

Cemetery Advisory Board Meeting
December 3, 2014

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Groat at 4:40 p.m.

Members Present: Brodie Rockenbaugh, Michael Andrako

Others Present: Vicki McKinnon, Bill McKinnon

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for the meeting on May 13, 2014 were approved as submitted. The minutes for the meeting on October 1, 2014 were approved as submitted.

Agenda:

Rates, Perpetual Care Fund, Long term land acquisition: Mr. Andrako reviewed the Oakdale Cemetery Strategic Plan. The Plan compared the rates of Marysville with 25 cities that were comparable in size.

Mrs. Groat asked about the Perpetual Care Fund. Mr. Andrako said that it would not be worth it to start a Perpetual Care Fund because it would only bring in a couple thousand dollars, and the contract to mow the cemetery is \$40,000.00.

Mrs. Groat asked if the \$40,000.00 is to cover mowing the whole cemetery. Mr. Andrako said the \$40,000.00 does not include the new sections that were constructed that do not have headstones. Mr. Rockenbaugh said he observed the company that came out and mowed the cemetery. He did not observe any headstones being damaged. Mr. Andrako said it was a team of eight guys and it took between six and eight hours to mow the cemetery. Mr. Andrako said we do not have eight workers available to send out to the cemetery to mow, so we use seasonal help, who are not as well trained as the regular employees. This requires more oversight. Mr. McKinnon said \$40,000.00 is one person's salary with benefits. Mr. Andrako said one person cannot do the cemetery in six to eight hours.

They are looking at two companies whose quotes are just within a couple hundred dollars of each other. The contract will be for mowing and trimming once a week. Both companies they are looking at for the contract have experience in mowing cemeteries. Mrs. Groat made a motion to support the contract for mowing services to the cemetery, Mr. McKinnon seconded the motion. Everyone was in favor of supporting the contract.

Mrs. Groat asked Mr. Andrako if he feels financially that a Perpetual Care Fund does not make sense at this time. Mr. Andrako said yes, any money that would eventually accrue interest from the principle that is deposited would not make a dent in our annual maintenance costs. Mr. Andrako said he feels our money would be better spent by putting it aside to purchase more land in the future. Instead of a Perpetual Care Fund we could have a Land Acquisition Fund, and over the years that would build up. Mrs. Groat asked

when land acquisition will become a real concern instead of a long range plan. Mr. Andrako said no sooner than 25 years. That was one of the issues addressed in the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Andrako said he would like the committee to review the Strategic Plan and edit and update it for 2015. Mrs. Groat said we need to read it fully and edit and plan to updated it for 2015. We need to get rid of the Perpetual Care Fund and move toward the Land Acquisition Fund.

Mrs. Groat asked how do rates compared? Mr. Andrako said we are low. Mrs. Groat asked if Mr. Andrako would make a price index for the sections. Mr. Andrako said if we decided to raise the rates, we could transfer the increase over to the Land Acquisition Fund. Mrs. Groat said this is not a group that wants to raise rates, she would like to do anything else besides raise rates. Mr. Andrako said he does not want to be in a place where people are cemetery shopping and choosing ours because it is the cheapest. If you look at residents versus nonresidents the price is double. Mrs. Groat said we need to define resident loosely, but she has no problem with nonresidents being higher. Mrs. Groat said she is ok with raising the rates for nonresidents.

Mrs. Groat asked Mr. Andrako to check with Mr. Aslaner, if land acquired is not contiguous, can you still call it the same cemetery but just a new section? Mr. Andrako said he thinks so but he will check with Mr. Aslaner to confirm.

Mr. Rockenbaugh said he learned there is a cemetery task force. Carolyn Steep went to a conference at the Woodland Cemetery in Dayton. Mr. Rockenbaugh said he went to Lakeview Cemetery in Cleveland and there was a place to put urns that was nicely landscaped and looked like a memorial, which is something we could look into. He said it was nice to see the different professions that were tied in with cemetery maintenance. Mr. Rockenbaugh said on the way back they stopped by Foxfire Preservation Cemetery. The website is: <http://www.foxfieldpreserve.org>. This is something where people are buried in a prairie. It is a green burial. There are no headstones or monuments, but there are markers where you can find different sites. This is a very green way to go with cemeteries. Embalming is something that is not green, the chemicals are toxic. Caskets leak, and the toxic chemicals are released into the ground. Also, our bodies contain mercury, and when they are cremated the mercury still remains. There have been some concerns about mercury exposure.

Mrs. Groat said that she cannot see using any current sections for prairie type burials. She said maybe when we purchase land, we can ask what the people think about the preservation burial. Mr. Andrako said maybe we add this to the plan. We look at property with trees and nature, and then we reevaluate the prairie style burial.

Mrs. Groat thanked Mr. Rockenbaugh for his vision for the committee.

The next meeting for the Cemetery Advisory Board will be March 4, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.

Prior to the next meeting the Board is to read carefully with suggestions the Oakdale Cemetery Strategic Plan dated 2010, edit and be prepared to update the plan. We are going to nix the Perpetual Care Fund and move toward a Land Acquisition Fund.

Adjournment: Mrs. Groat adjourned the meeting at 5:50pm.