

Cemetery Board
March 3, 2022

A regular meeting of the City of Waxahachie Cemetery Board was held on Thursday, March 3, 2022 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

Member absent: Perry Giles

Others Present: Michael Scott, City Manager
Amber Villarreal, City Secretary
Gumaro Martinez, Executive Director of Parks & Leisure Services
Brad Barnes, Assistant Parks & Recreation Director
Yadira Campos, Recreation Specialist
Travis Smith, Council Representative

1. Call to Order

Member Mr. Chad Hicks called the meeting to order.

2. Public Comments

Mr. Jerry Chapman discussed and requested assistance from the City to discover available plots in his family plot. He stated if vacant plots were not available in his family plot he will be interested in purchasing plots nearby.

After further discussion, Mr. Gumaro Martinez, Executive Director of Parks & Leisure Services, stated there are options to address Mr. Chapman's questions and will also be discussed further in a future agenda item. City Manager Michael Scott commented options can be reviewed in the meantime.

3. Approval of minutes of the City Cemetery Board meetings of November 4, 2021 and January 6, 2022

Action:

Ms. Connie McGuire moved to approve the minutes of the Cemetery Board meetings of November 4, 2021 and January 6, 2022. Ms. Chelsea Holder seconded, All Ayes.

4. Discuss cemetery activities

Mr. Martinez reported cemetery activities as follows:

- Total for 2021 – 91 plot sales, 6 cremation plots sales, and 4 columbarium sales. There were 93 funeral services held.
- January – 4 plot sales and 6 funeral services held.
- February – 4 plot sales and 5 funeral services held.

5. Discuss damaged grave marker remains

Mr. Martinez shared information in regards to remnants of older markers that have been located at the Parks Dept. shop since the City contracted for maintenance approximately 20 years ago. He asked for recommendations on how to appropriately handle the markers. Chairman Peggy Crabtree stated she spoke with a cemetery expert that recommended burying the markers near or around the location where they were found in order to protect them from the elements and future damage. Mr. Martinez stated he would research areas of the cemetery to be considered for burying the markers.

Mr. Martinez discussed recent vandalism at the Cemetery noting approximately 280 headstones were damaged with the majority located in the older additions of the Cemetery. He stated the Waxahachie Police Dept. is working to identify suspects and create a security plan for the Cemetery. Mr. Martinez thanked the community for their donations to the City and added the approximate cost to make repairs will be between \$50,000 and \$100,000. He noted the Parks Dept. is coordinating with professional restoration companies and volunteers to assist with repairs and cleanup under City supervision.

Mr. Scott stated the community is troubled by the vandalism and willing to help. Mr. Hicks recommended utilizing contractors that specialize in headstone restoration. Mr. Scott replied the City is researching professionals to best assist in the repair efforts. Councilmember Travis Smith recommended posting signage throughout the Cemetery notifying visitors of the ongoing investigation and to not touch the headstones and markers. Mr. Martinez stated signs will be placed throughout the Cemetery asking for leads to be directed to the Waxahachie Police Dept. and information on repairs be directed to the Parks Dept.

The Board further discussed security efforts, identifying damaged headstones, and funds specifically utilized by Crime Stoppers to encourage leads to identify suspects. Mr. Martinez stated he will keep the Board up to date.

Chairman Crabtree suggested researching the flooding issues near the creek and how the water affects the headstones. Mr. Scott stated a study is being conducted for Waxahachie Creek for plans of improvement on creek flow. Mr. Martinez noted he will look into the issue.

6. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yadira Campos
Recreation Specialist