



CLAY STREET CEMETERY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – February 4, 2026
HELD VIA ZOOM WEBINAR AND
IN FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA



The Clay Street Cemetery Commission convened at 5:02 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 Vice Chair Janet Richardson presiding. The following Commission members were in attendance:

Members Present: George Dalton, Seat A
 Jessica Desmond, Seat B
 Aldean Kilbourn, Seat C (joined at 5:09 p.m.)
 Janet Richardson, Seat D (remotely)
 Julie Jones, Seat E (remotely)
 Amy Stratman, Seat G

Absent: Karen Erickson, Seat F

Also Present: Jeremiah Cotter, Public Works Director (remotely)
 Colt Chase, Deputy City Clerk

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of January 7, 2026

J. Jones, seconded by **J. Desmond**, moved to APPROVE the January 7, 2026 minutes.

Vice Chair Richardson took a voice vote on the motion to APPROVE the January 7, 2026 minutes and all members voted in favor.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

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

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Adia Cotter – A. Cotter shared that she is a Supervisory Park Ranger with the National Park Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, and that she works at the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center. She discussed programming that was being organized for later in the year to commemorate the Semiquincentennial (250-year anniversary) of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. She stated Explore Fairbanks was creating a calendar of events that would celebrate historical highlights within the community and that some plans would likely result in increased cemetery traffic, for which they were seeking the blessing of the City and Commission. A. Cotter discussed a virtual history tour, similar to the Borough's annual "Trail Challenge", which would focus on local historical locations and stories across Fairbanks. She extended an invitation to share details of any events the Commission may be planning to increase awareness via inclusion on Explore Fairbanks' calendar and provided her contact information.

G. Dalton stated that this was a great idea and asked if they planned to do it every year going forward. **A. Cotter** explained that Explore Fairbanks was investing in a mobile app that would serve as a self-guided tour for significant locations around Fairbanks and that as long as the app was active, the program would continue. She added that they would also be producing a paper version of the tour for the first year.

J. Jones discussed other work she is involved with for the Semiquincentennial celebration planning. She stated that the Commission works hard to make the cemetery welcoming and informative to visitors and that they would very much support efforts that increased visitation. She shared that the Commission hosts cemetery history tours each year, offered to join whatever committee was overseeing the program being discussed, and offered suggestions for other entities and individuals who could be involved.

A. Cotter noted that a larger community festival would be held in August to commemorate the Declaration of Independence's ratification and that she would continue to connect interested parties for the upcoming events.

[Clerk Note: Chair Kilbourn arrived during A. Cotter's comments and assumed the Chair at 5:17 p.m.]

COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMISSION - None

EVENTS & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Chair Kilbourn discussed the annual clean-up day and recounted that due to weather uncertainties they typically hold the event the Saturday prior to Memorial Day weekend, which would be May 16. **J. Desmond** shared that she has an existing commitment that day and would be unable to attend. **Chair Kilbourn** asked **C. Chase** to publish the event on the City website and Facebook. **J. Richardson** stated that she could share the event with the women's Pioneers group. **G. Dalton** said he could do the same for the men but pointed out that the group typically holds their own event the same day. **Chair Kilbourn** suggested that any local organization with ties to the cemetery could come edge markers and clean their associated section of the cemetery any day in the preceding week. **A. Stratman** stated that now would be the perfect time to start sending out invitations. **J. Desmond** indicated that she planned to propose the opportunity to her Rotary group. **J. Richardson** confirmed that any of the affiliated organizations should be encouraged to come out and edge markers in their sections any time during the summer. **J. Jones** shared that she would also add the clean-up day on the Festival Fairbanks event calendar. **Chair Kilbourn** discussed the description which should be included on the various event calendars being published. **C. Chase** confirmed that they could use the Commission's City-issued email for contact information.

J. Desmond shared that her Rotary group was interested in a presentation from the Commission to discuss their work. She asked if there was interest in doing so on a Friday morning in April. **Chair Kilbourn** stated that April 24 would be feasible. **S. Stratman** and **J. Richardson** each indicated they would be able to participate. **J. Desmond** gave details about the format. **C. Chase** suggested they use the opportunity to solicit donations.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Chair Kilbourn noted that since the last meeting they had received a deposit of \$11,876 from the City's Discretionary Fund ("bed tax grant") as well as a \$300 donation from Wilcox family for a new marker for Frank Andersen. She reported the purchase of 2,000 new rack cards and confirmed their account balance of \$13,869.66.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a) Quiring Monuments Order

J. Jones reported that they are in the final round of proofing and are almost ready for production. She stated that she would share the updated order proof for additional review before any final approval.

b) New Marker for Frank Anderson

A. Stratman stated that she had been working with Frank's relative, Wanda Wilcox, to confirm details for the marker being made and noted that they were awaiting confirmation on if his last name ended in "-en" or "-on". Mark Wilcox, husband of W. Wilcox, who was in attendance remotely, expressed appreciation that details were being coordinated between A. Stratman and his wife.

NEW BUSINESS – None

OPEN AGENDA

Chair Kilbourn shared that J. Desmond had provided her family history and requested assistance with additional research. She recounted the work they had performed thus far and a general discussion ensued regarding genealogical research processes and details about J. Desmond's family history.

C. Chase shared that City Clerk Dani Snider had highlighted the Commission's work in her recent quarterly report to the City Council. He stated that he will leave a copy of the new rack card in each Councilmember's box. He thanked J. Richardson for her assistance with obtaining a photo for Jesse Bryant, a City of Fairbanks mayor from the 1930's who was one of six past mayors without a portrait on the wall outside Council Chambers. He explained that the original image was a very low resolution and so Artificial Intelligence software had been used to create a better version, with a disclaimer included with the posted picture. **Chair Kilbourn** shared that she had previously worked with someone who had great photo restoration skills and offered to approach him for potential image clean-up on J. Bryant's portrait. **J. Richardson** gave additional details about the research she had completed on past mayors. **A. Stratman** recounted that she had also done some work in the past on the topic. **Chair Kilbourn** suggested that a book outlining past mayors of the City of Fairbanks would serve as a great historical resource and might be a good project for the future.

NEXT MEETING DATES – March 4, 2026

Chair Kilbourn asked if any communication had been received from Commission member K. Erickson, noting her recent absences. **C. Chase** shared details of an email exchange with K. Erickson, that she had requested copies of past meeting minutes, and had indicated intent to attend the next meeting remotely.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kilbourn declared the meeting ADJOURNED at 5:43 p.m.



Aldean Kilbourn, Chair



Colt Chase, CMC, Deputy City Clerk

Transcribed by: CC