

Greenwood Cemetery Advisory Board Minutes
May 2, 2025
700-735 Oak Ave. Birmingham, MI 48009
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 Paul Connell, Laura Schreiner, Margaret Suter

Absent: None

Staff: City Clerk Bingham; Parks and Recreation Manager Laird

III. Introduction of Guests

- A. Carrie Laird, Parks and Recreation Manager
- B. Cheri Arcome, Creative Collaborations

IV. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION: by Buchanan, seconded by Connell:
Minutes to be accepted as amended.

VOTE: Yeas, 5
Nays, 0

V. Unfinished Business

VI. New Business

- A. Current status of cemetery storage and consideration of columbarium opportunities

Staff and Ms. Arcome presented the item and answered informational questions.

Board discussion was as follows:

- Cremation has increased in popularity.
- Church columbaria are in use throughout Birmingham.
- It may be appropriate for Greenwood to provide that option, given that the Cemetery has a limited number of plots remaining.
- Smaller walls, benches, or planters for cremains could also be options worth considering.
- Cremation is often chosen for being a less expensive option. It may be important to price any cremation option so that it remains a lower cost option versus full burial.
- It would be necessary to make sure any investment in a cremain monument would also be worth the return on investment for the Cemetery.

- People with plots in Greenwood may advocate for the ability to have upright monuments if upright cremain monuments are installed.
- The ground condition would need to be ascertained before any potential installations, and a cement foundation would likely be necessary.
- The garage could be replaced with a columbarium. The garage could also be aesthetically restored, and a columbarium could be installed nearby.
- A storage facility for what is presently stored in the garage would be necessary.
- Mr. Connell will attempt to get some quotes for a three phase columbarium wall from his industry contacts.
- Taller cremain monuments may not be popular options with the residential neighbors.
- The Pine Lake Cemetery’s columbarium style might be appropriate in the Greenwood context. GCAB members should visit Pine Lake in order to get a sense of the columbarium style.
- Local funeral directors have confirmed that a columbarium would be used at Greenwood.
- The columbarium could be green or another color that would make it blend more into the context.
- Concerns were raised about whether columbarium niches would be sold in the location discussed.
- It would be helpful to know how many niches would be available in the columbarium.
- Bronze urns may be a theft concern.
- It would be possible for purchasers of the columbarium niches to purchase open and close services, with any other services purchased independently as needed. Escrow accounts for prepayments could apply if more extensive services were offered.
- Ms. Arcome proposed a number of necessary questions for further consideration.
- Greenwood is a municipal cemetery, and should limit its offerings to ones appropriate for that function.

B. Update on Cemetery Operations – Laird and Arcome

Staff and Ms. Arcome presented the item and answered informational questions.

Board discussion was as follows:

- Turfbuilding in Section B would be helpful.
- DPS does a great job on maintenance.
- It would be useful to know if and when plots might be placed where trees were removed.

C. Future Business

- a. September 5, 2025
 - i. Begin work on the Annual Report
 - ii. Other Items for Consideration

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

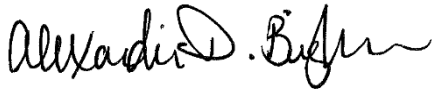
IX. Board Comments

Board discussion was as follows:

- The Board should come out to visit Greenwood and discuss issues biannually. October 2025 could be an appropriate next date, weather permitting.
- Carter Preservation Services was doing a good job.
- The Cemetery's remembrance tour will be held May 10, 2025.
- The Board thanked Ms. Arcome and PRM Laird for joining the meeting.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 a.m.



Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist