI

1. Call To Order

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

2. Roll Call

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

Absent: None

Staff: City Clerk Bingham

3. Introduction of Guests

None.

4. Approval of the Minutes – May 1, 2026

MOTION: by Buchanan, seconded by Suter:

To move that the minutes from the previous meeting of May 1, 2026 be accepted as amended.

VOTE: Yeas, 4
Nays, 0

5. Unfinished Business

- A. Motion for the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board to recommend the City Commission consider and adopt the proposed ordinance revisions regarding GCAB membership. Reducing the regular membership to five members and allowing two alternates, one of which may be a non-resident with an interest in the cemetery or other desirable qualifications.**

CC Bingham presented the item.

Board members discussed the following regarding the item:

- An alternate only votes when a regular member is not able to be in attendance.
- The Board could have two resident alternates, or one resident and one non-resident alternate. It could not have two non-resident alternates.

- An alternate would sit in the audience if a full board of regular members is in attendance.
- It would be positive for an alternate to attend meetings regularly.
- Noticing this ordinance change in a newspaper must meet certain legal requirements.
- One of the Board members felt that the City's public service announcements in the Oakland Press should be published for free, and that staff should request that.
- If the ordinance is changed, it might be possible to have a local journalist write about the work of the Board in order to publicize the ordinance changes and the Board vacancies.

MOTION: by Suter, seconded by Schreiner:
To move to accept the changes.

VOTE: Yeas, 4
Nays, 0

B. Resolution to release 10 graves, making 20 graves available under the current authorization and holding 25 graves in reserve.

CC Bingham presented the item.

Board members discussed the following regarding the item:

- Two graves were sold back to the City, increasing the total number of graves in reserve to 27.

MOTION: by Buchanan, seconded by Peterson:
To accept this motion to release 10 more graves.

VOTE: Yeas, 4
Nays, 0

6. New Business

- **Future Business**

7. Reports

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

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

9. Board Comment

Board members discussed the following:

- Traditional full burials still occur in Greenwood.
- Board members have found bags of dog excrement left in the Cemetery.
- The shade canopy and the grounds have been well maintained.

- While sprinklers were previously in the Cemetery, they have not been reinstalled due to breakage and costs.
- It would be possible to ask DPS about the feasibility of adding watering back into the Cemetery. It is possible that DPS would not be in favor of doing so.
- There used to be larger trees with more shade. Trees are being replaced in the Cemetery.
- The endowment would likely not be able to fund a columbarium.
- It is preferable to recommend actions to the Commission that are likely to be approved.
- It would be helpful to hear a cost estimate for the columbarium. This would also help determine the price point.
- The City has a number of other capital expenditures at present. The Commissioners may not feel that offering more space in Greenwood by way of a columbarium is a present priority.
- At least one Board member said they were not interested in adding a columbarium to the Cemetery.
- In contrast, the capital outlay to clean the historic gravemarkers in the Cemetery was appropriate.
- Concerns about the columbarium remain the size and the location. It might be more beneficial to explore other less expensive, long-term burial options.
- The tour went well. Some notable individuals buried in the Cemetery and some broader Birmingham history was discussed.

10. Adjournment

The Board motioned to adjourn at 9:24 a.m.

Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist



MEMORANDUM

City Clerk's Office

DATE: September 4, 2026
TO: Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board
FROM: Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk
SUBJECT: Request to review the refund policy

INTRODUCTION:

In May 2026, the city received the first ever request to refund and return two graves. This request was completed in compliance with section X. Lot Resale Policy of the Greenwood Cemetery Operational Procedures, Conditions, and Regulations. Shortly after this event, another potential request was made in June 2026 for the return and refund of four graves. This request has yet to be completed by the requestor since they reached out to the Mayor requesting a modification to the policy.

BACKGROUND:

In June, the requestor wrote to Mayor Baller:

Mayor Baller, I am writing for the City to modify the Greenwood Cemetery grave refund policy. The city only refunds half of the paid price for graves when returned to the city. Sometime ago, my family purchased 4 plots for \$12,000 total and we are only entitled to a \$6,000 refund. I understand the city will resell the 4 graves for \$24,000. While this was in our original contact, the policy seems unreasonable. Thank you for your consideration, Sincerely, Requestor

Mayor Baller forwarded the request to the City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk, and Chair of GCAB:

*Requestor,
Forwarding to City Manager Jana Ecker, City Clerk Alex Bingham (staff liaison to the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board), Board Chair Linda Buchanan and City Attorney Mary Kucharek. Educated guess: If you have not already done so, you'll probably need to submit the request for a policy change to the board, and further request that its decision (whatever it is) be reviewed by the commission, which apparently has final say over the [rules](#). I'd be interested in seeing sales/refund data and pros/cons on the refund policy.*

Clinton

The Clerk later replied:

Requestor, I called the number you provided, ###-###-####, to discuss your refund request for the spaces you purchased in Section C Lot 17-A Graves 15, 16, 17, 18. The voicemail for that number was not set up.

Currently, the lot resale policy stands and the city does not anticipate any changes. The policy has been in place since August 10, 2015, City Commission Resolution No. 08-174-15.

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board's next meeting is scheduled for September 4, 2026. If you would like the board to consider the issue, I encourage you to send a letter with your facts and reasoning by Friday, August 28, 2026.

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board would first review the issue and then make a decision on any recommendations for the City Commission to consider.

Sincerely,

The requestor replied stating that they would send a letter as directed, yet no additional information from the requestor has been received.

LEGAL REVIEW:

None at this time. The City Attorney will be consulted if the board decides to consider recommending modifications to the policy.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Currently, \$3,000 has been refunded from the perpetual care fund for the first request that was executed. The perpetual care fund would also refund \$6,000 if the current pending requestor wishes to follow through with their request with the current policy intact. This type of refund request is a new phenomenon, so there haven't been any budget considerations thus far for funds being withdrawn from the perpetual care fund for this reason. The city's finance director will be consulted when necessary.

SUSTAINABILITY:

None at this time.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:

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

SUMMARY:

Suggested Board Action:

1. Discuss the pros and cons of maintaining the current policy
2. Discuss the pros and cons of modifying the policy
3. Come to a consensus on whether to further research and consider policy changes or determine that the current policy sufficiently meets the city's needs

ATTACHMENTS:

1. GREENWOOD CEMETERY REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES - Draft Revisions

SUGGESTED COMMISSION ACTION:

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board is being asked to review the current section X. Lot Resale Policy of the Greenwood Cemetery Operational Procedures, Conditions, and Regulations. The board should come to a consensus on whether to maintain or consider changes to the policy in a way that the City Clerk can then report back to the City Manager, City Attorney, Finance Director and City Commission.



GREENWOOD CEMETERY

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES, CONDITIONS, AND REGULATIONS

Updated November 4, 2022

I. DEFINITIONS

A. The following words and phrases, for the purposes of these operational procedures, conditions, and regulation, have the meanings respectively ascribed to them.

1. "Cemetery" shall mean Greenwood Cemetery.
2. Cemetery land designations are as follows:
 - a) "Section" shall mean a collection of cemetery lots
 - b) "Lot" shall mean a collection of plots
 - c) "Plot" shall mean an individual gravesite. Interchangeable with "gravesite" or "grave space"
3. "City" shall mean any physical part of the City, the City Manager, the City Clerk, the City Department of Public Services, or any other entity otherwise responsible for municipal functions, and/or those employed by the city of Birmingham and or under the direction of the city and or its designated contractors.
4. "Corner Marker" also known as cemetery pin or lot pin, is used to locate cemetery sections, lots, and plots.
5. "Department" shall mean the City of Birmingham Department of Public Services.
6. "Immediate Member" shall mean spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, siblings, nieces, nephews, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and stepchildren. Shall also include domestic partner or those in a civil union.
7. "Memorial" shall include:
 - a) "Marker" shall mean a stone or object denoting the location of a grave which is not installed even with the ground level but does not exceed eighteen (18) inches in height, sixteen (16) inches in width, and twenty-four (24) inches in length.
 - b) "Monument" shall denote an object or memorial stone in excess of (18) inches in height, sixteen (16) inches in width, and twenty-four (24) inches in length.
 - c) "Flush Memorial Marker" shall mean an object denoting the location of a grave installed at lawn level.

8. "Minor" shall mean persons under eighteen years of age.
9. "Permanent outside container" shall be a container that encloses a casket. The following are considered permanent outside containers: concrete boxes, or concrete, copper, or steel burial vaults.
10. "Person of Historical Significance" shall be someone of importance to the history of Birmingham who has been buried in the Cemetery for at least 50 years. Final determination of historical significance shall be made by the Museum Director/City Clerk/City Manager in conjunction with recommendations from the Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board, the Museum Board, and/or the Friends of the Birmingham Museum, and may include input from other Michigan based community historical groups and/or academic institutions, as well as any known family descendants.

II. CONDUCT OF PERSONS

- A. All persons shall be responsible for any and all damage caused to any property in the cemetery. No minor shall enter the cemetery grounds unless accompanied by an adult responsible for the minor's conduct, or unless permission has been granted by the City.
- B. All Persons shall:
 1. Enter the cemetery through an established gate.
 2. Only visit the cemetery between the hours from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm.
 3. Deposit or leave rubbish and debris in city-provided trash receptacles
 4. Refrain from picking, mutilating, removing, or destroying any living plants or parts thereof, whether wild or domestic, on the cemetery grounds, except for work by the City.
 5. Refrain from breaking, injuring, removing, defacing or otherwise harming any memorial on the cemetery grounds.
 6. Comply with applicable leash laws.
 7. Refrain from discharging any firearm on the cemetery grounds, except in the conduct of military funerals using only blanks, and with written permission of City or designee and prior notification of the Police Chief.
 8. Refrain from the carry, use, or consumption of any intoxicants at any time while on cemetery grounds, or bring into the cemetery grounds, or consume such while in the cemetery.
 9. Refrain from hosting or advertising any goods, services, or activities unless the City has provided written permission.
 10. Conduct themselves in only a quiet and respectful manner while on the cemetery grounds.

III. TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

A. All vehicular traffic laws of the City of Birmingham shall be strictly observed. Every person or entity in control, including vehicular owners, drivers, and/or as operator who has engaged autopilot, will be jointly and severely liable for any and all damages caused by such vehicle which has entered onto cemetery grounds.

B. No person shall:

1. Operate a vehicle within the cemetery at a speed in excess of ten (10) miles per hour.
2. Operate or park a vehicle on other than established driveways, except for the purpose of City authorized maintenance or construction as permitted.
3. Turn a vehicle around within the cemetery by performing a u-turn.
4. Use a cemetery driveway as a public thoroughfare.

IV. MAINTENANCE AND PERPETUAL CARE

A. The City shall not be responsible for any special care of any particular section, lot, or burial space, or for the maintenance or repair of any monument, marker, or planting placed by the owner. Further, the City shall not contract or agree to give special care to any section, lot, or burial space, except as otherwise noted below.

B. The City shall be responsible for the maintenance and repair of the driveways, buildings, water system, drainage, and fences. The City and/or its designated Contractor shall also cut and maintain the grass areas, remove the leaves, trim, remove, replace or add trees and shrubs, and, in general, maintain the cemetery as a place of natural beauty devoted to the burial of the dead.

C. In order to preserve the integrity of potentially historical markers, the City shall maintain, using best practices and discretion, markers for deaths which have occurred at least 120 years ago or more, for which there has been no maintenance from descendants for a period of 10 years.

V. OPERATIONAL REGULATIONS

The following operational regulations shall apply to all areas within the cemetery:

A. Corners of all sections, lots, and plots will be marked with corner markers set flush with the ground surface, which will be installed and maintained by the City and shall not be disturbed.

B. The erection of any fence, railing, wall, coping, curbing, trellis, or embankment, or the planting of any hedge, on any lot or grave is prohibited.

C. The cutting of paths shall not be permitted.

- D. The City shall have the right to remove from any lot any objects, including trees, shrubs, and flower pots that are not in keeping with the regulations of the cemetery.
- E. The City is not responsible for any damage or loss of personal items.
- F. Decorative items are only allowed on owned plots or sections, not on adjacent graves or other locations in the Cemetery.
- G. Only one (1) vase or planter shall be allowed on lots or plots, providing that the same shall be kept in good repair. If not kept in good repair, the City shall have authority to remove and shall not be liable for any such removal.
- H. Only one (1) pinwheel per plot allowed.
- I. Items which pose a sound, light or littering disturbance are not allowed, including balloons, wind chimes, artificial flowers, solar lights, candles, glass or porcelain objects.
- J. The City shall have the authority to remove unapproved items from lots or plots and make the unapproved items available to an immediate member. If the item is not claimed within six months it will be considered abandoned property.
- K. Planters for the planting of flowers will be removed from lots and plots if not filled with foliage by July 1st. The City shall make the removed planter available to an immediate member. If the item is not claimed within six months it will be considered abandoned property.
- L. No person shall plant, cut down, remove, or trim any tree, shrub, or plant within the cemetery except by permission of the City, or a person authorized to act in their stead in matters pertaining to the cemetery.
- M. The planting of flowers on any plot, or otherwise disturbing the grass, shall release the City from all obligation to reseed without an additional fee.
- N. It is not permitted to plant any plant that may grow over three feet in height or is a non-native or invasive plant. If a plant, approved or otherwise, becomes overgrown the City may trim, cut or remove the plant. The City may ask for reimbursement from the plot owner for cost of removal or maintenance.
- O. The City reserves the right to remove all plants, flowers or other objects wherever situated that are not maintained in accordance with these regulations.
- P. The City reserves the right to remove any object that interferes with safety and maintenance.
- Q. If an individual or group wishes to place items at graves they do not own, they must receive written approval from the City and will be responsible for a plan for removal.

VI. MONUMENTS, GRAVE MARKERS AND FOUNDATIONS

A. MONUMENTS

1. Monuments will be permitted only on two adjoining side-by-side graves under one ownership. No more than one monument shall be erected on any plot.
2. Each monument shall be supported on a concrete foundation not smaller than the base of the monument it supports. Such foundation shall be constructed only by the City after payment has been made. Foundations will be installed April to November, weather dependent, as determined by the City. Requests received after November 1st will be held until conditions allow for installation.
3. Designs for monuments must be submitted to the City, when application is made for construction of foundations. A form with the size, material, and design must be submitted to the City or its designated contractor for approval, and all installation fees must be paid in full prior to delivery of the memorial.
4. A request to install a monument or marker on a grave of special historical significance may be made by a non-deed holder, subject to compliance with all applicable requirements for monuments and markers and final approval by the City. Such request shall be made by application, and shall include detail as to the historical significance of the person in question to the City or Cemetery, and obtaining necessary approval of such Application from the City, subject to the criteria in the Application. Any such marker or monument becomes the property of Greenwood Cemetery/City of Birmingham upon installation, and the City is not required to maintain such property, other than as part of the general maintenance of the cemetery.
5. No monument of artificial stone, sandstone, limestone, or soapstone will be permitted.
6. The City is not responsible for damage done to any attachments to a monument.
7. All contractors, vendors and workers engaged in setting monuments shall be under the supervision of the City and they will be held responsible for any damages. No work of setting monuments shall be started that cannot be completed by the end of the day following the start of such work.
8. All contractors/vendors engaged in setting monuments shall have prior approval from the City prior to commencement of work. Such contractor/vendor (and the workers thereof) will be held responsible for any damage resulting from said contractor's/vendor's (or the worker's thereof). Further, all monument installations shall be completed in a timely fashion, and may remain unfinished at the close of the business day provided the materials and area is left in a safe and secure manner.
9. No monuments shall be allowed in areas designated only for ground level memorials.

B. GRAVE MARKERS

1. Markers shall not exceed eighteen (18) inches in height and shall have a minimum horizontal dimension at the base of not less than half of the height. All markers shall be in one piece, and shall be dressed on the bottom at right angles to the vertical axis. These measurements do not apply to government issue markers.
2. Individual markers can be sod set without a concrete foundation.
3. A form with the size, material and design must be submitted to the City for approval and all installation fees must be paid in full prior to delivery of the memorial. Installation will not occur between November 1st and April 15th unless weather permits.

C. FLUSH/LAWN LEVEL MEMORIAL SECTION – AREAS PLOTTED AFTER JANUARY 1, 2015

1. On grave spaces in Sections B, C, D, K, L, and O, all memorials on new plots created after January 1, 2015, must be installed at lawn level. Memorials can be individual markers measuring twelve (12) OR sixteen (16) inches wide, twenty-four (24) inches long and four (4) inches deep. Companion memorials over two (2) graves can measure up to forty-eight (48) inches wide, twelve (12) inches long and four (4) inches deep.
2. The memorials must be made of acceptable bronze or granite material and set at lawn level. Bronze plaques must be installed on granite prior to memorial installation.
3. A form with the size, material, and design must be submitted to the City for approval, and all installation fees must be paid in full prior to delivery of the memorial. Installation will not occur between November 1st and April 15 unless weather permits.

VII. FUNERALS, INTERMENTS AND DISINTERMENTS

A. FUNERALS AND INTERMENTS

1. No lot or burial space shall be used for any purpose other than the interment of human remains and the erection of appropriate memorials.
2. No interment shall be made in Greenwood Cemetery until a proper burial permit has been issued, and until all other legally required permits have been issued by, and filed with, the proper authorities.
3. The City will provide opening and closing of grave, initial and periodic maintenance only, and will not be responsible for handling and lowering vaults or caskets. Tents, lowering devices, and other materials shall be furnished by the funeral director or vault company.
4. No grave shall be dug closer than six (6) inches from the line of any lot.

5. In all full burial interments, the casket shall be enclosed in a permanent outside container. Such outside container shall be installed by the funeral director, vault company, or the City's designated contractor.
6. In all interments of cremated remains, the container shall be installed by the City, its designated contractor, funeral director, or vault company. The size of the container must be submitted with the request for burial.
7. Time, date and location of interments must be coordinated by the city or designated contractor. Proposed interments must have approval with a minimum of 48-hours notice from the time of confirmation from the City Clerk or designated contractor, and must include the date, time and location of the interment.
8. All funerals within the cemetery shall be under the supervision of the City. No burials are to be made on Sunday or legal holidays, except by permission of the City. Overtime charges will apply after 2:00 pm Monday through Saturday, and any time on Sundays and Holidays.
9. Interments that involve preparation or follow-up work during other than regular working hours will be done at an additional charge for the overtime portion of the time required. The maximum charge shall not exceed the normal charges plus the weekend/holiday fee. This fee is in addition to the normal interment or disinterment fee charged during regular working hours.
10. Interment of the remains of any persons other than the owner will be permitted only after the written consent of the owner or the owner's authorized agent has been filed with the City Clerk or the City's designated contractor. In case of a minor being the owner, the guardian may give consent upon proof of this authority to act.
11. Only one (1) interment in any one grave space shall be permitted, except in the case of a parent and infant child, or two (2) children dying at about the same time, or in such other unusual cases as it shall seem to the City to be proper under the circumstances. Such interments shall adhere to *Section VIII Burial Rights Policy*.
12. A maximum of 3 occupants per plot are allowed if the owner of the plot or their heirs purchase the right to such interment. This can be in the form of one (1) casketed burial (full burial) and two (2) cremated remains, OR three (3) total cremated remains. Exceptions are made regarding children two (2) years & under.
13. Should the owner permit the burial of such cremated remains, only one additional memorial shall be permitted on the grave space and such memorial shall not be larger than twelve (12) inches wide, twenty-four (24) inches long and four (4) inches deep and installed at ground level.

B. DISINTERMENTS

1. Disinterment of a burial shall be facilitated by a Michigan licensed funeral director. Said funeral director shall obtain a permit for such removal from the local health officer of Oakland County. Disinterment shall not commence until after

issuance of the Oakland County permit is presented to the City or its designated contractor, approval for removal is granted by the City or its designated contractor, and all applicable fees are paid. Such disinterment shall only be scheduled between June 15th and October 15th each year unless approved by the City. The grave space where the disinterment occurred shall be returned to a safe condition.

VIII. BURIAL RIGHTS POLICY

A. Full Plot

1. A full plot accommodates up to three (3) burials. The primary burial can be cremated remains or a full burial. The additional two burials must be cremated remains.
2. Full plots purchased prior to January 1, 2015 require the purchase of the second and third burial right prior to each burial.

B. Cremation Plot

1. An individual cremation plot measuring three (3) feet by two (2) feet accommodates one (1) burial right for one (1) cremated remains.
2. A companion cremation plot measuring three (3) feet by four (4) feet accommodates two (2) burial rights for two (2) cremated remains.

IX. LOT SALES – PAYMENT PLAN POLICY

A. A payment agreement may be entered into to allow for the purchase price of a plot(s) to be paid over a period of time not to exceed twenty-four (24) months and the period provided to cure a default. A copy of this Payment Plan Policy shall be attached to all installment payment agreements and shall be provided to the Purchaser.

B. Payment agreements require a 20% down payment of the total purchase price, with the remaining balance to be spread into equal monthly payments not to exceed twenty-four (24) months. Such payment agreements shall be interest free. There shall be no prepayment penalty to the Purchaser.

C. Plot(s) being purchased under a payment agreement may not be used for interment until the purchase price of the plot(s) has been paid in full. The Purchaser may apply all payments made on the plan to the plot(s) needed for burial. Should this application of funds to the burial plot reduce the balance in the Purchaser's account below 20% of the value of the remaining plots, the Purchaser shall be given a grace period of up to six (6) months to repay the 20% deposit on the remaining plot(s).

D. In the event a Purchaser fails to make an installment payment, the Purchaser shall have ninety (90) days from the date of default to cure the deficiency and bring the payments current.

E. For purchase agreements initiated after January 14, 2019, failure to pay the entire contract on or before the final payment due date and the cure period will result in

forfeiture of the unpaid plot(s) and 50% of all monies paid to date. If enough money is on account to completely pay for a plot(s), the Purchaser shall have the option to purchase said plot(s) with those available funds. Fifty percent of the remaining funds on account and any plots not paid in full shall be forfeited.

X. LOT RESALE POLICY

A. All graves sold by the City after October 1, 2014 can be returned to the City or can be transferred from the original purchaser to an immediate member with supporting documentation acceptable to the City.

B. Graves returned to the City shall be repurchased by the City at fifty percent (50%) of the original purchase price, payable from the Greenwood Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund. Upon return, the City may resell the grave(s).

C. No transfer or return shall be permitted unless the City's records reflect the requesting party as the current owner of record, and all required documentation, including proof of ownership and , where applicable, proof of relationship, has been submitted to and approved by the City.

XI. SCHEDULE OF FEES AND CHARGES

Fees and other charges are as set forth in the Schedule of Fees, Charges, Bonds and Insurance.

XII. REVISIONS

The obligations of the City as herein set forth may, from time to time, be modified by the Birmingham City Commission.

1. October 18, 1971 Resolution No. 1434-71
2. February 13, 1984 Resolution No. 02-97-84
3. February 23, 2009 Resolution No. 02-52-09
4. December 17, 2012 Resolution No. 12-356-12
5. August 10, 2015 Resolution No. 08-174-15
6. March 27, 2017 Resolution No. 03-82-17 (and confirmed by Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board on May 5, 2017).
7. January 14, 2019 Resolution No. 01-011-19
8. November 4, 2022, Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board, with City Manager Approval

GREENWOOD CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD



2025/2026 ANNUAL REPORT

August 2026

Linda Buchanan, Chair

Linda Peterson, Vice Chair

Laura Schreiner

Margaret Suter

Paul Connell – Resigned (Sept 15, 2025)

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, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

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 5, 2025

Q2

October 3, 2025

December 5, 2025

Q3

March 6, 2026

Q4

May 1, 2026

June 5, 2026

2025/2026 Accomplishments

- Nomination and Selection of Chair and Vice Chair
- Produced the 2024-2025 Annual Report
- Recommended budget requests for the clerk to request and present for the FY 26-27 budget cycle in regards to cemetery preservation and maintenance
- Reviewed the Greenwood Cemetery Operational Procedures, Conditions, and Regulations
- Confirmed that the board does not wish to recommend collecting interest on payment plans
- Confirmed that the current price of \$6,000 per grave is appropriate
- Discussed opportunities for a columbarium in the cemetery
- Gave recommendation on proposed updates to cemetery signage to improve the availability of information and wayfinding in the cemetery
- Recommended an ordinance amendment for the City Commission to consider to restructuring the board membership, reducing regular membership to five members and allowing two alternates (one of which may be a non-resident)
- June 6, 2026 - Approved the release of ten graves with 25 graves in reserve

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	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
Sales in B	3	5	7	19	17
Sales in C	3	10	3	1	1
Sales in Other	0	1	0	0	0
Resident Purchases	2	4	2	9	6
Non-Resident Purchases	4	12	8	11	10
Payment Plans Initiated	0	0	3	0	6
Total Graves Sold	6	16	10	20	18
Transfer of Ownership Filed	6	7	5	5	4
Additional Burial Rights	5	6	3	1	6
Graves sold back /returned to the City	0	0	0	0	2

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.
- 6/5/26 The Cemetery Board authorized the sale of 10 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 2025 - June 2026

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	1	1	0	2
November 2025	1	0	0	1
December 2025	3	0	0	3
January 2026	0	0	0	0
February 2026	3	0	3	0
March 2026	1	0	0	1
April 2026	2	0	2	0
May 2026	1	0	0	1
June 2026	2	0	2	0
Total Sold	17	1	8	10
Available Under Current Authorization	17			
<i>Total Available</i>	42			
<i>Total in reserve</i>	25			

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	7/2025 - 6/2026
B (408)	214	32	10	3	5	7	19	17
C (72)	8	10	9	3	10	3	1	1
Other					1			
TOTAL	222	42	19	6	16	10	20	18

Section (total plots)	TOTAL Number of Graves Sold To Date	Number of Graves Remaining (obstructed)
B (408)	307	37 (56)
C (72)	45	1 (29)
Other		
TOTAL	352	38 (85)

Burials and Inurnments: July 2025 - June 2026

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 2025 Cremation and Burial Report, the 2025 cremation rate is projected to be 63.4% and the burial rate is projected to be 31.6%, the remaining 5.0% 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 82.3% by 2045, while burial rates are expected to fall to 13.0%. The City of Birmingham's 2025-2026 cremation rate is 72.7%, 9.3% higher than the national average, while full burial rate is 27.3%, approximately 4.3% lower than the national average.

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	0	3	0	0	1	1	1	4
November 2025	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
December 2025	3	0	0	0	0	1	3	1
January 2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
February 2026	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	3
March 2026	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
April 2026	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
May 2026	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
June 2026	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Totals	4	7	0	4	5	13	9	24

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:

2025 Q Ending September 30

Proceeds from cemetery plot sales and service fees	\$ 29,200.00
Investment income	<u>11,568.08</u>
Revenue for Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 40,768.08

2025 Q Ending December 31

Proceeds from cemetery plot sales and service fees	\$ 44,000.00
Investment income	<u>13,873.65</u>
Revenue for Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 57,873.65

2026 Q Ending March 31

Proceeds from cemetery plot sales and service fees	\$ 19,200.00
Investment income	<u>11,901.52</u>
Revenue for Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 31,101.52

2026 Q Ending June 30

Proceeds from cemetery plot sales and service fees	\$ 18,800.00
Investment income	12,235.68
Unrealized Gain	<u>206,906.73</u>
Revenue for Perpetual Care Fund	\$ 237,942.41

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
6/30/2026

	PRINCIPAL	INCOME	TOTAL
BEGINNING BALANCE 6/30/2025	\$ 1,417,237.51	\$ 210,986.69	\$ 1,628,224.20
SALE OF GRAVES	135,700.00	-	135,700.00
CAPITAL GAINS (LOSSES)	-	-	-
INTEREST/DIVIDENDS	-	49,578.93	49,578.93
CHANGE IN MARKET VALUE	<u>206,906.73</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>206,906.73</u>
ENDING BALANCE 6/30/2026	<u>\$ 1,759,844.24</u>	<u>\$ 260,565.62</u>	<u>\$ 2,020,409.86</u>
<u>INVESTMENTS</u>			
BOND MUTUAL FUNDS	\$ 786,789.89	38.9%	
EQUITY MUTUAL FUNDS	<u>1,233,619.97</u>	61.1%	
TOTAL	<u>\$ 2,020,409.86</u>		

CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
PERPETUAL CARE FUNDS
ANNUAL INVESTMENT REPORT
6/30/2026

	PRINCIPAL (NONSPENDABLE)	INCOME (SPENDABLE)	TOTAL
BEGINNING BALANCE 6/30/2025			
Pooled Funds	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Bond Mutual Funds	540,368.15	144,969.74	685,337.89
Equity Mutual Funds	876,869.36	66,016.95	942,886.31
	<u>\$ 1,417,237.51</u>	<u>\$ 210,986.69</u>	<u>\$ 1,628,224.20</u>
SALE OF PLOTS			
Bond Mutual Funds	64,600.00	-	
Equity Mutual Funds	71,100.00	-	
	<u>\$ 135,700.00</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 135,700.00</u>
CAPITAL GAINS (LOSSES)			
Pooled Fund	\$ -		
Bond Mutual Funds	-		
Equity Mutual Funds	-		
	<u>\$ -</u>		<u>\$ -</u>
INTEREST/DIVIDENDS			
Pooled Fund		\$ -	
Bond Mutual Funds		35,324.76	
Equity Mutual Funds		14,254.17	
		<u>\$ 49,578.93</u>	<u>\$ 49,578.93</u>
CHANGE IN MARKET VALUE			
Pooled Fund	\$ -		
Bond Mutual Funds	1,527.24		
Equity Mutual Funds	205,379.49		
	<u>\$ 206,906.73</u>		<u>\$ 206,906.73</u>
ENDING BALANCE 6/30/2026	<u>\$ 1,759,844.24</u>	<u>\$ 260,565.62</u>	<u>\$ 2,020,409.86</u>
<u>INVESTMENTS</u>			
BOND MUTUAL FUNDS	606,495.39	180,294.50	786,789.89
EQUITY MUTUAL FUNDS	<u>1,153,348.85</u>	<u>80,271.12</u>	<u>1,233,619.97</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$ 1,759,844.24</u>	<u>\$ 260,565.62</u>	<u>\$ 2,020,409.86</u>

CONDITION

During the 2025-2026 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: new siding, gutters, and shingles
- Approximately \$17,500 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, 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 2026/2027

The Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board has prioritized the following action items for 2026-2027:

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.

• *Encourage 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. The board will conduct an annual read through to ensure that the document meets the cemetery's current operational needs.

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 (72)	Section B (408)	Total
Obstructed – Temporary (trees/roots)	3	44	47
Obstructed – Permanently (monument)	26	12	38
Owned	42	315	357
Available	1	37	38

*Data from this table is current as of September 2, 2026

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 2026-2027 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.



Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board

2027 Meeting Dates

Fridays at 8:30 a.m.

Meeting requirement: once per quarter

January 8, 2027	No meeting (New Year/Holiday)
February 5, 2027	No meeting
March 5, 2027	Q1 meeting Bring in Creative Collaborations and Carter's Preservation to update board on work in the Cemetery
April 2, 2027	No meeting
May 7, 2027	No meeting
June 4, 2027	Q2 meeting Review Rules & Regulations
July 2, 2027	No meeting (Near 4 th of July Holiday)
August 6, 2027	No meeting
September 3, 2027	Q3 Meeting - Chair and Co-Chair Nominations - Review Draft Annual Report
October 1, 2027	Q4 Meeting - Finalize Annual Report - Plan Budget Requests for FY 2028-2029
November 5, 2027	DO NOT SCHEDULE (November 2, 2027 Election)
December 3, 2027	No meeting

September Updates

Clerk's Office Update

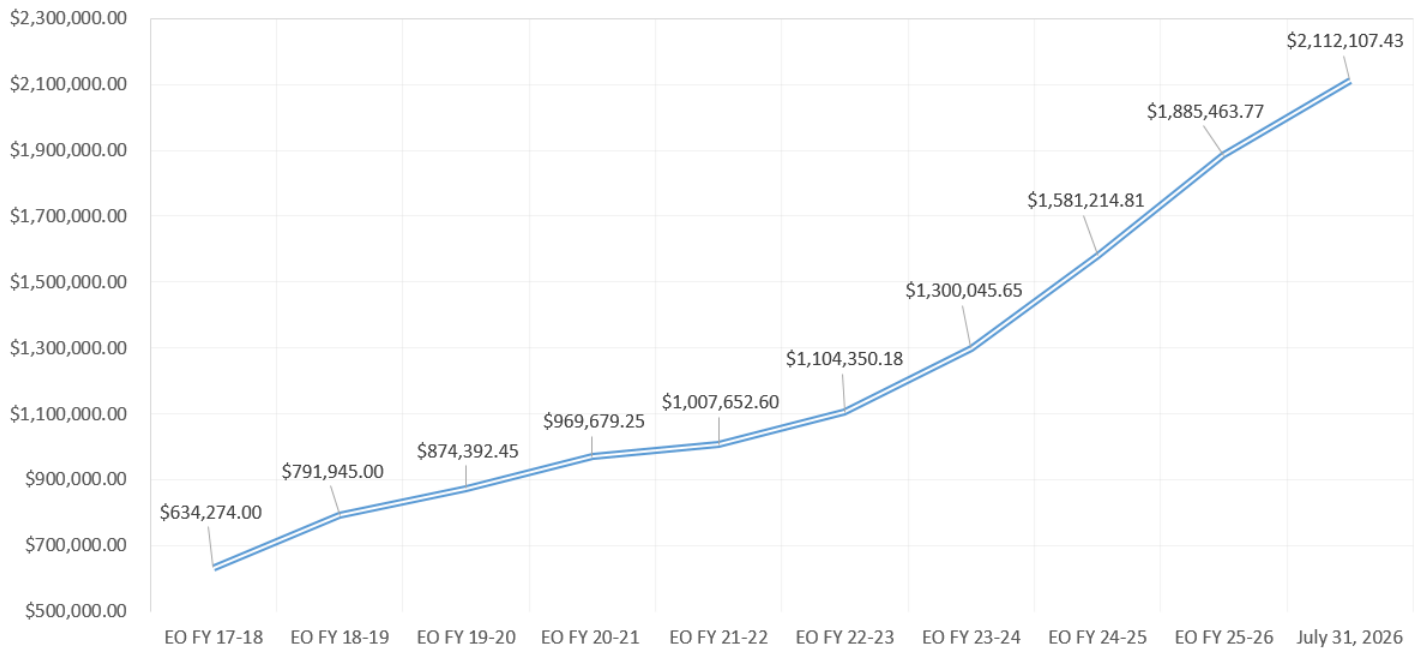
The Clerk's Office is preparing for the November 3, 2026 election and various other projects.

DPS Update

With spring cleanup and faucet repairs complete, DPS is actively doing their routine oversight and maintenance of the cemetery.

Perpetual Care Fund Update

GREENWOOD PERPETUAL CARE FUND



FY 26-27 Grand Totals	
Sales in B	5
Sales in C	2
Sales in Other	0
Resident Purchases	1
Non-Resident Purchases	6
Payment Plans Initiated	1
Total Graves Sold	7
Transfer of Ownership Filed	0
Additional Burial Rights Purchased	0
Graves sold back to/returned to the City	0

Greenwood Cemetery Sales and Availability				
	Sec B	Sec C	Resident	Non-Resident
July 2026	2	2	0	4
August 2026	3	0	1	2
September 2026	0	0	0	0
October 2026	0	0	0	0
November 2026	0	0	0	0
December 2026	0	0	0	0
January 2027	0	0	0	0
February 2027	0	0	0	0
March 2027	0	0	0	0
April 2027	0	0	0	0
May 2027	0	0	0	0
June 2027	0	0	0	0
Total Sold	5	2	1	4
Available Under Current Authorization	13			
<i>Total Available</i>	38			
<i>Total in reserve</i>	25			

Cemetery Burials								
	Sec B		Sec C		Other		Total by Month	
	Full	Crem	Full	Crem	Full	Crem	Full	Crem
July 2026	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	2
August 2026	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
September 2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
October 2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
November 2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
December 2026	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
January 2027	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
February 2027	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
March 2027	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
April 2027	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
May 2027	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
June 2027	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	0	2	2	1	0	1	2	4

FACES

Linda Buchanan and George Getschman

As members of the Friends of the Birmingham Museum, history buffs Linda Buchanan and George Getschman are bringing local history to life in an unlikely place – the Greenwood Cemetery.

"My brother and I began doing the Greenwood Cemetery tours twenty years ago, and during that time George joined us, helping to bring these history tours to the community," said Buchanan, a lifelong Birmingham resident and former elementary history teacher. "The cemetery on Oak Avenue, founded in 1825, tells us in the most interesting way about the rich history of our city and its residents – like all cemeteries do."

Dressed in full Victorian regalia, they give the hour-long tours twice a year, in September and May. Of the cemeteries 3,800 gravesites, 650 date back from the 19th century and occasionally include tales fit for a spine-chilling movie.

"The oldest section of the cemetery is land purchased by Dr. Ziba Swan in 1821 for the burial of a mother and daughter murdered by one of their boarders, since there was no cemetery in town at the time. It was later run by Martha Baldwin and the Greenwood Cemetery Association and finally taken over by the city of Birmingham in 1946," said tour guide Getschman, Bloomfield Hills resident.

The tour concentrates on those who founded the settlement of Birmingham and ends with an even longer walk through the many famous people buried there.

Greenwood represents a microcosm of "Who's Who" for the city, with notables interred such as Martha and Edwin Baldwin, library founder; John West Hunter, first settler to Birmingham; Elijah Wiliess, first land owner; Olive Hamilton second land owner; Harry and Marlon Allen, first mayor of Birmingham and his wife; and George Booth and his wife, who established Cranbrook Educational Community.

As for artists, there is renowned American sculptor, Marshall Fredericks, known for his art deco works such as the Spirit of Detroit and the Peace Memorial, located in Shain Park in downtown Birmingham. He is buried with a dramatic sculpture of his famous Leaping Gazelle atop his headstone. Celebrated ceramic artist and founder of Pewabic Pottery, Mary Chase Perry Stratton is also there, as is the more recently interred novelist, Elmore Leonard, with a headstone that labels him the "Dickens of Detroit."

The historian duo call their work with the Friends of the Birmingham Museum (previously the Birmingham Historical Society) a labor of love.

"I'm passionate about doing research and have been reading all of the old copies of The Birmingham Eccentric at the library, so I can add points of interest to the tour content as we go along," said Getschman, a dentist in Birmingham for over 40 years. "It's all about keeping a connection to one another, and our collective history helps do that." He also plays trombone in the Birmingham Concert Band as well as speaks each year at the Memorial Day commemorative ceremonies. Buchanan feels likewise and volunteers at The Community House when she's not traveling to historical places that include memorable cemeteries like the New Orleans cemetery, built in 1854.

They are proud of the other projects their organization has been part of – raising funds for monuments for enslaved people who had no markers, educational tours to all Birmingham schools, and encouraging preservation of the city's stories and architectural heritage.

"Every life is a part of history and important," said Buchanan. Her tour teammate Getschman added, "My grandfather taught me that if you know history, you see things other people can't see."

They both agree these are the philosophies that keep their passion project alive and give their tours lasting meaning.

Story: Susan Pock

Photo: Sam Barger

