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CITY OF JACKSONVILLE

City of Jacksonville  
Cemetery Commission

Meeting Notes  
Regular Meeting, September 19, 2022  
New City Hall

- 1) Meeting was called to order by Chair Siedlecki at 4:30 p.m. Those in attendance were Chair Siedlecki, members Athanas, Anderson, Borland, Carr and City Council Liaison Selbe. Absent were Jorgensen, representative from the Jewish section who was out of town. Also absent was Cemetery Sexton Richard Shields.
- 2) Commission members introduced themselves and well as the sections they represent. Guests in attendance were Eric Rogers, Jim Finses, Kurt and Heidi Elliott. All are Jacksonville residents and cemetery volunteers.
- 3) Public comment made by Mr. Finses was in regard to the status of planning for the expansion of the cemetery into the eleven acres purchased for that purpose. He was concerned that the Commission and City should be looking at developing a plan of action. Chair responded that the topic has been discussed at several past commission meetings and that no other section owners were interested in any of the eleven acres so at this time it appears it would remain as city property and expanding the city sections of the cemetery. Chair also noted that he believes we still have sufficient grave sites in the existing city section for approximately three years but would check on that. Chair also mentioned that earlier discussions on the subject recommended a low maintenance approach such as not allowing any curbing, individual fencing around grave sites, no ground cover such as rocks, bark etc. One suggestion was perhaps allowing only flat markers in the new area. A Scattering garden and niches for cremated remains was also something to be considered as less and less people are looking at the old traditional coffin burials. Thought and consideration must be given to blending the new eleven acres into the existing cemetery grounds. Chair also mentioned that he would support having public comment on the subject. While we were looking at perhaps trying to get a student intern involved in the past, Covid put that idea on hold. It is something that might be reconsidered. Mr. Finses suggested making the expansion an Agenda item for the next meeting. Chair thanked Mr. Finses for his comments and concerns.
- 4) Follow - up items from June 20, 2022 meeting
  - a) Chair Siedlecki thanked Tony Thompson and his staff for the quick response in getting the debris piles cleaned up in the area between the Catholic and Improve Order of Red Men sections. Much appreciated by all.
  - b) number of pending requests, Mark Portrait for placement of a memorial bench, Chair wrote him on March 15, no reply. Kevin Schroeder for curbing around plot 5 block 84 in the 2005 City Annex approved on June 20, has curbing been installed? Mrs. Salvadori request for ground covering, border responded in late May nothing further. Was going to ask Richard Shields for an update at today's meeting but since he is not present will follow up with him in person.

c) Chair thanked Pete Jorgensen and members of the Temple for having hired help to care for their section of the cemetery again this year. A very big help to the city and volunteers and it is appreciated. Also a number of dead or at risk trees in their section were removed or pruned in Augusts by Mike Bartlett Tree Service at a cost of close to \$2,000.

Chair mentioned that dead or at risk trees was discussed at the June meeting as well. We know there are a lot of trees in all sections of the cemetery that need attention however, what is needed is an assessment done in each section as to the trees that need to be removed, which require limbing or pruning to remove dead portions of the tree and a priority order. This will provide us with an idea of what the bill of work is by section and what it is going to cost. If you are going to go after a grant you have to be able to provide details and numbers on what is needed to be done and what it will cost.

#### 5) Action/Discussion Items

a) Chair mentioned that the Ish block in the IOOF section had recently been decorated in a rather strange manner. One side of the fencing, the entrance gate side, had baby crib bumpers tied to the fencing, both sides of the gate. The bumpers were of a circus scene and very colorful, beads were wrapped and tied around the gate latch and plastic poker chips were spread inside the block and neighboring Klipple block. The nearby grave site of Otis had a stuffed toy, angle and plant placed in it. A camera has since been placed by the FOJHC.

b) Chair share a before and after photo of the White block in the Masonic section that was recently restored by the FOJHC. The tall white marble column was found a couple years ago in three pieces in the Sexton's Tool House. It was put back together and reinstalled on the monuments base. The very top feature was not found.

c) FOJHC is looking at some large restoration projects to start in the fall, the Prim block in the Masonic section is one. The fence and gate that use to surround the block was stolen in 1958 and plans call for a reproduction fence and gate to be reinstalled.

d) Chair reminded members that the FOJHC Living History tours will be on October 7 and 8 and that notice will be placed on the gate and elsewhere that areas of the cemetery may be restricted at that time.

e) Chair thanked everyone for their hard work in keeping the cemetery neat and safe this past summer given the heat, smoke and fire danger.

f) We just received a request for curbing around Block 73 plot 6 in the 2005 City Annex and Chair will follow-up with Richard.

6) There will be a Community Clean-up Day of the cemetery grounds on Saturday, October 29 from 9 until 12 noon.

Chair advised Art Borland, Masonic section that new benches cost \$225. each with lettering at 50 cents per letter. He will advise Richard where they want to place them before ordering through the FOJHC.

7) The next meeting of the Commission is set for Monday, December 12, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. at new City Hall.

8) Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.