



BAXTER CEMETERY COMMISSION MINUTES

Monday, July 27, 2026 at 4:00 PM

Baxter City Hall, 13190 Memorywood Drive, Baxter, MN

CALL TO ORDER

The quarterly meeting of the Baxter Cemetery Commission was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Vice Chairman Robert Ehrich.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Commissioner John Cremers, James Rau, Vice Chairman Robert Ehrich and Council Liaison Darrel Olson.

Members Absent: Chair Jeanette Ruff.

Staff Present: Cemetery Overseer Mary Haugen.

CONSENT AGENDA

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Bronze Military Star Discussion

The commission discussed the discontinuation of the Bronze Star Markers that have been used to honor veterans. The Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA) offered the Bronze Star Marker program, which provided grave markers to honor veterans in Minnesota cemeteries, and did not receive dedicated funding from the State Legislature. The cost has risen to over \$100 per marker and due to the lack of a fiscally sustainable source for these markers, the MDVA has made the difficult decision to discontinue the program.

Crow Wing County Veterans Services kindly offered a box of the bronze star flag markers to disseminate to eligible veterans that pass away for Baxter Cemetery. Staff now has 30 markers to issue and on a yearly average, the City places between two – six markers on grave sites which will provide for the next five plus years.

Vice Chair Ehrich noted that hopefully things will change and future funding of the markers may be reallocated. Council Liaison Olson expressed concern over future veterans not being honored.

Commissioner Rau inquired on reaching out to other communities and their efforts to provide markers to honor their veterans. Mr. Rau also mentioned service organizations might have some information or assistance for this program.

UPDATES

Cemetery Overseer Haugen informed the commission that the 2027 Budget is currently being worked on and looked for input on cemetery needs.

Vice Chair Ehrich inquired if the City was using or considering using drought tolerant grass seed as the cemetery does not have an irrigation system. Mr. Ehrich note that an irrigation system would add maintenance, service and repair to the park maintenance employees.

Council Liaison Olson inquired if the City has received any complaints about the uneven ground. Ms. Haugen stated that a few complaints have been received over the years. Staff will research the best ways to establish level ground and will provide information at the next meeting.

ADJOURN

MOTION by Commissioner Cremers, seconded by Commissioner Rau to adjourn the meeting at 4:31 p.m. Motion unanimously approved.

Approved by:

Respectfully submitted:

Robert Ehrich
Vice Chair

Mary Haugen
Cemetery Overseer