

Russellville Oakland Cemetery Commission Minutes

October 20, 2020

The Russellville Oakland Cemetery Commission met for the regular meeting on Tuesday, October 20, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. in the 1st Floor Conference Room.

Attending in Person: Director Stephanie Warwick, Commissioner/Secretary Rebecca Howell, and City Council Liaison Justin Keller

Attending via ZOOM: Chairperson/Commissioner Mindy Hudson, Commissioner Mary Schwartz, Commissioner Kenneth Startup, and Commissioner Cindy Hlass

Absent: City Finance Director Robin Johnson, City Attorney Trey Smith, Mayor Richard Harris, Debi Headley from the Mayor's Office, and visitor Sean Ingram from The Courier

Chairperson Hudson welcomed everyone and began the October 20th Russellville Oakland Cemetery Regular Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Old Business:

The First Order of Business was to review and approve the minutes from the September 22, 2020, Cemetery Regular Meeting. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Startup and seconded by Commissioner Schwartz. The minutes were unanimously approved.

The Second Order of Business was a presentation of the September 2020 Financial Report by Secretary Howell and Director Warwick. Bank account balances at 9/30/2020 were Russellville Oakland Cemetery operating account \$124,177.91 and Bank OZK perpetual care trust account \$152,621.98. Secretary Howell noted that cemetery donations in September included a bequest, and the total revenues for September were \$36,538.97. Total expenditures for September were \$7,263.50, which included \$5,300.00 for mowing and removal of tree branches and brush. Director Warwick will check into the \$1,200.00 in cemetery improvements and which project that was.

Late informational update concerning the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures:

Director Warwick updated the above financial information in an October 21st email to Commission members. The \$5,300.00 mentioned above was actually grounds maintenance/mowing for two months' period, and the \$1,200.00 in cemetery improvements was yearly maintenance fees for our database cloud system.

For the period of January – September, revenues exceeded expenditures by \$59,655.95. Commission members discussed the \$17,950.00 Memorial Addition roadway appropriation and determined that it had not been taken out of the \$59,655.95, leaving actually \$41,705.95 available to be spent. The motion to approve the September 2020 Financial Report was made by Liaison Keller, seconded by Commissioner Schwartz, and unanimously approved.

The Third Order of Business was an open floor for the public to address concerns/suggestions, and there were no visitors in attendance.

New Business:

The First Order of New Business was discussion of a proposed Workshop/Cleanup Day for Oakland Cemetery and suggested areas of work to be performed by Cemetery Board and Community. The date and time will be Sunday, November 15, 2020, between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m., with a rain date of November 22. The focus will be on re-work of stacked stone walls in the northern portion of Center B, between Drive 1 and 2, and, also, cleanup and removal of faded and dead flower arrangements. Provided supplies will include protective, sanitizing items such as gloves, masks, and pick-up grabbers for trash.

Liaison Keller and Commissioner Startup will check on community service volunteers. Self-guided tours will be available for the public; these tours feature printed signs and photographs of several persons of historical interest. Liaison Keller made a motion to go ahead and spend the \$250.00 projected for the May 2021 Decoration/Cleanup Day (for signs for self-guided tours) so that new signs will be available for the upcoming cleanup, as well as for the May 2021 event. Commissioner Startup seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

In order to set up a new Zoom meeting, Chairperson Hudson adjourned the meeting at about 5:57 p.m. Then she opened the second part of the Cemetery Regular Meeting at 6:22 p.m.

The Second Order of New Business was presentation of Proposed 2021 Project List for Oakland Cemetery, with estimation of costs per proposed project. Director Warwick reported that four Arborvitae bushes along the creek had been lost, and she said that the Teddy Bear magnolia trees discussed earlier this year are not available yet and will have to wait. She presented information about a new Russellville Oakland Cemetery sign proposed for the Drive 3 and 11th Street area, and Commission members discussed adding an additional one or two similar signs at other drives. The 2021 Cemetery Project List also includes building an information board near the new sign at Drive 3 and 11th Street. Public Works estimate for the future information board is \$2,600.00.

Liaison Keller made a motion to purchase from Sign Hub the Russellville Oakland Cemetery sign for Drive 3 and 11th Street at a price of \$1,907.49 plus tax. Commissioner Hlass seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Then Commissioner Startup made a motion to replace the four Arborvitae bushes at a cost of \$500.00 from Earth Works. Commissioner Schwartz seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Another item on the 2021 Project List is an Avenue of Flags – about 50 American flags equally placed on Drives 1 and 2 at an estimated cost of \$2,800.00 plus tax/shipping and labor for initial installation of ground sockets. Director Warwick shared her passion for this project and asked Commissioners to seriously consider it. “It would be a tribute to veterans and those at rest,” said Director Warwick. Flags would be set out a day or two before and after special occasions/holidays. Liaison Keller made a motion to table this discussion and Chairperson Hudson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Hudson thanked those in attendance and, following a motion by Commissioner Startup and second by Liaison Keller, declared the meeting adjourned at about 6:50 p.m.