



CLAY STREET CEMETERY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 4, 2023
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 at the City Council Chambers, 800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska, and via teleconference with **Chair Aldean Kilbourn (Seat C)** and with the following members in attendance:

Members Present: George Dalton, Seat A
 Dawn Milligan, Seat B
 Janet Richardson, Seat D
 Julie Jones, Seat E
 Karen Erickson, Seat F (remotely)
 Amy Stratman, Seat G
 Jeff Jacobson, Public Works Director

Also Present: Colt Chase, Deputy City Clerk

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

a) Regular Meeting Minutes of September 6, 2023

J. Richardson, seconded by **G. Dalton**, moved to APPROVE the September 6, 2023 meeting minutes.

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

G. Dalton, seconded by **J. Richardson**, moved to APPROVE the agenda.

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

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS – None

COMMUNICATIONS TO COMMISSION – None

EVENTS & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Chair Kilbourn referenced deadlines for bed tax grant items such as the report for the current year and application packet for next year's award. **J. Jones** affirmed her commitment to handle the reporting and application; she stated she would draft the narrative and have Chair Kilbourn review it prior to submission.

FINANCIAL UPDATES

a) Discretionary Fund (Bed Tax) Grant Balance Report

J. Jones reported that the full balance of the 2023 bed tax award has been spent, and the remaining balance of \$2,684.86 in the report reflects all available, unrestricted funds in the Commission's account.

b) Capital Projects Fund Balance Report

J. Jones reported that the balance of \$9,314.27 in the report has been fully encumbered. She stated the new Quiring Monuments order of \$9,325.00 would deplete these funds, with the difference coming out of the main account.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Sample Sign Layout

Chair Kilbourn asked if there had been any additional changes to the narrative as discussed at the last meeting. **J. Jones** stated that A. Stratman provided helpful edits, and the current narrative reads as follows:

Historic Aerial Views of Clay Street Cemetery

The first airplane in the Alaska Territory was assembled and flown in Fairbanks in 1913. Although Alaskan aerial photography dates back to 1900, taken from a balloon, the first known photo from an airplane was in 1908, not long after the Wright brothers powered their first flight. Aerial photography in Alaska dates back to the early 1930s. Naturally, Clay Street Cemetery is featured in some of those early photos. Later, satellite and drone photography became popular for capturing aerial images. Featured here are photos from different apparatus: 1934 & 1955 (airplane), 2020 (satellite), and 2021 (drone).

Clay Street's grave sites have changed over the years due to the deterioration of the original wooden fences and markers. The flood of 1967 took a damaging toll on the remaining memorials. Since 2010, volunteers have restored many identified sites with new granite markers and graves of the unknown with simple white crosses.

Clay Street Cemetery covers 4.3 acres in downtown Fairbanks between 3rd and 7th Avenues. The surrounding area has evolved since the cemetery was established, with houses and businesses becoming closer over the years. The Independent Lumber Company mill was erected in 1906, three years after the cemetery. It was along the river from 7th to 10th Avenues. It included the saw and planing mills, offices, warehouses, sheds, and residences. One of the former warehouses still stands on the corner of 8th Avenue and Clay Street. The most significant transformation of the area came with the construction of the Steese Highway, separating Clay Street from the riverfront in the mid-1970s.

The grand gateway to the cemetery was constructed in 2010.

J. Jones shared that she visited the artist earlier in the day and that A. Stratman had sent her a beautiful aerial image from the 1930s; however, it is just a scan of photo and would not be usable for the sign. **A. Stratman** stated that she found the image on eBay, and it was available for purchase for about \$15.

J. Richardson, seconded by **J. Jones** moved to authorize A. Stratman to purchase the aforementioned image for the Commission's use.

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

J. Jones reported that the individuals she knew who could potentially take updated aerial photos of the cemetery are no longer available to do so. She stated that she contacted a realtor who provided the name of a licensed drone operator, and she will be reaching out to them soon. She stated that will be the last photograph they need for the sign.

b) Quiring Monument Orders

Chair Kilbourn shared that J. Jones has submitted a new order and J. Richardson has reviewed it extensively already. She stated that the only item noted so far was a Masonic symbol cut off, which may be a printing error, but it would behoove them to follow up with Quiring Monuments to confirm it will be produced as expected.

J. Jones stated that she noticed between the stones on the order that there were two different symbols and was unsure if that was an error. **J. Richardson** clarified that one stone has a symbol for Christian Science, and the other is Knights Templar; she stated they are meant to be different symbols. She also requested for the stone of Lena Ferguson to upgrade to the ‘Star of David – Floral 03’ option.

J. Jones indicated that they have received the initial round of details for the order, and they are going through to collect revision requests. She stated she will submit those to Quiring Monuments when they are ready, and they will continue to exchange proofs until they are satisfied with the order.

Chair Kilbourn confirmed they had also caught one name on the order of someone who had already been placed. **J. Richardson** indicated that the marker for Thomas Mayer should be removed and replaced with Romeo Hoyt. She stated the one with the last name DeGregory could also be replaced with Jacob Jacony. She added that all associated details for the changes has been or will be submitted to J. Jones.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Reimbursement of Amy Stratman for total of \$19.47

J. Richardson, seconded by **G. Dalton**, moved to APPROVE the reimbursement to A. Stratman for \$19.47 for the following purchases: Joann’s, 9/13/23, \$15.98 for two tiles for cemetery kiosk; Walgreens, 9/7/23, \$3.49 for thumbtacks for cemetery kiosk.

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

OPEN AGENDA

J. Richardson shared that the great, great granddaughter of Peter Conley, who purchased a marker for him, recently flew to Fairbanks to meet with several members. She stated they enjoyed lunch together, then visited the cemetery to place Conley’s marker. She stated she was very thankful for the experience.

J. Jacobson informed members that he will be presenting his budget requests to the Mayor on Monday, which will include a \$10,000 line item for the Clay Street Cemetery. He stated he plans to create a nice collage of 2023 highlights from the cemetery to show the Mayor and members of the City Council what has been happening in 2023. Commission members thanked J. Jacobson for all the efforts undertaken by Public Works at the property. **J. Jacobson** returned their thanks and recognized that members are the ones doing the hard work.

J. Jacobson inquired as to whether the financial reports could be formulated to differentiate, all in one listing, the transactions and balances for the capital projects account, bed tax grant monies, and the general account funds. Deputy Clerk Chase responded that he is the one who requests the reports from the Chief Financial Officer as part of the meeting preparation. He stated that he could create a template to show a full financial snapshot of all accounts and fund sources in a single report.

Chair Kilbourn asked if any photos or narrative had been shared with Deputy Clerk Chase regarding the visit of Peter Conley's great, great granddaughter. **J. Richardson** stated that she had not yet done so but would forward him details so he could make a post on social media. **Chair Kilbourn** stated that would also be a nice way to informally highlight to the public that, if desired, individuals can make donations to have new markers produced for a family member or loved one.

J. Jones stated that she was happy to see a recent article in the News-Miner about the cemetery. **Chair Kilbourn** acknowledged that it was a long time coming, but unfortunately, some of the information was inaccurate and some photos not captioned correctly. **J. Jones** shared that even so, it was a nice story, and the photos were great. She added that it generated some interactions from people who knew she was involved with the Commission. **Chair Kilbourn** added that 7-8 people she knew had also mentioned seeing the article, and overall, it was nice to see something published.

J. Jones discussed the need to finish the work for the sign layout. She stated it has already paid for, and the company producing it has been patiently waiting for a final version. She asked to confirm that exchanging revision notes via email for the sign narrative would not violate any Open Meetings Act guidelines. She also asked who would be willing to help her finalize the language and whether she was clear to proceed with the order. **Chair Kilbourn** indicated that she could send the final version through the Clerk's Office. Deputy Clerk Chase responded that the creation and purchase of the sign was already approved by the Commission, it had been discussed at length over the last several months, and the sign narrative would be included in the meeting minutes, and as such, J. Jones should proceed.

Deputy Clerk Chase reminded those present that Commission member K. Erickson had been listening in during the meeting via Zoom. He stated there were some technical difficulties that prevented her from speaking, but he confirmed with her via text messaging that she had nothing to add to the discussion nor had any objections to any actions taken.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Chair Kilbourn confirmed that the next meeting is scheduled for November 1, 2023, at 5 p.m.

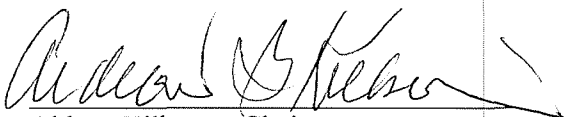
Chair Kilbourn, seconded by **A. Stratman**, moved to cancel the December 6, 2023 meeting.

Chair Kilbourn stated that the December meeting has been cancelled in past years and seemed prudent to do so for 2023. **J. Jones** shared items that would normally take place during December pertaining to the bed tax grant presentation and confirmed she is able to handle those matters.

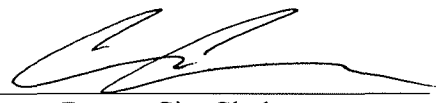
Chair Kilbourn took a voice vote on the motion, and all members voted in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Kilbourn declared the meeting ADJOURNED at 5:31 p.m.



Aldean Kilbourn, Chair



Colt Chase, Deputy City Clerk

Transcribed by: CC