



To: Mayor and City Council
From: Dylan Mulfinger, City Administrator
Subject: Cemetery Work Session
Date: 7/24/2026

On July 20, the following was provided as concerns for the cemetery:

*I have had a few residents that I'm friends with and family members asking why the cemetery looks rough. Why and how do we as a city use our resources better.
Using city guys to help to those flower beds downtown, when they could be utilizing hours at cemetery.
And why the grave stones are not cleaned from the mower,
I could keep going on.
Some of them have even talked to a couple of employees, so as a council person and other 3 I had gotten a call from 1, we would like to discuss how we resolve what is going on.
I know we have budgets, but we also have to make sure our guys are being utilized for city stuff,*

The cemetery is usually a topic for the city every couple of years. We have some concerned residents talk about how there is too much grass on the graves, and it is not mowed well. This year is surprising as the city just cut a position from the cemetery. We also cut a position from parks. The city has not adjusted the amount of work at each department, only the number of employees. While the cemetery is a place for deep reflection, we should not forget the growing unsustainable burden this property places on the city and its residents. Once all the graves are sold and filled, the city will derive no income from this property. Unfortunately, this is not the good old days, with property taxes continuing to be a focal point of the state legislature, the ability for the city council to invest in the cemetery is limited. I discuss the cemetery annually with the Parks Superintendent and we have both decided we will do what we can with the limited resources available. As always, if the city council wants to change operations within a department, I look forward to the policy they set.

Additional history on the cemetery:

8/8/2022 Council Meeting

Payne received calls regarding Woodlawn Cemetery condition. The city is short staffed and is doing their best to keep up with mowing 53 acres and trimming headstones. Even though wages were increased to \$12.00 per hour, we are still not able to find employees. Seeders suggested "Silver Cord" high school volunteers might be able to assist.

5/8/2023 Council Meeting

Councilmember Payne asked the council if they were interested in a work session on the cemetery maintenance. No council members responded.