MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
HIGHLAND CEMETERY BOARD
JULY 8, 2009

The Chairman, Chris Elledge, called the Special Called Meeting of the Highland Cemetery Board to order at 2:05 p.m., Wednesday, July 8, 2009 at the Highland Cemetery Office. Notice of the meeting and agenda were posted on the City Hall bulletin board as required by State Law.

ROLL CALL: Chris Elledge, Raymond Jackson, and Robert Williams.
MEMBERS ABSENT: None.
STAFF PRESENT: Gerald Catlett, Parks and Grounds Administrator
Azalee McGahee, Cemetery Sexton
Jeanie Wheeler, Recording Secretary
VISITORS: None.

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CALLED MEETING OF JANUARY 7, 2009 . Elledge asked for consideration of the minutes of the said meeting.

MOTION by Williams; SECOND by Jackson to accept the minutes of January 7, 2009 as written. AYES: Elledge, Jackson, and Williams. NAYS: NONE.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None.

The Chairman Elledge then proposed to take the items of business out of order and presented Item 2 for discussion first.

1. CONSIDER AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION FOR USING PERPETUAL CARE FUNDS FOR A CEMETERY BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT.

Elledge introduced this item for discussion and asked staff to provide background for this proposal.

Catlett informed that he had been called to a meeting by the City Attorney, Frank Jensen, and Stephen Newcombe, Trustee of the Perpetual Care Funds concerning the use of perpetual care funds – especially for the planting of trees. The meeting produced a proposal by staff and the Trustee for removing of 16 trees, professional trim 47 trees, and planting 40 new trees for the approximate cost of $70,000.00.

The Trustee, Newcombe had stated the use of these funds in this manner was appropriate. He also informed staff that he would like to ask matching funds from McMahon Foundation that

would provide nearly $150,000.00 for the project. This type of funding would allow for the planting of 400 more trees with a preference for the new trees to be oak trees.
Catlett continued that the only way the City would consider this proposal would be consideration also for the irrigation to support the planting of this many trees. Catlett added that he would pursue assisting the Trustee to put together a final proposal for presentation to the Board and to the City. He added the proposal would be to do the removal, planting, and irrigation by professional contract. Catlett stated that there was well over 300,000 in the account that can only be used sporadically around the Cemetery. He and the Trustee agreed that a complete facelift to the entire Cemetery would benefit the perpetual care lots and the rest of the Cemetery too.

Elledge agreed that is does take a lot each to maintain the perpetual care lots with sprinkler repairs, fertilizer, and the labor that has to be considered that is provided by the City.

Catlett reviewed this year's budget and to date that $2,800 has been contracted this year for taking care of the perpetual care lots.

Catlett and Elledge agreed with this project there would still be over half left in the account.

Catlett expressed with such a large amount of funds, it will never be used fast enough to be able to take care of the lots in any of our lifetimes. This would be a win, win for the perpetual care lots and the entire beautification of the Cemetery and the money could only be spent at the Cemetery. He added that it would be nice to have older damaged trees and huge stumps removed that would likely never be funded any other way and over a much longer period of time.

Williams asked looking ahead how long would this Cemetery still be selling lots for the City?

McGahee stated the Cemetery still has at this time another 20 years before reaching capacity.

Catlett stated that staff has been looking at options for expanding the Cemetery. All around the Cemetery is Indian land and a proposal would be to trade for same size land elsewhere for the expansion. He stated that he knew of a piece of property the Indian tribes would be interested in and that they are wanting and ready to expand.

Jackson asked about the attorney proposing and agreeing with this.

Elledge expressed his concerns about the wisdom of beautifying a cemetery that will soon run out. He added this Cemetery has a lot to offer over the competitions pricing and benefits. Anything that could be done to enhance the Cemetery and make it more attractive is only better for the Cemetery as a whole.

Catlett agreed with Elledge that one sure fire way to make this cemetery grow and expand it to make it more attractive to the public for use. He added that the staff is asking for the Board's approval to pursue this action with the Perpetual Care Fund Trustee.

MOTION by WILLIAMS; SECOND by JACKSON.

To approve action for staff to pursue proposal for beautification project for the Perpetual Care lots and the entire Highland Cemetery with the Perpetual Care Fund Trustee.

AYES: Elledge, Jackson, and Williams. NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

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2. CONSIDER AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO REQUEST FUNDING TO REPLACE THE RIDING MOWER.

Elledge presented this item for discussion and asked staff to provide background for the request.

McGahee provided that the riding mower that needed replacing was due to the engine blowing up and the repairs would be $5,000.00 and the asking price for a new mower would be $9,000.00 to replace the mower.

Catlett added that this particular mower was originally purchased for $6,000.00.

Elledge asked about seeing a cemetery employee way out on 82nd Street mowing.

Catlett informed the Cemetery board that the City has given extra funding for contract mowing of the medians and right-always so the Cemetery will not be mowing as much outside the Cemetery.

Catlett noted that with the approval to replace the riding mower he would begin the process of writing up the specifications for the quotes.

MOTION by JACKSON; SECOND by ELLEDGE.

To approve action for approving funding from the Cemetery Care Funds not to exceed $9,000.00 to replace the riding mower.

AYES: Elledge, Jackson, and Williams. NAYS: None. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE:
A. Cemetery Care Funds Report. (Not available at this time)
B. Cemetery Sexton's Output Report.
The Sexton provided the information for the Output Report for January through June 2009.
(Copies provided to the staff and board members.)
Wheeler asked that if the Sexton would email these reports to her she could include them with agenda.
C. Staff update on all Cemetery projects that are not completed.
Catlett reported that the electrical for the flagpole had been moved to the nearest PSO electrical junction box to provide electric for the flagpole.

Catlett also informed that he had spoken with J.T. Grayson and he was checking with Larry Grayson first about paving road.

McGahee reported that in one of the low lying areas of the Cemetery there would be boring across the street to help provide drainage.

COMMENTS/DISCUSSION/ADJOURNMENT

The board and staff continued discussion reference the depth of cremation burials. McGahee provided that only a depth of 18in is needed for a normal cremation burial.

Williams expressed that only a 9 or 12 hole should be sufficient for burying a cremation.

Williams also asked about a better updated information center for cemetery visitors to access information thru a computer program by voice activation. He said this would be a far better improvement that the center that is outside at this time.

There were no other comments or discussion and the meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

RESPECTIVELY SUBMITTED,
CHRIS ELLEDGE, CHAIRMAN
HIGHLAND CEMETERY BOARD