

Russellville Oakland Cemetery Commission Minutes May 15, 2018

The Russellville Oakland Cemetery Commission met for the regular meeting on Tuesday, May 15, 2018, at 5:30 p.m. in the 1st Floor Conference Room.

Attending: Director Stephanie Warwick, City Attorney Trey Smith, City Finance Director Jerry McKaughan, Chairman/Commissioner David Lee, Vice Chairwoman/Commissioner Mindy Hudson, Commissioner/Secretary Rebecca Howell, Commissioner Cindy Hlass, Commissioner Patricia Petray, Commissioner Cecelia Slone, and visitor Sean Ingram from The Courier
Absent:, City Council Liaisons Freddie Harris and Phyllis Carruth and Mayor Randy Horton

Chairman Lee called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance.

Old Business:

The First Order of Business was to review and approve the minutes from the April 17, 2018, Cemetery Regular Meeting. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Vice Chairwoman Hudson and seconded by Commissioner Hlass. The minutes were unanimously approved.

The Second Order of Business was a presentation of the Financial Report by Finance Director McKaughan. Balances at 4/30/18 were Bank of the Ozarks C.D. \$143,482.64, Bank account \$50,698.23, and Genworth account \$95,514.20. Interest rate on the new C.D. is 1.64%, and this is negotiable annually. The Genworth account has a good return, and it now has two (2) years left. It is a seven (7) year deal. It has a fixed rate not below 4%, and there is no loss of principal, a feature appreciated by the State. In 2018, two traditional grave spaces have been sold at \$750 each and 20%, or \$300, sent to the State for perpetual care. April mowing cost \$2,600.

The Third Order of Business was not addressed. This had been planned as a time to open the floor to the public to address concerns/suggestions; however, there were no visitors in attendance.

The Fourth Order of Business was a discussion of the Fee Schedule for the Memorial Gardens Addition of Oakland Cemetery. As requested by Commissioners, Director Warwick created a new proposal for fees per grave space and cremation space. Much research and consultation has gone into this project. The Director's proposal is this: (a) traditional space fee of \$350 and the balance of \$500 be applied to maintenance and (b) cremation space fee of \$175 and

the balance of \$375 be applied to maintenance. These price points of \$350 and \$175 are reasonable for our area's market.

After a discussion, Commissioner Slone made a motion to accept Director Warwick's proposal with the exception of \$750 instead of \$850 for the traditional grave space. Price point will still be \$350, with \$400 applied to maintenance. Commissioner Petray seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Another motion was then made by Vice Chairwoman Hudson for Director Warwick to take the above information and motion to City Council. Commissioner Hlass seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The Fifth Order of Business was a discussion of shrubs or other "screening" to be placed along the west line of the cemetery. TABLED to the regular June 2018 meeting of the Oakland Cemetery Board.

The Sixth Order of Business was an overview of the Cemetery's 175th Anniversary of Service and Decoration Day. The Saturday, May 5, 2018, event was a success! Weather was perfect, and turnout was good despite other events taking place around town. Director Warwick has received numerous calls and emails of appreciation for the recognition of Veterans, for hosting this event, and for ongoing improvements. Sponsors of the event are listed on a plaque. Special guests were Mayor Randy Horton, Pastor Kelly Pearson, and Veterans Ken Harper and Bill Eaton.

Commissioners thanked Director Warwick for a fabulous job, and our Director added that we all did a great job. The cemetery was able to give back to the community with the extra food going to two nonprofits and a fire station. Planning is underway for future events.

New Business:

The First Order of New Business was an offer by City Attorney Trey Smith to codify the cemetery ordinances into one code. Various ordinances make up the cemetery, including operation, formation, and duties and powers. The result of codification is to streamline, and then changes can be made in the code. Commissioners encouraged City Attorney Smith to continue this project.

Vice Chairwoman Hudson made a motion to adjourn, Secretary Howell seconded it, and the meeting was adjourned at about 6:26 p.m.