Considerations for Burleson Memorial Cemetery

PUBLIC SPACES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD

NOVEMBER 10, 2026

Points of Discussion

- Operational considerations and feedback
  - Hours of operation and public access
  - Cemetery fountain
- Item regulation review and feedback
  - Current ordinances and signage
  - Benchmark results
  - Maintenance cadence

Operational Considerations: Access

Current Hours of Operation and Public Access

- Per current ordinance, the cemetery is closed from sundown to sunup.
- The front gate is left open for ease of access.
- The fencing partially encloses the cemetery with an opening along the trail on the west side.



Feedback Requested

If further consideration and possible action is recommended:

- *Are there specific hours of operation that the Board would like to be considered?*
- *Does the Board recommend the gat stay open or should it be closed at designated times?*
- *Does the Board recommend that staff explore the cost of fully enclosing the cemetery?*



Operational Considerations: Fountain

Cemetery Fountain

- Currently, there are not regulations outlining permitted and prohibited interaction with the fountain at the cemetery other than prohibiting litter and any substance which will or may pollute the water.
- There is an ordinance prohibiting bathing in city parks as well as prohibiting swimming in parks except in areas and during hours designated for swimming. However, the cemetery is not considered a park.

Feedback Requested

If further consideration and possible action is recommended, does the Board recommend that swimming, bathing, or washing in the cemetery fountain should be specifically prohibited?



Item Regulation: Purpose

- Safe and consistent landscaping care and other maintenance
- Prevent unsightly weathering and breakage
- Respect for others interred and their visitors
- Potential safety hazards

- Staff wants to be respectful of the cemetery patrons and the itemsplaced, but also need to maintain the area.

Item Regulation: Scope

- Guidelines based on maintenance needs
- Prohibited items
- Exceptions for prohibited items for holidays or other occasions
- Multicultural considerations
- Removal responsibility and cadence

Item Regulation: Current Ordinances

Prohibited Items

- No glass containers
- No structures of any kind, such as curbing, fencing, benches (memorials excluded), flagpoles, etc.
- No plantings without prior approval
  - Placed at head of the grave
  - Not to exceed 12-18” in height

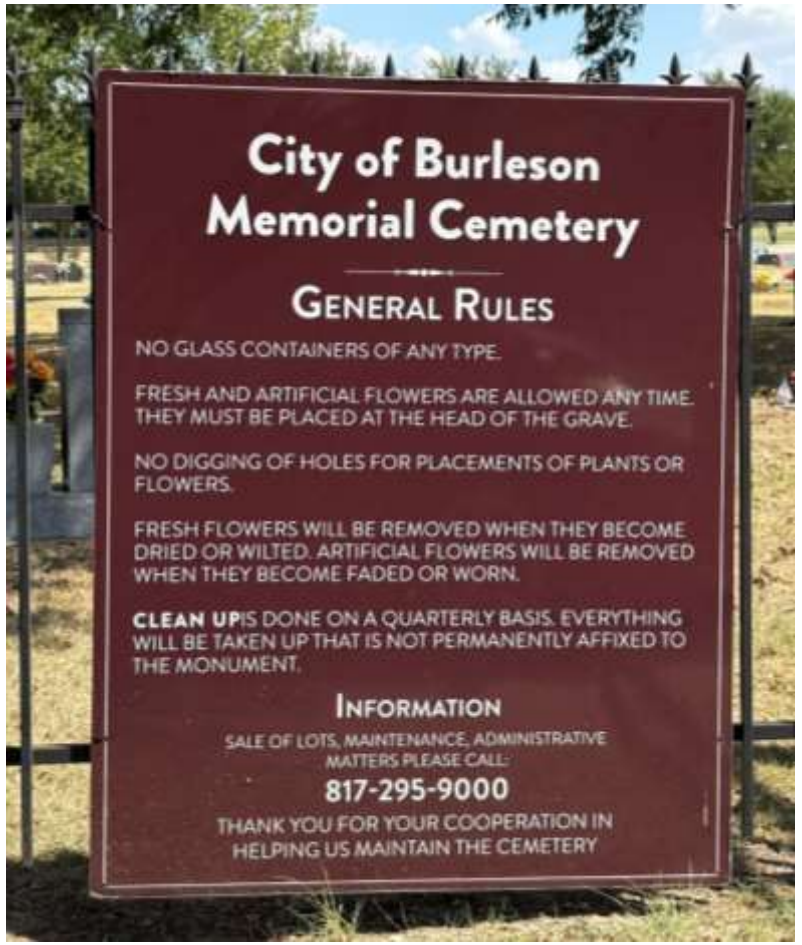
Item Regulation: Current Ordinances

Permitted Items

- Cut flowers or artificial flowers placed at the head of the grave
  - Holders such as clay or plastic pots, wire, frames, etc., containing flowers or other decorations may be removed as soon as the flowers fade or wither.
  - Placing of potted plants, cut flowers, or baskets is permitted adjacent to the headstone only.
  - Funeral designs or floral pieces will be removed from graves when they become wilted or unsightly. Persons desiring to retain the same must remove them within 72 hours. Artificial flowers may be moved 30 days after the holidays.

Item Regulation: Signage

This is the current signage of rules posted at the cemetery entrance.



Benchmark by City

12 DFW mid-size cities were identified with municipal cemeteries.

Eight of those cities have city ordinances or other guidance regarding decorative or personal items.

General Guidance

Other Municipal Cemeteries

Common guidance for floral arrangement aligns to current practice and is sometimes limited to 1-3 pieces.

Common guidance is for items to be removed if unsightly or deteriorated.

Common guidance is to prohibit glass, signs and advertisements, seating such as benches, curbing, and any plantings (without prior approval).

Six of the 12 mid-size cities with municipal cemeteries included in the benchmark outline specific regulations about general items placed at gravesites.*

- *Additionally, two cemeteries have regulations similar to current Burleson ordinances or leave items to staff discretion.

General Guidance by City

Items Permitted

- **Benbrook**
- **Granbury:** Requests notice for items to be installed

Items Prohibited: personal items, decorative items, shepherd's hooks, decorated flags, standup decorations, wind chimes, boxes, toys, shells, statues or crosses (other than a part of the monument)

- **Cleburne**
- **Coppell**
- **Greenville**
- **Mineral Wells**
- **Waxahachie**
- **Weatherford**

General Guidance in Large Cities

Items Permitted

Similar to current Burleson ordinances

- **Arlington**

Items Prohibited

- **Denton**
- **Grand Prairie**
- **Mesquite**
- **Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery**

Flags

Other Municipal Cemeteries

Common guidance includes removing flags as they become torn, tattered or faded for proper flag disposal.

Some cities specify guidance for flags only during certain holidays and specify guidance for types of flags. Permitted flags may have size limits such as less than 12” in height.

Five of the 12 mid-size cities with municipal cemeteries included in the benchmark outline specific regulations about flags placed at gravesites.*

- *Additionally, two cities leaves items to staff discretion.

Flags by City

Flags Permitted
- ***Benbrook***
- ***Granbury***

Flags for Holidays
Commonly Memorial Day, Independence Day, Flag Day, Veterans Day
- **Cleburne**
- **Coppell**: removed within ten days
- **Greenville:** removed within ten days

Flags for Individuals
- **Mineral Wells:** American flags and firefighter flags
- **Weatherford:** United States and/or Texas flags and only on the graves of veterans and police officers/firefighters killed in the line of duty

Flags Prohibited
- ***Waxahachie***

Flags in Large Cities

Dallas

- **Freedman's Memorial Cemetery:** No placards, banners, flags or similar materials unless it is part of the ceremony or memorial service authorized by the Park and Recreation Department

Denton

- The flag of the United States of America
  - Memorial Day, Independence Day, Patriot Day, Veterans Day
  - Strict size and mounting restrictions

Additional Lights and Candles

Other Municipal Cemeteries

Common guidance does not always include lighting beyond installed lighting or lights as a part of a funeral ceremony or memorial service.

Three of the 12 mid-size cities with municipal cemeteries included in the benchmark outline specific regulations about additional lights and candles.

Lights Prohibited

- **Cleburne**
- **Coppell:** No candles are to be left unattended (must be removed after each use); no solar, battery or electrical lighting, holiday, devotional or decorative lighting
- **Greenville**

Additional Lights and Candles in Large Cities

Grand Prairie

- Candles may not be left unattended at the gravesite and must be removed at the end of each visit
- Solar lights are only permitted when placed inside an approved vase; battery-powered or electrical lighting, including holiday, devotional, or decorative lights, are not permitted

Holiday Considerations

Other Municipal Cemeteries

Common guidance may include wreaths, sprays, and grave blankets if not included in a floral arrangement rule.

Common guidance is placement is allowed seven to ten days prior to a holiday with removal seven to ten days after the holiday.

Four of the 12 mid-size cities with municipal cemeteries included in the benchmark outline specific regulations about holiday exceptions.*

- *Additionally, three cities allow holidays decorations under general guidance within the plot.

Holiday Considerations by City

Holiday Items Permitted

- **Benbrook**
- **Granbury**
- **Weatherford**

Holiday Exceptions by Holiday/Period

- **Cleburne:** holidays, special occasions
  - no Christmas trees
- **Coppell:** November 15th to January 15th
- **Mineral Wells:** Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas
- **Waxahachie**: Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Memorial Day, Christmas (Friday before Thanksgiving to January 15)

Holiday Considerations in Large Cities

Grand Prairie

- One week before the holiday to five days following the holiday; all decorations must remain in the vase
- Christmas decorations: Friday after Thanksgiving - January 5

Denton

- No wreathes, easels, grave blankets, or other special arrangements except during interment and the first seven days unless otherwise approved

Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery

- Christmas wreaths and grave blankets: December 1 - January 20, < 2’ x 3’
- Potted plants: 10 days before to 10 days after Easter, Memorial Day, and Christmas

Feedback Requested

After reviewing the provided benchmark, what is the Board's recommendation?

- Current city ordinances may address the concerns and no further consideration for possible action is needed
- A recommendation that staff consider adjusted communication or enforcement practices
- A recommendation for further consideration by City Council for possible action

Feedback Requested

If further consideration and possible action is recommended, are there additional items not currently outlined by the City's Code of Ordinances that the Board would like to identify for consideration?

Number and Size of Floral Arrangements

Size of Items

Wreaths and Grave Blankets

Flags

Candles and Other Lights

Balloons

Stuffed Animals

Food

Unsecured Items

Holiday or Special Occasion Exceptions

Other

Feedback Requested

At this time, general maintenance by Parks is performed weekly. Past guidance included that the City should inspect for faded or outdated décor twice annually the first business days after daylight savings time adjustments or quarterly.

Does the Board recommend staff to consider a specific cadence for clean-up with consideration for operational capacity and efficiency?

Questions / Comments

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