

**BOARD OF CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS
COUNCIL ROOM, CITY HALL
106 W. DIVISION STREET
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2024
6:00 P.M.**

The Board of Cemetery Commissioners met in City Hall, Chair Clough presiding. On roll call: Council Members Daniel Clough and Julie Counsell, Mandy Krejci and City Clerk-Treasurer Rex R. Roehl present. Lori Pekol absent.

Also present: Cemetery Sexton Regan Barth.

The minutes of the previous meeting were declared approved.

Sexton Barth reported on normal maintenance on equipment, roads and graves, lawnmowing, mole trapping, Fall cleanup will begin October 1st, taking down three trees, there are about 30 ash trees that will be cut down as time permits, trees will be replanted in the same general area as the stumps are also dug out.

Discussion on people donating trees, selling the wood, the funeral choice of planting a tree and applying for a DNR tree grant.

Krejci asked how would people know they have to clean off the Cemetery; why don't all the names on the headstone face the same way; do we weed whack; and straighten headstones.

Sexton Barth stated the Cemetery decorations are cleaned off twice a year – notices are in the Clark County Press and Shopper, it is on Facebook, the City's website and posted at the Cemetery; where they place their names on the headstone is their choice, we have no specific requirements; the City does weed whacking as we can – this year we were short on Summer help; we do stone straightening as we can – we have to take the stone apart in sections, try and level out or replace the base and reinstall the stone.

Counsell asked what are the number of traditional burials vs cremations.

Barth stated cremations are gaining and it is about 50/50 now.

Chair Clough stated the Commission has had a presentation by Brian Hopperdietzel, Marshfield Monument, Marshfield, WI with an estimated cost of \$50,000 to \$55,000 depending on site work and landscaping; the City does not have any money; the Grants Committee researched Columbarium funding and could not find any grants (the Riverside Cemetery, Withee, WI did finance a columbarium with general funds and perpetual care fund borrowing); and we have an email from our City Attorney stating perpetual care funds do not allow construction of a new columbarium, perpetual care funds are limited to maintenance.

Counsell stated the City's roads are bad, we cannot invest in a columbarium.

Krejci stated we have to entertain the idea, if we don't offer a columbarium, they are going to go elsewhere.

Clough suggested starting to set money aside to build up a fund.

Counsell asked what Gesche's Funeral Home's take on this – would they be willing to help the City front the costs.

Clough stated that we have to be careful with a private for-profit business arrangement.

Krejci stated people could donate to a project.

Counsell stated the City could donate the site plots like what was done for the Smiling for Samuel baby memorial.

Sexton Barth stated columbariums come in different sizes and shapes, if put in a whole new area of the Cemetery, it would have to be platted, you are starting from scratch, landscaping, site prep, everything that goes with it, he could contact Cold Spring Monument, Cold Spring, MN for ideas.

Krejci asked if anyone was calling for a columbarium.

Sexton Barth stated not really.

Counsell stated we need to find out the interest – do survey, put a question on the water bills, etc.; be creative in financing – can we presell; people are getting cremated in order to save the money – will they spend to purchase a niche in a columbarium.

The Commission consensus was to table the Columbarium issue for more information – Sexton Barth will contact Cold Spring Monument, Clough will contact Gesche's Funeral Home and Marshfield Monument, Counsell will draft survey questions and Krejci will contact other cemeteries.

Sexton Barth presented the proposed 2025 Cemetery Budget. Barth stated that his salary is 2/3 Cemetery and 1/3 Parks.

<u>Budget Line</u>	<u>2024 Budget</u>	<u>2025 Proposed Budget</u>
Sexton Salary (2/3)	\$ 34,695	\$ 35,568
Extra Help	20,515	21,024
Utilities	4,000	4,000
Telephone & Internet	1,750	1,750
Conferences & Travel	1,000	1,000
Repairs & Maintenance	10,200	10,200
Seeds, Plants & Trees	1,000	1,000
Landscaping	1,000	1,000
Gas, Oil & Grease	4,000	4,000
Street Maintenance	500	500
Care Fund	4,000	4,000
Equipment (1/2)	-0-	-0-
Vehicles (1/2)	-0-	-0-
Lawnmowers (1/2)	6,000	4,650
Totals	<u>\$ 88,660</u>	<u>\$ 88,692</u>

Sexton Barth stated wages were increased 2 ½% and Lawnmowers is ½ the cost, we are on a three-year rotation to match the commercial grade mower warranties, the quote from TCR Power reflected a better trade-in value than last year.

Counsell asked if the whole 2024 budget would be spent.

Sexton Barth stated everything but Extra Help, as we could not find the workers this Summer.

Motion Counsell, second Krejci, to recommend the proposed 2025 Cemetery Budget to the Finance Committee. All Aye.

Krejci asked about putting up a Cemetery map on the bulletin board.

Sexton Barth stated it is on the City's website, CIMS (the City's cemetery program) has developed an add-on program using a QR code to look up the map and burials, but it is expensive (\$2,000 initial set up plus \$800 per year maintenance in addition to the current program maintenance cost of \$1,500 per year).

Motion Krejci, second Counsell, to adjourn. All Aye.

Daniel Clough, Chair

Rex R. Roehl, Clerk-Treasurer