

Cemetery Board
September 5, 2024

A regular meeting of the City of Waxahachie Cemetery Board was held on Thursday, September 5, 2024 at 8:30 a.m. in the Hatchet Conference Room at the Charles Beatty Municipal Services Building, 408 S. Rogers, Waxahachie, Texas.

Members Present: Connie McGuire, Chairman
 Perry Giles, Vice Chairman
 Marion Reynolds
 Trudy Hankins
 Brian Hess

Others Present: Kyle Cooper, Director of Parks & Recreation
 Brad Barnes, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation
 Yadira Campos, Administrative Coordinator
 Patrick Souter, Council Representative

1. Call to Order

Chairman Connie McGuire called the meeting to order.

2. Public Comments

Waxahachie resident Mr. Forrest John who lives at 1005 E Marvin Street, Waxahachie TX, 75165 shared he has many family members who are at the Waxahachie Cemetery and remembers when it was up to the family to maintain their property before the City took over maintenance responsibilities. He also shared with the board he knows the gravedigger contract has been an ongoing topic for many years and when he looked up the City Ordinances it shows in 9-E and 9-F that the funeral homes are in charge of who they contract out for the gravedigger. He states there is nowhere in the ordinances where it shows the City or the Cemetery Board responsible to have a contract with a gravedigger. He recommended the Cemetery Board and staff to go back and review their responsibilities in regards to having a gravedigger contract in place.

3. Consider approval of minutes of the City Cemetery Board meeting of July 11, 2024.

Trudy Hankins requested agenda Item 4 and 5 reference the Cemetery Board meeting of May 2, 2024 to reflect the boards discussion.

Action:

Trudy Hankins moved to approve the minutes of the Cemetery Board meeting of July 11, 2024 as amended. Motion was seconded by Brian Hess and carried unanimously (5-0).

4. Hear update on cemetery plot sales & services

Senior Director of Parks and Recreation Kyle Cooper provided the following update on August plot sales and services report.

- Plot sales: 5
- Cremation sales: 2
- Columbarium sale: 1
- Burials at the cemetery: 7

5. Review updated grave digger contract

The Item was presented by Mr. Cooper. He presented the 2019 Request for Proposal (RFP) gravedigger's contract and the current contract that is referencing Exhibit A. Exhibit A serves as an example illustrating standard contract language. Perry Giles inquired about the gravedigger's accountability, specifically asking if before and after pictures are being taken. Mr. Cooper confirmed that the gravedigger does indeed take before and after photos.

Brian Hess questioned whether the board would have the opportunity to make recommendations for the contract. Mr. Cooper clarified that the Purchasing Department and staff would be responsible for creating the new contract, without board input.

Ms. Hankins inquired about the use of an RFP when it wasn't required. Mr. Cooper explained that the RFP is being referenced as an exhibit for the new contract.

Mr. Hess asked about the duration of the new contract. Mr. Cooper confirmed it would be a 3-year contract, after which it would be put out for bid again. Mr. Hess then asked if the City determines the contract length, to which Mr. Cooper responded affirmatively, adding that the City is merely refining the current contract. The board continued to review and discuss the ongoing updates to the current contract.

6. Discuss cemetery's 5-year plan

The Item was presented by Mr. Cooper. He explained that staff saw the importance of including a 5-year plan for the Cemetery this year. He shared the following 5-year plan noting these items are pending approval with the Fiscal Year 25 Budget.

2025:

- New position: Cemetery Field Supervisor – Supervisor will take over cemetery administrative tasks and also oversee cemetery maintenance workers.
- Equipment Replacement Plan: zero turn replacement
- Fuel Trailer: This will allow the Cemetery staff to fuel up on site.

Council Representative Patrick Souter shared that the new Field Supervisor position will not only provide administrative services but will also be a maintenance worker.

Perry Giles inquired about the availability of a local source for ethanol-free gasoline. Brad Barnes, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, responded that the nearest location offering such fuel is Buc-ee's in Ennis.

Mr. Hess suggested an alternative of purchasing a fuel tank. Mr. Barnes explained that owning a fuel tank involves numerous regulatory requirements. He further clarified that opting for a fuel trailer instead would be more advantageous, as it comes pre-equipped to meet all necessary regulations.

2026:

- Implement different levels of staff at the Cemetery.
- Add an addition maintenance worker. This is will depend on the Field Supervisor recommendation and whether if it's a full time or more seasonal position that is needed.
- Shop Enhancement Expansion: This has been quoted for \$160,000.

2027:

- Purchase a Soda Blaster - Mr. Cooper shared the head stone cleaner will enhance the quality of service provided by the City.
- New Cemetery Software.

2028:

- Cemetery Expansion – He shared the expansion will depend on how many spaces are still available in FY28.

Mr. Cooper emphasized that these items are subject to change and not guaranteed. Their implementation will depend on available funding approved in the budget.

Marion Reynolds inquired about potential plans to install fencing around the cemetery. Mr. Cooper clarified that improvements such as fencing, roads, or cemetery row markers are not included in the 5-year plan. Instead, these enhancements would need to be addressed through separate budget allocations.

7. Discuss cemetery fiberoptic

Mr. Cooper presented the item to the board. He informed them that he reached out to the IT department regarding a timeline for the fiberoptic installation. IT indicated that the fiberoptic would be in place by the end of 2025. Additionally, Mr. Cooper mentioned that he had requested IT to reconsider the quote and explore alternative options that might allow for earlier installation of cameras at the Cemetery.

Mr. Souter stated he would set up a meeting with management to provide more answers in regards to the fiberoptic at the Cemetery before the next board meeting.

Chairman McGuire expressed her appreciation to staff for cleaning up the crape myrtles at the Cemetery.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Yadira Campos
Administrative Coordinator