

City of Racine

*City Hall
730 Washington Ave.
Racine, WI 53403*



Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 19, 2006

4:30 PM

City Hall, Room 103

Board of Cemetery Commissioners

*Sharon Baldukas, Margo Drummond,
Vilas Lund, Dale H. Slaasted,
Alderman Sandy Weidner*

Call To Order

*Staff Present: Director Donnie Snow
Supervisor Steve Bedard*

PRESENT: Sharon Baldukas, Margo Drummond, Vilas Lund and Dale H. Slaasted

EXCUSED: Sandy Weidner

Approval of Minutes for May 15, 2006 Meeting

Public Comment

Vilas Lund asked, as a taxpayer, why the minutes included a 5th unnecessary page. It was a computer glitch that is being worked out.

Considered as Reported

Reports

Chairperson Baldukas asked for clarification on revenues from creations. Supervisor Bedard said he would call Baldukas the next morning with an answer.

Director Snow suggested that the "Reports" might better be titled something other than Steve's reports. he also pointed out that such reports should be handled as "Received and Filed: rather than being approved, thus showing that they are informational but should be verified before approving.

The Report was Received and Filed

Old Business

Grave Buy Back Program

During a discussion of the buy back program it was noted that no other area Cemeteries are doing so, that prices on our buy backs have been lowered and that sometimes such gravesites are donated. Supervisor Bedard and Jack Schumann recommended that buy backs be eliminated. Dale Slaasted said he felt we can't just arbitrailly end the program but rather need to set a date and give public notice.

Supervisor Bedard pointed out that there is a problem with relatives of gave spaces coming back to sell them for profit which raises legal questions as to their actual relationship to the original owner. Those seeking to sell a gravesite are required to show identification but often don't have a deed.

Director Snow said, that in order to eliminate possible fraud, it might be better not to say we are buying back gravesites. Chairperson Baldukus gave monetary numbers on the by backs which show that every year since 2003 it has cost the Cemetery more creating a financial drain.

Director Snow recommended we get out of the program. Supervisor Bedard said no purchases pending. He also said that up to 10 cremations burial are allowed in an empty grave, or three if they are places over a casket previously buried.

Sharon Baldukus stated that other Cemeteries only allow two per grave. Bedard said that if there is a gravesite within an area allowing upright headstones that one headstone is allowed worth the others being flat. If three flat markers are on one gravesite, the grounds crew has to ride over them.

He also said that, based on what is required to reclaim abandoned graves it would be better to have several to take through the process, given that paperwork plus 3 public notices are required. The possibility of a need for change in the rules regarding markers on a single grave was also raised. Due to the need for more information, this issue was deferred to the July meeting.

Considered as Reported

Status of Original Mound Fence

Supervisor Bedard submitted an estimate for repair and restoration of this fencing from Jensen Sheet Metals for \$3, 450.00. It included work on all nine sections but not installation. Director Snow said that bids on the project should go through Mr. Aiello.

To have Staff follow through on getting bids for the Mound Fencing.

Considered as Reported

Cemetery Video

Supervisor Bedard said that he had spoken by phone with the City Attorney regarding his pursuance of this project. he was told by the City Attorney to write a letter of intent to the City Council. When asked who would receive the profit from the video, Supervisor Bedard said that he personally would "if anyone is interested, it would be for sale - I want it marketed as a private enterprise, not through the Cemetery." It was suggested that permission from Preservation Racine might be required for any use of information in their Mound Cemetery Walking Tour and that something in writing from the City Attorney be gien to the Commission. Also that families of Mausoleum, etc would need to give permission.

Considered as Reported

New Business

UPDATE ON FOUNTAIN PROJECT

Chairperson Baldukas informed the commission that, through research, she had located a possible design group - Jacobs Ryan Associates of Lake Forrest, IL who won an award for their work in that Cemetery in 2003. She also provided information on the Eickhof Columbaria group out of Crookton, NM as a way to raise revenue, she suggested that perhaps we could ask a design firm for ideas related to both Mound and Graceland.

At Graceland she pointed out, the area around the pond might be suited for cremations related benches or other memorials, possibly including a gazebo. Discussion followed on use of the Graceland building for selling such memorial items and whether or not we could even do that, given our statues as a city cemetery.

This item was to be placed on the July agenda. Any agenda item, Supervisor Bedard said, must be submitted by the Wednesday proceeding the next Monday meeting of the Commission.

TREE TRIMMER BIDS

Vilas Lund asked why there were no prices for work to be done listed on the copy of what we were given. Director Snow said he would get those figures for us. Mr. Lund also asked if the contract can go over the \$10,000 allowed to which Director Snow answered yes, but only in case of a catastrophe.

As to who is responsible for deciding what work is to be done, Director Snow said that it was the job of the City Forester to make those determinations, based on an itemized list submitted to him. Mr. Lund also inquired as to the length of the contract and if any city tree trimmer had been laid off. Mr. Snow said that one had and that for the upcoming budget, \$270,000 would have to be cut from the Parks and Recreation funding.

ITEMS FOR THE JULY AGENDA

Design Work for Mound and Graceland Cemeteries

Saturday Burials

Mound Cemetery Pond

Cemetery Video

Other

Adjournment

*The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m. on a motion
declared the public hearing closed*