

**CEMETERY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

August 25, 2011

5:00 P.M.

Engineering/Planning Conference Room, City Hall

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jason Sladky  
Dennis Schneider  
Jerry Waak  
Ted Dirkman

**STAFF PRESENT**

Val Mellon  
Derek Muench  
Sandy Ronski

**OTHERS**

D. Muench called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

**Approval of the Minutes from April 15, 2010**

T. Dirkman made a motion to approve the minutes. D. Schneider seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Election of Officers**

J. Waak made a motion to have J. Sladky as Chairman and D. Harrigan as Vice-Chairman. T. Dirkman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Revision of Rules & Regulations**

D. Muench reviewed the proposed changes to the Rules & Regulations. There was some discussion of our current quit claim policy. D. Muench said that approximately 75-80% of the spaces in the cemetery have been sold. J. Waak said we shouldn't put on any restrictions when buying the lot back. T. Dirkman said that we should not be giving anything back unless we are sure that we can get a return on it. J. Waak does not want to get customers riled up about this issue. T. Dirkman said that the only thing we can do to try to break even is to sell, such as monuments, etc. He said that we have to decide if we want to run the cemetery as a service or as a business. S. Ronski brought up the fact that in the 1970's the City spent the cemetery's perpetual care fund which was meant to provide funds for the cemetery's maintenance. D. Muench said that we are now 150 years in the hole. J. Waak said that he doesn't want minor things like buying spaces back to be thrown out; he would rather see other services cut.

T. Dirkman requested that the commission be allowed to review the Rules & Regulations and bring back any additional recommended changes to the next meeting. D. Schneider asked if more people were going to be appointed to the commission. D. Muench said that we recommended some individuals but no one has been appointed as of yet. T. Dirkman made a motion to table the revisions until the next meeting. D. Schneider seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Review of fees**

D. Muench received some information from Jerry Schermetzler at Calvary Cemetery regarding the prices at Calvary and Knollwood. The last time that any fees were raised was January 1, 2010 when the Saturday surcharge and the surcharge for having two or more burials per space were raised from \$100 to \$150 each. At the same time, the foundation fees were raised from \$95 to \$105 for a single marker and from \$145 to \$160 for a double marker.

D. Muench thought that the surcharge for having more than one burial on a space might be too low. T. Dirkman recommended that the surcharge be 50% of the cost of the lot (or land) portion of the space. For example, to put a second burial on a traditional space, the cost would be the \$350 opening and closing fee plus \$313.25 (50% of the \$626.50 lot portion of a space) = \$663.25. S. Ronski said that we have 20 to 25 of these per year. J. Waak said that with the economy the way it is, he is against any major changes.

### **Update since last meeting**

D. Muench said that we have been actively selling in section X. S. Ronski stated that five cremation-only spaces have been sold north of the pergola, three of those have markers there, and two have burials. The waterlines were put in this spring. The south side is still available to be laid out for future burials.

This is our third year with the Memorial Tree Program, and about 50 have been sold so far. This is a revenue generating program. We receive a 20% discount on the trees from Brandt's Family Tree.

The Cemetery Walk was a success again this year. This was the third year. The weather was nice. D. Muench felt that we may have had a slightly better turn out this year than last year.

New signs were put up in the cemetery stating no cremation scatterings or pets allowed. Also new directional signs were put up. The signs were made by the DPW.

D. Schneider asked if there was a time when we would not accept any more trees. He felt that some sections, such as E, really have a lot of trees in them. S. Ronski said that the foremen have been trying to limit the number of trees in certain sections. For example, for one family with burials in section Y, the closest space they could get for a tree was across the cemetery road in section H.

J. Waak said that the chapel looks great. He felt there should be some recognition for the Dow family and a dedication for it. There was nothing in the newspaper, and he felt there should be some publicity for it. D. Schneider suggested we focus the publicity on section X now that it's complete. Then, the chapel could be highlighted.

### **New ideas (community marker, green burials, etc.)**

Steve Pfeffer from Pfeffer Funeral Home contacted the cemetery wondering if we would consider having an area for green burials (burials without a vault). Some places with green burials have one common marker for the area. Currently, our rules and regulations require a vault. T. Dirkman said that it started on the west coast, and Ohio has a couple cemeteries

that do that. D. Schneider said that we don't require a casket, but we do require a vault. T. Dirkman said that if people want to touch the ground, some cemeteries use a vault with no cover and turn it upside down. The person lays on the ground for certain religions and then the upside down vault goes over the top of them. The vault requirement is a requirement of the cemetery not of the State of Wisconsin. This is to prevent cave-ins. T. Dirkman also feels that a vault is good for legal reasons in case a body needs to be exhumed.

Another idea the commission may want to consider is a cenotaph. This would be a common marker for people who are buried elsewhere. D. Muench suggested having this in a garden area. T. Dirkman said that it is typically located near a cremation area. S. Ronski said that the cost of adding a name to it should probably be less than the cost of the Memorial Tree Program; otherwise people will probably do the tree and marker package instead.

T. Dirkman suggested a cremation ossuary. An ossuary consists of a large underground vault (such as a double depth vault) that has an opening above ground. Cremated remains are put in a capped PVC tube with the name that is put into the vault through the above ground opening. It is a community area. T. Dirkman said that you could probably sell it for \$295 or so. An inscription for the person could then be purchased on a nearby cenotaph. T. Dirkman said that his company has been doing more of these types of interments than scatterings in gardens, etc.

*The next meeting will be Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>. T. Dirkman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. D. Schneider seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:25 P.M.*

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Derek Muench, Cemetery Manager