

# **Cemetery Commission Regular Meeting Minutes September 17, 2025 – 1:30 P.M.**

## **Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order.

## **Roll Call**

Commissioner present were Donna Hoelke, Robbin Jensen, Tia McMonigal, and Kay Spizzo. Gary Bakken was Absent. Staff included City Administrator Allie Polsfuss, Deputy Clerk Deb Runksmeier, Public Works Supervisor Joe Zierden, and Councilmember Steve Jensen.

## **Approval Of July 16, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

The minutes were reviewed for approval.

*Motion to approve the minutes was made by McMonigal and seconded by Spizzo. The motion passed 4-0.*

## **Bench Purchase**

Joe Zierden presented information about purchasing a bench for the water feature area. He reported that the cost would be less than \$1,000, and a donation had been received from Don Erickson towards the purchase. Zierden explained that the bench would be placed at the head of the water feature, facing it. He described the bench as being made of rubber-coated plastic, similar to those on the nature trail, and approximately 6 feet long, suitable for 2-3 adults.

The commissioners discussed the placement and installation of the bench. Zierden mentioned that the area was relatively flat, but they would determine the best method for securing it, either by extending the legs into the ground or creating a cement pad. He assured the commission that the purchase could be made from the operating budget for site improvements without needing a formal motion.

## **Cemetery 2026 Budget**

Joe Zierden presented a plan for improvements to the cemetery for the next year, focusing on reviving plantings and maximizing space in the center of the cemetery by the columbarium. He described a project that would involve using boulders to widen the lower area where people take pictures during the butterfly release, creating a flat grass space, and narrowing the planting window.

Zierden estimated the project cost at around \$10,000, mainly for rocks and plants. He suggested planning the work for after the butterfly release next year to ensure proper timing and plant maturity. The commissioners discussed the timing of the project, considering factors such as plant availability and weather conditions. They agreed that fall might be the best time for implementation.

He also provided an update on the current year's budget. He noted that most line items were on track, with site improvements underspent due to time constraints. He mentioned that professional services costs would increase, covering landscaping, mowing, fertilizing, and spraying services.

The commission discussed plot sales, noting a busy year with many cremation burials and several sales in the new section. Joe confirmed that the proposed budget, including the site improvement project, had already passed the preliminary budget review with the council.

## Staff Reports

Public Works provided updates on various cemetery matters:

- Pavers: Zierden mentioned that he would work on paver designs over the winter. Brent, who would be doing the work, had provided two designs but could accommodate various options. The commission discussed standardizing the designs and potentially including them in the fee schedule.
- Administrative changes: Staff informed the commission about upcoming changes, including new software implementation, additional office staff, and improved organization for handling orders and information.
- Maintenance and clean-up: The commission discussed the presence of decorations and balloons on graves. Staff advised that commissioners could contact the office if they noticed items that needed removal, emphasizing the sensitivity of the issue and the need for a balanced approach to maintenance.
- Recommended updating the Sound System Equipment before the next Butterfly Release Event.

## Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:49 PM.

Submitted By, Deb Runksmeier  
Deputy City Clerk