

## Cemetery Advisory Board

**Date:** June 8, 2011  
**Time:** 7:00 pm – 8:55 pm  
**Location:** Parks and Recreation Administrative Building on Plant Road

### **Board Members Present:**

1. Steve Moore, Chair
2. Debbie Miller, Vice Chair
3. Martin Rody
4. Mary Hayes
5. Esphur Foster

### **Board Members Absent:**

1. Marguerite Hutchins

### **Staff Present:**

1. Butch Kisiah, Director of Parks and Recreation
2. Robert Minick, Superintendent of Landscape Services and Park Maintenance
3. Ashley Barriga, Administrative Intern

### **Citizens Present:**

1. Lee Heavlin, Veterans Memorial Committee
2. Jim Merritt, Veterans Memorial Committee
3. Ernest Dollar, Preservation Society

### **Review of Minutes from March 9, 2011 and November 10, 2010**

- **Motion:** The Board motions to approve the March 9, 2011 and November 10, 2010 minutes.
  - **Motion made by:** Mary Hayes
  - **Motion seconded by:** Martin Rody
  - **Outcome:** Vote approved unanimously

### **Updates from Preservation Society**

- Ernest Dollar explains that the **report on the Barbee-Hargraves Cemetery** provides historical information. The report highlights that the Barbee-Hargraves Cemetery is estimated to have begun around 1740. This research also found that most citizens want to leave the cemetery as is; the report recommends doing such.
- Ernest Dollar explains that the **ground penetration survey of the Barbee-Hargraves Cemetery** shows the location of burials. Ernest Dollar explains that they did not do the survey under the asphalt. Steve Moore highlights that 53 burial sites were identified. The Board agrees that this work gives the people that are buried there the dignity they deserve.
- Ernest Dollar elaborates on the **findings of the report on the West Chapel Hill Cemetery**. This cemetery originated from legislative law which called for the segregation of cemeteries. A lot of

this cemetery is vacant. Steve Moore asks what would preclude the town from selling the vacant plots once the owners of existing vacant plots and occupied plots were identified; Butch Kisiah says that this could be discussed at a future meeting.

- Ernest Dollar **thinks the Parks and Recreation staff**, especially Debra Lane, for all their hard work and support throughout this project.
- Ernest Dollar **updates the board on the status of the contract work**. In regards to the Cemetery Stewardship, the survey of Old Chapel Hill Cemetery should be completed by the end of the month, with text and images for documentation. As for the website, Butch Kisiah will put Ernest Dollar and the Town of Chapel Hill's IT Director in contact. And for signage, Ernest Dollar will begin discussing the signage at the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery with Steve Moore.
- The Preservation Society **gave a preservation award** to the Cemetery Advisory Board and the Town of Chapel Hill.

### Update from Town

- There is no money, in the **FY 11-12 budget**, that is allocated to cemetery beautification.
- **A list of items that need to be done at the cemeteries** is presented by Steve Moore. Each of the cemeteries needs: (1) a map with the newly discovered graves, (2) educational signage, (3) markers for discovered graves, (4) ground enhancements and (5) ground penetrating radar analysis for any remaining section. Additionally, at Memorial Cemetery, there needs to be cooperation with the monument project. Last, the website needs to be updated and enhanced to reflect accurate revisions.
- **Motion:** The Board motions to recommend that staff continue working with the Preservation Society to complete the work at the cemeteries.
  - **Motion made by:** Martin Rody
  - **Motion seconded by:** Esphur Foster
  - **Outcome:** Vote approved unanimously
- Robert Minick provides an **update on the ongoing landscape activities:**
  - At Memorial Cemetery
    - The process to level the stones, not mounted in a concrete base, has started.
    - The process to level the grass has started and will be a continual process.
    - Staff proposes that the water source for the well be removed and relocated according to County standards. The current area should be returned to grass and the wooden bench should be removed.
      - **Motion** to support staffs proposal on the relocation of the well and the removal of the bench.

- **Motion made by:** Mary Hayes
  - **Motion seconded by:** Martin Rody
  - **Outcome:** Vote approved unanimously
- Staff recommends that the four wooden benches be removed and replaced with backless benches made out of recycled plastic.
    - Some Board members prefer a different style bench and others are concerned with the use of recycled material in the sun.
    - Steve Moore suggests that the bench, product number 02JC1361, is the best option so far.
    - The Board will defer a decision on the benches until further information is provided and research is done. Board members will look at existing park benches and email Butch Kisiah their vote on a preferred bench.
  - Staff does not recommend replacing the two existing receptacles. However, Debbie Miller would like new receptacles that complement the new benches to be brought in. Robert Minick will provide images of the benches and receptacles at the following meeting.
  - The overhead lighting was put in for security reasons, so staff does not recommend putting in more lighting. Debbie Miller would like more attractive, elegant lighting. Robert Minick says that staff can talk to Duke Power to see what alternatives there are.
  - Staff suggests the continuation of the sidewalk given that it is marked in the original plans, there is an increase in use of those plots and the large number of requests received for this sidewalk.
    - **Motion:** The Board recommends that staff does not move forward with the sidewalk.
      - **Motion made by:** Debbie Miller
      - **Motion seconded by:** Mary Hayes
      - **Discussion:** The Board members discussed the different types of materials that could be used and the need for this sidewalk given the population.
      - **Outcome:** Vote approved unanimously
    - Staff will bring the original plan of the cemetery to the next meeting.
  - **Special maintenance was done** in preparation for Easter and Mother's Day, specifically at West Chapel Hill Cemetery and Memorial Cemetery.
  - There were **additional concerns with the cemeteries**. Steve Moore says there are still old markers by the Di Phi plot. Debbie Miller mentions that at West Chapel Hill

Cemetery there are visibly dead branches and that Roosevelt has a dipped grave. Debbie Miller adds that for the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery that there are a lot of bare spots and that the gazebo could use mulch or fill dirt. Robert Minick and his staff will address these issues.

- The Board wants to **thank the staff** for all their hard work.
- **Budget status clarification (per Ken Pennoyer)** – None
- **Petition to council for new rules/regulations for Old Cemetery** – Nothing has been put in writing regarding these rules and regulations. Staff will try to figure out a way to implement these rules and regulations; however, it may be too costly to implement, in which case it will not be carried out.

### **New Business: Memorial Cemetery Veterans Plaza Options**

- Butch Kisiah provides an overview of the progress by explaining that seven responses to the RFP have been received. Staff will review the responses to ensure they are complete. The Steering Committee will then select three firms which will receive a stipend to provide a conceptual design. From those designs, one firm will be selected.
- Jim Merritt and Lee Heavlin **discuss the membership of the Steering Committee**. Jim Merritt explains that they would like to recruit another Cemetery Advisory Board member to serve on the Steering Committee in addition to Martin Rody and Steve Moore. Jim Merritt asks if Esphur Foster would serve. Lee Heavlin explains the importance of having representation from the Cemetery Advisory Board, so that the project meets what Chapel Hill wants, not just what the veterans want.
- Steve Moore and Debbie Miller express their interest in having the **3 final firms present their designs to the Cemetery Advisory Board**, in addition to the Steering Committee, before a vendor is recommended to Council. Butch Kisiah reminds the Cemetery Advisory Board that Council tasked the Steering Committee with making the recommendation, so members of the Cemetery Advisory Board are strongly encouraged to join the Steering Committee to participate in the process. Butch Kisiah explains, however, that the Steering Committee could bring the three designs to the Cemetery Advisory Board, if they so desire.
- The Cemetery Advisory Board **agrees to have a joint meeting** with the Steering Committee to evaluate the top three firms and their submitted designs. In the meantime, the Cemetery Advisory Board will be copied on all correspondence of the Steering Committee.

**Next Meeting Date** -- The next Cemetery Advisory Board meeting is Wednesday, September 14, 2011 at 7pm at the Parks and Recreation Administrative Building.