

Cemetery Board
October 3, 2019

A regular meeting of the City of Waxahachie Cemetery Board was held on Thursday, October 3, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in the City Council Conference Room, 401 S. Rogers, Waxahachie, Texas.

Members Present: Peggy Crabtree, Chairman
Chad Hicks
Connie McGuire
Chelsea Holder
Perry Giles

Others Present: John Smith, Director of Parks and Recreation
Amber Villarreal, Assistant City Secretary
Melissa Olson, Council Representative

1. Call to Order

Chairman Peggy Crabtree called the meeting to order.

2. Public Comments

None

3. Re-organize the Board

Action:

Ms. Connie McGuire moved to nominate Ms. Peggy Crabtree as Chairman. Ms. Chelsea Holder seconded, All Ayes.

4. Approval of minutes of the City Cemetery Board meeting of August 1, 2019

Chairman Crabtree amended the August 1, 2019 minutes as follows:

She read from the Texas Historic Commission website pertaining to cemetery restoration and it depicted to not put broken headstones ~~on~~ in concrete due to the destruction it will cause over the years.

Action:

Mr. Chad Hicks moved to approve the minutes of the Cemetery Board meeting of August 1, 2019 as amended. Ms. Connie McGuire seconded, All Ayes.

5. Consider donation of a sprinkler system for the Baby Land portion of the City Cemetery

Mr. Jeff Jones explained his infant grandson passed away in June and is buried in Baby Land in the City Cemetery. He noted he has been personally watering the area every other day and proposed to donate a sprinkler system for Baby Land. He explained there will be no interruption to current or future graves and will be solar powered. The system will be fully funded and the city's burden will only be the minimal expense of water supply. He reported the contractor can begin work the week of October 14th and it will only be a two or three day process.

Parks and Recreation Director John Smith noted staff has reviewed the plan and the system is suitable for that area.

Mr. Jones also explained he and his wife would like to work with city staff and families to provide headstone markers for the unmarked graves in Baby Land addition.

Action:

Ms. Connie McGuire moved to accept donation of a sprinkler system for the Baby Land portion of the City Cemetery. Ms. Chelsea Holder seconded, All Ayes.

6. Discuss headstone deposit and take any necessary action

Mr. Smith explained some cemeteries require a headstone monument deposit to prevent unmarked graves. If a headstone is not placed within the one-year period then that money is used to pay for a small grave marker.

Mr. Perry Giles expressed concern with adding emotional stress and an additional financial burden to the grieving families. He noted he is more comfortable with a two year deadline. Mr. Smith explained the deadline can be extended with approval by the Board.

Ms. Connie McGuire inquired if a small marker can be done for a reduced cost and Mr. Giles noted a small monument is priced about \$175.

Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Gumaro Martinez explained record keeping and deposit refunds will be the most difficult part of the process but a solution can be found.

Mr. Smith explained the unmarked headstones are not an issue for Cemetery staff because they have the spaces marked in their records. The new process would assist patrons of the cemetery in locating unmarked graves.

Mr. Chad Hicks suggested including the additional cost in the purchase of the lot, which would automatically be used to purchase a footstone for the grave and there would be no need to process refunds. Councilmember Melissa Olson concurred noting she supports minimizing the burden on families.

Action:

Ms. Connie McGuire moved to direct staff to continue to investigate and research the process and cost of requiring headstone deposits. Mr. Chad Hicks seconded, All Ayes.

7. Adjourn

There being no further business, Mr. Chad Hicks moved the meeting adjourn at 8:52 a.m. Ms. Connie McGuire seconded, All Ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Villarreal, Assistant City Secretary