

Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board Minutes
March 7, 2025
Municipal Building, 151 Martin
8:30 a.m.

Commented [1]: @leichenhorn@bhamgov.org i made the small correction, @kdolland@bhamgov.org please LF and post minutes online

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 Paul Connell, Laura Schreiner, Margaret Suter

Absent: None

Staff: City Clerk Bingham; Museum Director Pielack (left 8:44 a.m.)

Creative Collaborations: Cheri Arcome

III. Introduction of Guests

IV. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION: by Suter, seconded by Connell:
To accept the minutes as is.

VOTE: Yeas, 5
Nays, 0

V. Unfinished Business

VI. New Business

A. Inventory and Grave Price Assessment

CC Bingham and Ms. Arcome presented the item and answered informational questions from the Board.

Board member comments were as follows:

- \$6,000 might be too high a price per grave. It may be prohibitive for some people with connections to the City, and there has been some dismay at the quality of the grass given the present frequency of burials in the available burial area.
- Alternatively, \$6,000 may be appropriate, given the Cemetery's historic nature, the limited number of available graves left, that there is an effort to continue funding the Perpetual Care fund, that while it is a higher price, it is not out of the range of other local cemeteries, that graves in the Cemetery have been offered for substantially more via private sales, and that this is a cost to reserve a permanent location.
- One plot could hold three burials in the case of cremation.
- If there was a desire to slow grave sales, maintaining the cost at the present \$6,000 is also appropriate.
- One reason the Cemetery is appealing is because it is centrally located, which benefits people visiting the Cemetery.
- It is still appropriate to require flush markers for new burials in Sections B and C.
- A minority of people tend to prepay for their funerary expenses.
- There may be some trends towards people prepaying for their plots, while not prepaying for the funerals themselves.
- People's perceptions of the price of a plot may depend in part on whether they pay for the plot and the funeral around the same time, or whether the plot was purchased significantly in advance.
- Some individuals with loved ones in the Cemetery have paid more than \$6,000 for plots, and felt the investment to be appropriate and worthwhile.
- The Cemetery cannot sell to every potentially interested person. It is useful to remember that everyone will have different circumstances, and that a person's priorities will be different from the Board's.

- The Board's priorities are maintaining the historic Cemetery, caring for the Cemetery, and having availability in the short and long terms.
- The Board might be interested in exploring options for columbariums, niches, planter borders, and other offerings at different price points.
- The Board will have another check-in regarding inventory and grave price assessments when there are 35 graves remaining.

MOTION: by Suter, seconded by Connell:
To re-evaluate after 30 graves are sold.

VOTE: Yeas, 5
Nays, 0

- B. Future Business – Board members recommended the following topics:
- April 4, 2025 – At Greenwood Cemetery

It was concluded that the April meeting would be canceled and the May meeting would be held at Greenwood as long as all stakeholders could be present in May.

If all stakeholders could not attend a May meeting, then the April meeting would still be held.

Possibilities for columbariums, other options for cremation burials, providing Cemetery information on the external walls of the Cemetery garage, and potential future plans for removing obstructions to create more graves could be discussed at upcoming meetings.

- No meetings scheduled May through August
- September 5, 2025
- Other Items for Consideration

VII. Reports

- Update from Museum Director Leslie Pielack
 - Update, FindAGrave Memorial Database for Greenwood Grave Sites at Birmingham Museum

MD Pielack presented the update and answered informational questions from the Board.

- Update from Clerk's Office

CC Bingham presented the update.

- Financial Reports
- Cemetery Sales & Activity
- City Manager's Reports

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

IX. Board Comments

Chair Buchanan noted another person of historical significance buried in Greenwood, former Major League Baseball player John Rainey.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 a.m.



Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist