

Russellville Oakland Cemetery Commission Minutes

May 17, 2022

The Russellville Oakland Cemetery Commission met for the regular meeting on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. in the 2nd Floor Conference Room.

Attending in Person: Director Stephanie Warwick, Chairperson/Commissioner Mindy Hudson, Vice Chairperson/Commissioner Kenneth Startup, Commissioner/Secretary Rebecca Howell, and Commissioner Mary Schwartz

Attending via Phone: City Attorney Trey Smith

Attending via Google Meets: Commissioner Cindy Hlass

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

Chairperson Hudson welcomed all and expressed appreciation for attendance at the May Cemetery Regular Meeting, which she called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Old Business:

The First Order of Business was to review and approve the minutes from the April 19, 2022, Cemetery Regular Meeting. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Vice Chair Startup and seconded by Commissioner Schwartz. The minutes were unanimously approved.

The Second Order of Business was a presentation of the April 2022 Financial Report by Commissioner Schwartz, in the absence of Finance Director Johnson. Cash balances for April 30, 2022 were: Russellville Oakland Cemetery operating account \$99,765.60 and Bank OZK perpetual care trust account \$155,543.72. The April Statement of Revenues and Expenditures showed expenditures greater than revenue by \$2,029.60.

The Third Order of Business was a debriefing and discussion of the May 1, 2022 date of service/workshop for Oakland, open for suggestions to improve/modify this type of future events. Director Warwick reported that the workshop was very positively received and that more than 30 visitors were counted in the cemetery during the workshop. The workshop featured a demonstration by Director Warwick of how to clean a monument with the D2 cleaning product. Nine visitors participated in the demonstration, and some people have asked to see the product again. Now that more visitors are attending events, Director Warwick hopes to have a Fall cleaning on a Saturday morning, and, possibly, an additional such event. These may be in October and November.

The Fourth Order of Business was a continued discussion for the plaque to be placed in the Mary Rye Campbell Addition. This should include design and wording of the plaque as well as the type/design of the post/base to be used. Director Warwick presented two ideas for the pillar or base of the plaque, and Commissioners especially liked the base which was a large boulder with a book (metal work) on top. The plaque would be a "page" of the book.

The Fifth Order of Business was a continued discussion concerning possible outreach for donations to help offset the anticipated expenses for erecting a fence along the east line of the cemetery. Director Warwick presented an attractive single-page flyer, which incorporates ideas from Commissioners' draft letters. Commissioner Schwartz made a motion to approve this letter as the donation letter, and Vice Chair Startup seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

Vice Chair Startup suggested, also, that historic pictures of the cemetery on computer may create interest from the public, as April 2023 marks the 180th anniversary of our cemetery. Other ideas were: (a) a digital tour of the cemetery on computer, (b) Civil War re-enactments, and (c) an emphasis on genealogy. A successful 175th anniversary was celebrated a few years ago, and the 180th anniversary of Russellville Oakland Cemetery may call for another celebration.

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

The Seventh Order of Business was a discussion about speed bumps in cemetery drives. The speed bumps are helpful in slowing traffic through the cemetery. Over the past few years, cars have been observed driving between 8th and 11th Streets through the cemetery and with no apparent reason to be in the cemetery. Due to the possibility of the speed bumps getting out of place, Commissioners and Director Warwick will look into removing the speed bumps and designing a drive pattern of zigzags and latch or swing gates. Creating a detour should make the cemetery of safer place to walk.

New Business:

No new business was presented and Chairperson Hudson adjourned the meeting at about 6:08 p.m.