



# City of Racine

## Meeting Minutes

### Board of Cemetery Commissioners

City Hall  
730 Washington Ave.  
Racine, WI 53403  
[www.cityofracine.org](http://www.cityofracine.org)

---

Monday, July 16, 2007

4:30 PM

City Hall, Room 103

---

#### Call To Order

*Meeting called to order at 4:30 p.m.*

#### Roll Call

*Staff present: Steve Bedard, Donnie Snow, Dawn Lackey*

**PRESENT:** 4 - Sharon Baldukas, Margo Drummond, Dale H. Slaasted and Sandy Weidner

**EXCUSED:** 1 - Vilas Lund

#### Public Comment

*No public comment.*

#### Approval of Minutes for June 18, 2007 Meeting

to Approve the Minutes

## Financial Report

*Ald. Sandy Weidner pointed out that on July 3, 2007, the City Council voted on bids and the amounts came out of three different accounts - War Memorial, Crypt, and Maintenance. Donnie Snow told the members that the first three numbers and the last four numbers are the same, however, the middle three numbers are different for the accounts. He will check on the accounts to be sure no money was removed in error. Ald. Sandy Weidner then pointed out that 000.5760 should be the capital account; Donnie Snow will check on this also. Donnie Snow reiterated the fact that an accountant from financing should come to a meeting and explain the financial report and that he will have someone available for the next meeting.*

*The report seems to indicate that monies were paid out of the Cemetery accounts. Donnie Snow will check on this and have the report corrected if needed. Sharon Baldukas thinks that the numbers for the crypt report and Mound maintenance are mixed up. There was a transfer of funds to account 207.000.5760 at the March 19, 2007 meeting - Mound Cemetery Maintenance Renovation and Mound Cemetery Crypt Design. There should also be money in the Monument Square fund to cover Ken Saiki and enhancements. Resolution 07-0300 states that \$15,000.00 was taken out of Mound Cemetery account. Donnie Snow stated that typically these kinds of errors could be corrected without going back before the Council. If there is a resolution, then typically there can be a journal entry made to correct certain aspects.*

*Margo Drummond stated that these used to be such a simple sheet and easy to read. The Commission would like Steve Bedard to look for an easier to read report. Donnie Snow receives the reports directly from Finance because the Commission should be looking at information an auditor would review.*

*Ald. Weidner moved to receive and file. Passed unanimous.*

**The Report was Received and Filed**

## Burial and Revenue Report

*Steve Bedard reported on what is going on, i.e., burials, and types. Ald. Sandy Weidner stated she does not see under Revenues the internments. Ald. Sandy Weidner is worried that there are no checks and balances on the money spent. Donnie Snow stated that the Commission should be able to see up-to-date information on the financial statements and again stated that he will have someone from Finance attend the next meeting. The Commission wants to be able to see totals of money spent, money earned, etc. on an easy to read statement.*

*The Commission does not feel it is getting enough information to make accurate votes or that they can look at what the future numbers may be. They should be looking at the budget for next year. Donnie Snow thinks it would be best to review previous year trends (i.e. late 1990s early 2000s, 300 - 355 burials per year), but Ald. Sandy Weidner wants the Commission to be looking at the future and the whole picture.*

*The 2008 contract will be coming up and should have some big adjustments. Steve Bedard stated that the August 15, 2008 contract will be out for bids 90 - 180 days before the end of the contract. Margo Drummond stated that the auditor was to have long-term goals. Donnie Snow would like the Commission to give him a list of all the information they need and are looking for. A copy of the recent contract will be distributed to each member of the Commission and they are to put their comments and questions in the margins. The contract and other meeting information should always be mailed out 1 1/2 weeks prior to the meeting.*

*Slaasted moved to receive and file. Passed unanimous.*

### **The Report was Received and Filed**

## Old Business

*Request for approval of Niche Emblem design. This item was not on the agenda for this meeting because Donnie Snow gave approval to Steve Bedard and made the decision to go ahead with the emblem. There are no copyright issues, and it is small and similar to the others that have already been approved. It was pointed out that this item should have been put back on the agenda and not decided by staff. In the future, any items of this type will come before the Commission and if placed on the agenda for Commission approval, will remain there until voted on.*

*Donnie Snow will call the individual for the emblem and see where it stands at this time; there may be a possibility of putting it back on the agenda once again for approval providing the individual is not too far along in the process. Donnie Snow apologized to the Commission for his decision to expedite this request without Commission approval.*

*Ald. Sandy Weidner wants three items - financial reports, accounts and numbers, and cemetery hours - put on the agenda to deal with at the next meeting. She would also like an evaluation on how Saturday mornings are going and the moratorium on grave buy back.*

07-0463

Subject: Cemetery Audit is now complete and will be presented to the Board of Cemetery Commissioners for review.

Recommendation: 04/16/2007 - The Mayor will be calling a meeting of the whole to discuss the Audit.

Recommendation of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners 5-21-07: That a joint meeting be held between the Committee of the Whole and Cemetery Commission.

Recommendation of the Committee of the Whole of 06-19-2007: the Item be received and filed.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Recommendation of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners 6-18-07: that the item be deferred.

Recommendation of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners 7-16-07: that the item be received and filed.

Fiscal Note: N/A

*Donnie Snow distributed an e-mail sent to Robert Weber regarding the recommended ordinance change. Ald. Sandy Weidner is opposed to ALL the recommended language changes in the e-mail. Before the recommended language changes would come into effect, it would have to be approved by the Cemetery Commission, the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Department, and then it could go to Council. Margo Drummond stated that the Committee of the Whole discussed that the language would go through the Cemetery Commission and then directly to the Council, not through the Parks Board.*

*Sharon Baldukas states that there are no checks and balances and that the Commission has a legal right to ask for an audit.*

*The Commission started discussing Saturday hours. The hours listed at the funeral homes are not the hours that the cemetery had agreed on. When the Commission and Council announced an end to Saturday burials, they did not say the cemetery office hours were to end. Donnie Snow said that no money was added for the Saturday office hours and the Council did not want to pay the cost for Saturday burials. Sharon Baldukas stated that there is an additional charge of \$371.00 for a Saturday burial, but the auditor interpreted it one way and the staff another.*

*Donnie Snow wants the Commission to take the documents that are not thorough and make notes on them and then return them to him for review. In addition, anything relating to policy bring to the attention of Donnie Snow and he will look at for additional review and approval.*

*Ald. Weidner moved to receive and file. Passed unanimous.*

**Recommended to be Received and Filed**

07-0779

Subject: Mr. Mekus will be updating and explaining the Crypt Design.

Recommendation of the Board of the Cemetery Commissioners 6-18-07: that the Crypt Design Plan be deferred.

Recommendation of the Board of the Cemetery Commissioners 7-16-07: that the item be deferred.

*The Crypt Design cost analysis from Mekus was passed out. There is a base bid column which states that Phase I would cost a total of \$1,031,097.42. Donnie Snow had asked for alternatives to be put into the bid (i.e. start with Phase II; fountain; chapel room; etc.), so there are additional columns segregated out to look at individual costs as well. Phase II is \$1,064,239.23; could start with Phase II and add the elevator, the ramp, or the fountain. The chapel room is listed as \$72,036.00.*

*Sharon Baldukas is questioning the winter maintenance costs, but the cemetery already has the removal of ice and snow in the maintenance budget. There was a discussion on the elevator vs. ramp issue - the elevator would leave more room for crypts, which would mean more revenue, but there could be a problem if the elevator is not working. The Commission should also think about the costs involved with parts and maintenance and the revenue without the elevator.*

*The other item of discussion was the handicap bathroom and whether that should be added into the plan. It was pointed out that this is a different type of construction and Mekus would not be handling design plans and specifications for this work.*

*Ald. Sandy Weidner asked for a staff recommendation. Donnie Snow stated that he would recommend the installation of a ramp instead of an elevator because of the long-term maintenance, repair and replacement cost. Further discussion followed staff recommendation.*

*With regard to the fountain - the Bruce Company is being paid right now whether the fountain is working or not and the fountain has not been working for years. The fountain work should be in the initial phase of construction. Ultimately, once the fountain is complete, the City is responsible if the fountain breaks or leaks.*

*Donnie Snow wants the members to look at what phase they would like to start with and to remember this is a 25-year plan.*

*The Commission is concerned that this project is over the funds available. The Commission may also want to look at pre-sale, however, what would be done if the person dies before the new crypts are constructed.*

*Margo Drummond would like to review the plan and discuss it at the next meeting. Donnie Snow is requesting all questions to be directed to him a week or two prior to the next meeting, he will then send them to Mekus for a response and once he receives answers, he will forward those to the Commission.*

*If this project were approved by the Commission, Mekus would then appear before the Committee of the Whole and Cemetery Commission to present the plan.*

*Ald. Weidner moved to defer to next meeting. Passed unanimous.*

**Deferred**

## New Business

### 07-0908

Subject: Approval of Burial Permission letter

Recommendation of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners 7-16-07: that the item be approved with corrections.

Fiscal Note: N/A

*Steve Bedard passed out the new "Permission for Burial of Human Remains in Mound and/or Graceland Cemeteries" letter. This is being developed because of the problem with duplicate names, divorces, etc. so there will be no problems with burials in the wrong place. The City of Racine and the PRCS Department are listed on the hold harmless and it is requested that the Board of Cemetery Commissioners be added to the hold harmless as well. Donnie Snow will see to it that the Cemetery Commission is added to the hold harmless section. People will be able to sign and fax the document from the funeral homes to the Cemetery or come to the cemetery and sign in person. The City Attorney's office drafted the form and approved the same.*

*A policy line item needs to be added to the Cemetery Policies and Guidelines.*

*Ald. Weidner moved to approve with said addition. Passed unanimous.*

**Recommended For Approval**

## Adjournment

*Commission stands adjourned at 6:55 p.m., no further business.*

## Office of the City Cemetery

**If you are disabled and have accessibility needs or need information interpreted for you, please call the Cemetery Office at 636-9188 at least 48 hours prior to this meeting.**