



CLAY STREET CEMETERY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 5, 2025  
HELD VIA ZOOM WEBINAR AND  
IN FAIRBANKS CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
800 CUSHMAN STREET, FAIRBANKS, ALASKA



The Clay Street Cemetery Commission convened at 5:00 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:                    Jessica Desmond, Seat B  
   Aldean Kilbourn, Seat C  
   Julie Jones, Seat E  
   Karen Erickson, Seat F (remotely)  
   Amy Stratman, Seat G

Absent:                                George Dalton, Seat A  
   Janet Richardson, Seat D  
   Jeremiah Cotter, Public Works Director

Also Present:                        Colt Chase, Deputy City Clerk

**APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

a)        Regular Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2025

**K. Erickson**, seconded by **A. Stratman**, moved to APPROVE the January 8, 2025 minutes.

**Chair Kilbourn** took a voice vote on the motion to APPROVE the January 8, 2025 minutes and all members voted in favor.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**J. Desmond**, seconded by **A. Stratman**, 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** – None

**EVENTS & PUBLIC RELATIONS**

**Chair Kilbourn** suggested that it was still too early to set a date for their annual cleanup event in May.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE**

**Chair Kilbourn** noted that since their last meeting, they received \$11,712.00 from the City's Discretionary Fund (i.e. "Bed Tax") grant process, bringing their current account balance to \$14,318.10.

**J. Jones** pointed out that they received a little less than in 2024 but that it is still a decent amount and they will have plenty of work for the coming summer to ensure they will be able to spend the funds.

**Chair Kilbourn** asked if they had already purchased pea gravel at the same time as concrete pads in late 2024. **J. Jones** recalled that in November she had reported using their remaining funds for the year to purchase concrete pads and that they would need to purchase some additional pads, plus the pea gravel, with funds this year. **Chair Kilbourn** discussed the concern that rates may be increasing and suggested that they place their order soon, with the hope that Public Works would be able to store the materials until the summer when they can be delivered to the cemetery. **J. Jones** stated that she will check on this and that it fits within the purview of their grant, so they would not need a motion to authorize the expense.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### a) Quiring Monument Orders

**J. Jones** reported that Quiring has all of their stones in, ready in the queue to be processed, and that they had completed three rounds of review to approve all of the inscriptions. She explained that this did not give them an estimated delivery window but that it was good news that their order in line. She reminded them that they have a pallet of markers that arrived in the fall which they can focus on at the start of the season, with this new order hopefully not far behind.

#### b) Update on Elks Plot Information

**Chair Kilbourn** stated that she has not gotten any additional follow up on the missing flash drive. **J. Jones** indicated that she intends to personally follow up with the Elks member with whom she had initially spoken about their efforts to locate this archive.

#### c) Digital Resources for City Website

**C. Chase** shared the City's website on the projected screen and reviewed the lack of published information about the cemetery, noting only minimal references to the Commission itself. **Chair Kilbourn** recalled that it had been reported that a new website was being developed and that a page for the cemetery could be created with their desired content. **C. Chase** confirmed that this was correct and that while not every City Board or Commission had its own page on the website, a couple do such as the Discretionary Fund and the Fairbanks Diversity Council. He asserted that it would be very appropriate for the Clay Street Cemetery Commission to have its own page as well. He clarified that if the completion of the new website was going to be too far in the future, they could still get a page created on the current website.

Discussion occurred regarding the preferred content for a dedicated Clay Street Cemetery page and there was consensus that the following elements should be incorporated:

- Current photos of the cemetery, including recent workdays.
- Historical aerial photos of the cemetery throughout the 1900's to present.
- A brief history of the cemetery.
- A description of the purpose of the Commission and the work its members perform.

- Scheduled events such as Commission meetings, workdays, etc.
- A reference and link to the dedicated section of the online “Find a Grave” database where Clay Street burial information has been uploaded over the years.
- A high-resolution map of the cemetery showing the numbered burial plots.

**C. Chase** acknowledged that each item on this list was something that already existed in locations such as the on-site kiosk, high-pressure laminated sign, and printed brochures. He stated that gathering content to publish would not be difficult and they could use the same text and images found in these resources.

**Chair Kilbourn** asked to show on the overheard screen a simple search for a name on the Find a Grave website. **C. Chase** demonstrated the process and highlighted how this database could be linked to the City website in other ways. He discussed the master spreadsheet that had been maintained by J. Richardson which listed each person’s name, the section they are buried in, and gravesite number. He suggested that someone looking to volunteer their time could go down the entire list, look up each name in Find a Grave, and paste the direct URL to that person’s profile in a new, dedicated column in the spreadsheet. **C. Chase** explained that this link would not change even if someone’s information was updated later and that it would make this master spreadsheet even more useful. He then discussed how someone could turn the high-resolution map into a more interactive tool by inserting a link over gravesite in the PDF that would, upon being clicked, open up that person’s profile in Find a Grave. He demonstrated this process with one example on the screen and explained that once this interactive PDF had all known plots linked to their existing profile, this map could be made available on the City’s website for any curious visitors. **C. Chase** added that the file could also be connected to a scannable QR code which could be utilized in other printed materials in the future or on a sign at the cemetery. He asserted that the goal would be to make all of their existing information accessible in different ways.

**Chair Kilbourn** asked if J. Desmond would be able to do the work that had been described. **J. Desmond** affirmed that she has time to devote to the project and could get started with filling in the individual links for each person in the spreadsheet as well as linking their gravesite in the PDF to the same URL.

**C. Chase** asked if he could be sent the editable text and historical photos from the recently finalized high-pressure laminate sign. He added that if there were other images that they would prefer to be used on the website that they would have plenty of freedom to do so. He stated that if they learn that the new website was not going to be ready until later in the year then they could get something published on the existing City website in the meantime. **Chair Kilbourn** indicated that there are some nice images from when the main gate was constructed that would be great to include. **A. Stratman** shared that she has some photos from their archives that were taken in the 1980’s with individuals at the cemetery dressed in Golden Days attire which would be good to include.

**NEW BUSINESS** – None

## **OPEN AGENDA**

**J. Jones** shared that she had sent photos of the main gate and arch to the Public Works Department to highlight the current condition of the structure. She discussed how it was in serious need of repair and maintenance and that she would like to have this on the agenda for their next meeting to follow up. She suggested that they could write a grant proposal to the local Rotary group that had provided assistance in the past and that they would likely be happy to give support again.

**J. Desmond** discussed her hope to get more people to visit the cemetery in the future and suggested holding special events such as Shakespearean performances. **Chair Kilbourn** shared that they have struggled in the past to get sufficient involvement and attendance to some of the events they have put on but that they will continue to hold their walking tours each May even if only a few people show up. **A. Stratman** proposed a First Friday event where the community could be invited to come visit the cemetery and learn about this important piece of the City's history.

**C. Chase** suggested that they look into getting a donation portal set up that could be posted at the property via a QR code for visitors to scan and contribute to the Commission's efforts. **J. Desmond** proposed setting up a print-on-demand for Clay Street Cemetery shirts or other materials. **A. Stratman** shared that the Friends of S.S. Nenana Inc. has an option for local on-demand printing of shirts.

**Chair Kilbourn** acknowledged that new efforts of various approaches might generate more interest, visitation, and engagement with the cemetery and/or the Commission. She indicated that everyone was welcome to put together ideas.

**UPCOMING MEETING DATES** – March 5, 2025

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Kilbourn** declared the meeting ADJOURNED at 5:36 p.m.



Aldean Kilbourn, Chair



Colt Chase, Deputy City Clerk

Transcribed by: CC