



# Cemetery Fees, Contract, and Ordinance Updates

City Council Meeting - August 7, 2023

**Staff Presenter: Jen Basham, Parks and Recreation Director**

# Overview

- 1 Review recommended cemetery fees for adoption**
- 2 Discuss recommended amendments cemetery operations contract**
- 3 Review recommended amendments to cemetery rules ordinance**

# Background

- **January 11, 2023 - Staff briefed Cemetery Board on monument installation policy and recommended ordinance updates to address leaning monuments**
- **May 17, 2023 - Staff presented proposed space fees to Cemetery Board for newly expanded area of Burleson Memorial Cemetery**
  - Cemetery Board requested additional information to enable more informed recommendations
- **June 21, 2023 - Staff provided revised presentation of fee proposals and the Cemetery Board provided fee recommendations to be presented to City Council for consideration.**
- **Staff worked with Burleson Cemetery Operators (dba Lucas & Blessing) and city legal staff to draft contract amendments to reflect fees as proposed by Cemetery Board.**

# Current Space Fees (Original Section)

## Fees applicable to contract:

- Single grave space: \$1,450
- Companion space (double-depth): \$2,350  
(second interment rite add \$900 to single grave space fee)
- Baby Space: \$245





# Benchmarking Comparable Cemeteries

Cemetery grave pricing reviewed to ensure adherence to current market rates for newly expanded area

- **Bear Creek Cemetery - similar to Burleson as recently reinvented cemetery**
- **Laurel Land Cemetery - close in proximity and class**
- **Mansfield Cemetery - close in proximity and class**
- **Mt. Gilead - good model to consider for columbarium management and pricing currently managed by Lucas and Blessing**
- **Skyvue Cemetery - close in proximity and class**
- **Other local cemeteries not recommended to compare to new Burleson improvements**



# Benchmarking

	Flat Marker	Upright	Cremation Space	Cremation Niche (Columbarium)	Baby	Double Depth	Family (3 plots)	Family (4 plots)
Mansfield City	\$2,000	\$2,000	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Skyvue Memorial	\$920	NA	NA	\$2,170- \$3,190	\$300-\$600	\$200		
Laurel Land Memorial	\$3,995-\$6,695	\$6,695	NA	\$4,495	\$695	\$2,795		
Bear Creek	\$300	\$3,000	\$1,200	NA	\$800	NA		
Mt. Gilead	NA	NA	NA	\$2,200	NA	NA		
<b>Burleson</b>	<b>\$1,450</b>	<b>\$1,450</b>	<b>\$995</b>	<b>\$2,200</b>	<b>\$245</b>	<b>\$2,350</b>	<b>\$11,250</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>

# Cemetery Board Fee Recommendations

Space Type	# of spaces available in original area	# of spaces available in expansion area	Original Area Fees	Proposed Expansion Area Fees	Comments
Upright Monument	*300 (some spaces unusable due to size requirements)	320	\$1,450	<b>**\$2000</b>	Includes extra 2-ft. easement for monument with shrub wall. \$2,500 originally proposed per benchmark study
Flat Monument		576		\$1,700	
Double Depth	Any full size space could be used as double depth	Any full size space could be used as double depth	\$900	\$900	
Baby Spaces	16	190	\$245	<b>**\$400</b>	\$500 originally proposed per benchmark study
Cremation Space	NA	300	NA	\$995	
Cremation Space	NA	128	NA	\$2,200	
Family Estate (3 plots)	NA	4	NA	\$11,250	3 spaces in center plaza near fountain with private shrub wall
Family Estate (4 plots)	NA	8	NA	\$15,000	4 spaces in center plaza near fountain with private shrub wall
Total	316	1,558			

**\*No distinction made between flat and upright monument spaces in original cemetery area**

**\*\*Proposed fees in **red** denote Cemetery Board-suggested decreases from originally proposed**

# Revenue Projections

New expansion spaces only

Space Type	Spaces	Existing fees	Proposed	Revenue using existing fees	Revenue using proposed fees
Upright Monument	320	\$1,450	\$2,000	\$464,000	\$640,000
Flat Monument	576		\$1,700	\$835,200	\$979,200
Double Depth	Any full size space could be used as double depth	\$900	\$900	Any full size space could be used as double depth	
Baby Spaces	190	\$245	\$400	\$46,550	\$76,000
Cremation Space	300	N/A	\$995	\$298,500	\$298,500
Columbarium Niche	128	N/A	\$2,200	\$281,600	\$281,600
Family Estate (3 plots)	4	N/A	\$11,250	\$45,000	\$45,000
Family Estate (4 plots)	8	N/A	\$15,000	\$120,000	\$120,000
Total				\$2,090,850	\$2,440,300
Net 65% remittance				\$1,359,052.50	\$1,586,195
Net Difference				\$227,142.50	

# Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Costs

Spaces Sales Revenues expensed over **20 years** (estimated time to sell all spaces)

Includes all remaining spaces available for sale including old section spaces

Remaining old section spaces assumed at existing rate

Assumes annual lot sales as constant over estimated time to sell all remaining lots

Does not include annual costs or budget for leveling leaning monuments in old section with foundation and piers

All revenues are net revenues accounting for **65% remittance** to City for every lot sale

Escalation of annual O&M costs over 20 years not considered in model

Estimated Annual Revenue Using Existing Fees	Estimated Annual Revenue Using Proposed Fees	Annual O&M Costs for Entire Cemetery	Estimated Annual Cost Recovery Existing Fees	Estimated Annual Cost Recovery Proposed Fees
\$67,952.63	\$79,309.75	\$74,000	-\$6,047.38	\$5,309.75

# Existing Cemetery Management Contract

- Contractor: Burleson Cemetery Operators LLC dba Lucas and Blessing
- Current Contract Executed: November 12, 2018
- Term: 10 years with two 5-year renewal options that must be approved by City Council
- Items subject to fees:
  - Burial lot sales
  - "Extraordinary burial structures" e.g. columbaria, scatter gardens, etc.
- Remittance fee to City: 65%
- Fee increases greater than 10% from previous year must be approved by Council





# Contract Revisions Proposed

- Remove language allowing Lucas & Blessing to increase space fees up to 10% annually
- Require all fee increases be approved by City Council
- Add approved fee table to contract
- All changes to be included as addendum to existing contract





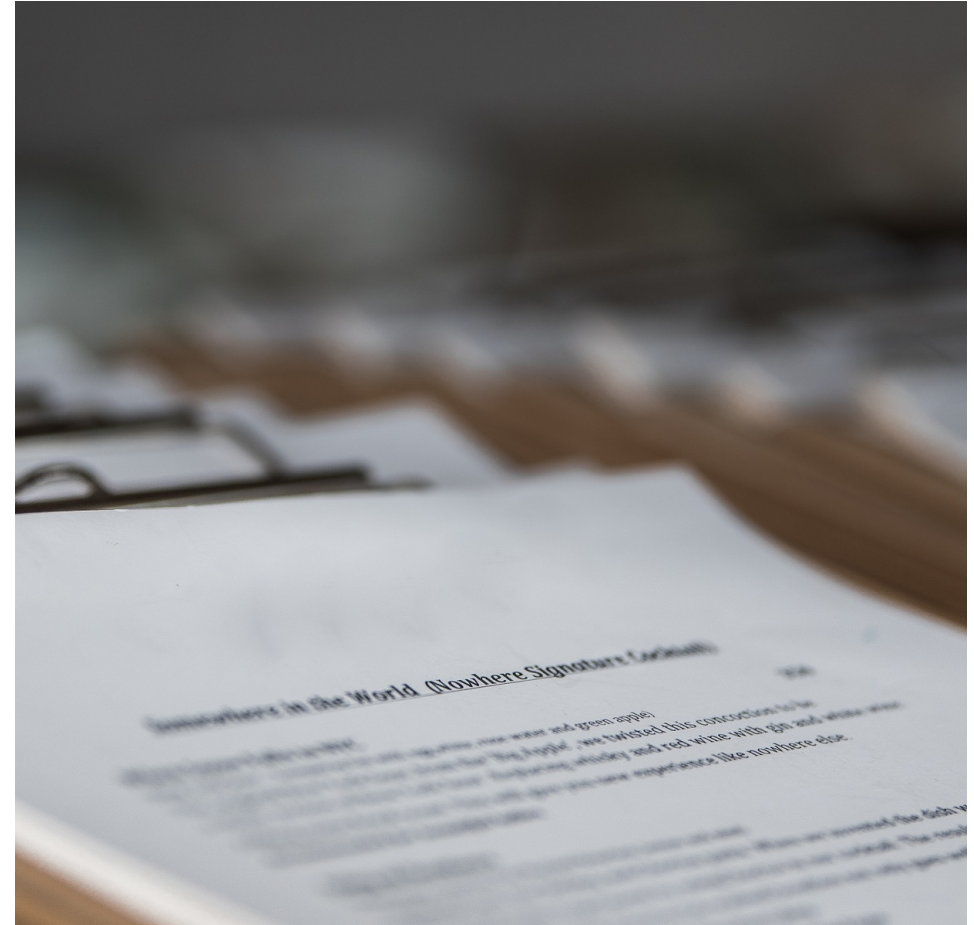
# Cemetery Monument Leveling

- **December 2022, staff hired contractor to level headstone monuments that had severely shifted**
- **Monuments were re-set with 6-inch foundations and 18-inch piers to minimize future shifting**
- **82 monuments of the most severely monuments were re-set**
- **Change of cemetery rules ordinance is required to ensure future monument installations are correct**



# Current Policy - Rules and Regulations

- Code of the City of Burleson
- Chapter 18 "Cemeteries", Article II "Rules and Regulations"
- Outlines monument installation process and monument foundation specifications
- Staff is recommending updates on monument installation procedures and specifications to include best practices for improved quality control



# Proposed Policy Changes and Impacts

**Repeal and replace Article II of Chapter 18 to include:**

- Enhanced specifications related to monument installation
- Require all monument installation companies be approved by City or designated cemetery operator
- Additional specifications for memorial foundations to strengthen foundations and include 18-inch piers to help prevent monuments from leaning





# Items for Consideration: 7A, 7B, 7C

**A**

**Consider approval of an ordinance amending the City's fee schedule ordinance by adding fees associated with Burleson Memorial Cemetery**

**B**

**Consider approval of a contract amendment with Lucas and Blessing (Burleson Cemetery Operators) for grave and cremation spaces for newly expanded section of Burleson Memorial Cemetery**

**C**

**Consider approval of an ordinance amending Article 2: Rules and Regulations of Chapter 18: Cemeteries of the City of Burleson Code of Ordinances (First Reading)**

***Amending city fee schedule for cemetery space fees will require two readings but space sales will be available following approval at first reading and refunded if necessary.***

# Options for Item 7A

**Cemetery Board recommendation**

**Staff recommendation**



**Approve cemetery fees  
as presented**



**Approve cemetery fees  
with changes**



**Deny cemetery fees  
as presented**

# Options for Item 7B

**Cemetery Board recommendation**

**Staff recommendation**



**Approve contract  
amendment with  
Burleson Cemetery  
Operators as presented**



**Approve contract  
amendment with  
Burleson Cemetery  
Operators with changes**



**Deny contract  
amendment with Burleson  
Cemetery Operators**

# Options for Item 7C

**Cemetery Board recommendation**

**Staff recommendation**



**Approve cemetery ordinance revisions as presented**



**Approve cemetery ordinance revisions with changes**



**Deny cemetery ordinance revisions as presented**