



CLAY STREET CEMETERY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – September 3, 2025
HELD VIA ZOOM WEBINAR AND
IN FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA



The Clay Street Cemetery Commission convened at 5:06 p.m. on the above date to conduct a Regular Meeting in the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, and via teleconference, with **Chair Aldean Kilbourn** presiding and the following Commission members in attendance:

Members Present: George Dalton, Seat A
Aldean Kilbourn, Seat C
Janet Richardson, Seat D
Julie Jones, Seat E
Karen Erickson, Seat F
Amy Stratman, Seat G

Absent: Jessica Desmond, Seat B
Jeremiah Cotter, Public Works Director

Also Present: Colt Chase, Deputy City Clerk

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of August 6, 2025

J. Jones, seconded by **K. Erickson**, moved to APPROVE the August 6, 2025 minutes.

Chair Kilbourn took a voice vote on the motion to APPROVE the August 6, 2025 minutes and all members voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

J. Jones, seconded by **K. Erickson**, moved to APPROVE the agenda.

Chair Kilbourn took a voice vote on the motion to APPROVE the agenda and all members voted in favor.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – None

COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMISSION

J. Richardson shared that she had received a letter of appreciation from the archivist at St. Vincent's Mission in Santa Barbara. She recounted that while researching Anita de Martinez, who had passed away in Fairbanks in the early 1900's, she discovered a handwritten note on the back of her inquest referencing the Mission which led her to submitting a request for any available information. She shared that she had received details about A. de Martinez being left at the orphanage as an infant, which led to sufficient information to have a headstone ordered for her. She reported that the headstone had been placed this summer and that she had sent a completed photo to the archivist who responded with gratitude for the Commission's work and that A. de Martinez's final resting place had been treated with such respect.

Chair Kilbourn reported that they believe they have five locations in the Moose section of the cemetery where the individual buried there had been identified, although they have little information to go on. She stated that she had found contact information for the Royal Order of Moose and contacted them to share what data the Commission had, requesting any further details that may be available on the individuals.

C. Chase shared that former City Councilmember Gene Redden had stopped by his office in the previous week to inquire if any information was available for an individual for whom he was assisting with for research. He stated that he was unable to find any details but provided a link for the Clay Street Cemetery's section of the Find-a-Grave website. He indicated that there would likely be a follow-up email which he would share with the Commission members, in the event that any of them had knowledge of the individual.

EVENTS & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Chair Kilbourn shared that they are essentially done for the season, other than cleaning out the shed. She noted that they would appreciate it if the bagger attachment to the mower would be removed to create more space, given that it is not being used.

J. Richardson reported that classes from Barnette Magnet School would participate in their annual history tour and clean-up project on September 19.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Chair Kilbourn referenced the provided financial report and noted that a donation of \$300 had been received from the Elizabeth Ann Sharp Trust to cover her marker. She recounted that they would like to purchase additional dirt by summer 2026 to add to the planters and reduce the frequency of watering.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Cemetery Grounds Maintenance

J. Richardson expressed appreciation for Tim from the Public Works Department, who had continued to do a great job with mowing and trimming around the property, which she had told him personally. She noted that the excessive rain from the last few weeks had been a challenge for upkeep. She reported that the path from the 7th Avenue gate that leads to the 5th Avenue pathway has almost disappeared due to overgrowth of grass and weeds. She stated that she is unsure of how the City would like to deal with this problem but reiterated that the path is almost completely gone.

J. Jones stated that by the next summer she would like to discuss the directional posts at the property and determine if they would like to repaint the existing individual units or replace them with a single four-way post. She pointed out that what is currently in place is ineffective. **J. Richardson** concurred that the current signs make no sense. **J. Jones** suggested that they discuss this item the following spring. **Chair Kilbourn** asked C. Chase to have this included on the April 2026 meeting agenda.

J. Jones noted that there are larger concrete pads left and asked why they are not being put out before they finish working for the season. **J. Richardson** explained that the units left to attend to are smaller-sized ones, that they do have plenty of smaller pads, but will be unable to do anything with them until they get

their next order of markers. **J. Jones** asked if they could dig up some of the sunken locations to raise them with their remaining gravel, provided the weather warms up and the rain stops. **Chair Kilbourn** concurred that this would be a good use of any available labor. **J. Richardson** added that they will find uses for the remaining large pads. **J. Jones** noted that if she had additional workers available before the season ends, she can also have them doing more edging and clearing buried markers.

b) Cemetery Rack Card Redesign

Chair Kilbourn stated that with J. Desmond not being present they did not have any update or advancement on this project. **J. Jones** asked if they should consider returning the project to committee for further work. **Chair Kilbourn** suggested that they may do that sometime in the future but that they are currently busy enough with research to prepare for their next marker order.

A. Stratman asked what the deadline is for the rack card design update. **J. Richardson** indicated that they would not need the cards until the next tourist season. **J. Jones** offered to handle the redesign work, if such was still needed, in six to eight weeks once her other duties slow down.

C. Chase asked what quantity they typically order. **Chair Kilbourn** reported that they usually get 1,000 at a time and that they do so from Graphic North Printing.

c) Additional White Cross Placements/Replacements

J. Richardson shared that the volunteers had installed 20 more crosses as well as replaced two units that had been broken. She stated that more would be put in, weather permitting, before the season was over.

d) Application for Placement – Elida Slaback

Chair Kilbourn reported that a letter had been sent but that things were on hold until they received a response and had clarification on the family's plans for placement in July 2026.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Application for Placement – Elizabeth & Bert Sharp

Chair Kilbourn referenced the two applications for placement that had been received from Bert Sharp for both him and his wife, Elizabeth Sharp (deceased).

J. Jones pointed out that the concrete pads had already been put in place for both and that the headstone for Elizabeth had not yet been ordered. **J. Richardson** noted that hers would be ordered with the next batch, which would make for a total of 21 markers.

J. Jones, seconded by **G. Dalton**, moved to APPROVE the Application for Placement for Elizabeth (“Betsy”) Ann and Bert Sharp, received on August 15, 2025.

Chair Kilbourn took a voice vote on the motion to APPROVE the Application for Placement for Elizabeth (“Betsy”) Ann and Bert Sharp, received on August 15, 2025, and all members voted in favor.

J. Jones asked if anyone had or would contact B. Sharp to let him know the status of the applications. **J. Richardson** stated that she would reach out to him.

OPEN AGENDA

J. Jones asked how things were progressing with their preparations for the next batch of markers to be ordered. She explained that she would be compiling their annual financial report for the bed tax grant program to submit in October and that it would be nice to have the next order placed before then.

Chair Kilbourn shared that unfortunately things were going a bit slower for her. **J. Richardson** reported that she has six or seven names completed. **A. Stratman** stated that she is still working on her list as well. **Chair Kilbourn** and **A. Stratman** discussed using newer tools, including Artificial Intelligence, to aide in their research efforts. **Chair Kilbourn** explained that their primary challenge is that the names they are working on have much less information available than other names which they had completed in the past, which is one of the main reasons they had been put off for later.

J. Jones recounted that on occasion they have prepaid for an order, to ensure funds were spent prior to a particular deadline, and that the details of the names and personal data could be finalized at a later point. She asked if they would like to do so again and that she could get a quote for the 20 markers plus the one for Betsy Sharp. **Chair Kilbourn** confirmed that there was consensus for J. Jones to proceed as described.

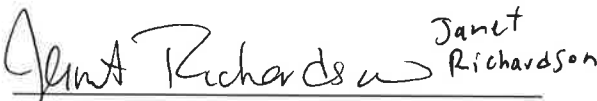
Chair Kilbourn indicated that if they needed an alternative option to expend funds before the deadline they could consider purchasing the dirt she had mentioned earlier in the evening, although she was not thrilled at the idea of needing to store it over the winter.

NEXT MEETING DATE – October 1, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

J. Jones, seconded by **J. Richardson**, moved to ADJOURN the meeting.

Chair Kilbourn declared the meeting ADJOURNED at 5:34 p.m.


for Aldean Kilbourn, Chair


Colt Chase, CMC, Deputy City Clerk

Transcribed by: CC