

CITY OF DEWITT
Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Advisory Commission
April 14, 2010
Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chairman Conway called the April 14, 2010 Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Advisory Commission meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Roll Call: Commissioners Conway, Firth, and Hunsaker were present.
Also present: DPS Supervisor, Rich Miller and Clerk/Treasurer, Lisa Grysen.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Hunsaker, second by Firth to approve the Agenda. Motion Carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Hunsaker, second by Firth to approve the minutes of February 10, 2010. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC PRESENT: Mary Lou Galardi, 517 N. Scott; Pat Dalman, 2136 Arbor Meadows; Denise Glarner, 10252 Colby Lake Road, Perry; Patricia Molitor, 511 W. Washington; Leri McClure, 1118 ½ Chimney Hill Drive; Curt Wallace; Julie Gorden, 12583 RoDicDon Drive.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Several family members of interred loved ones in the City Cemetery had the following questions and comments:

- Easter decorations were removed from cemetery spaces less than 24 hours after the holiday. Items were then placed in a dumpster type container.
- It does not state in the Cemetery Rules and Regulations what the measurements for decorating are. No clear definition to the cemetery rules.
- Family members should be allowed to plant a loved ones favorite flowers and/or place a favorite toy etc.
- The PR&C Commission needs to take notice of the older sections of the cemetery that are in need of monument repair.
- The current rules are too restrictive.
- The City needs to understand that without edging or curbing the monuments will not be protected from grounds maintenance.
- A family member doesn't wish to visit graves in sterile surroundings and undecorated.
- A family member doesn't find any of the graves unsightly.
- What does the City propose in order to keep weeds out of the flowers if curbing can not be installed?
- What is wrong with placing wind chimes, solar lights etc. at the gravesite?
- A family member did thank the Commission for trying to enforce the rules for the entire cemetery.

Commissioner Hunsaker stated that Chairman Paulsen (who was unable to attend the April 14th meeting) will be updated on publics concerns. Family members, in attendance, were informed that cemetery rules will be discussed at next months meeting scheduled for May 12th at 7:00 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. **Cemetery Rule Enforcement:** Notices were placed at various grave sites that were decorated beyond the limits of the current rules and regulations and lot size. The DPS crew has been actively cleaning up the spaces after the winter season. The cemetery rules are clear and there is signage at the cemetery indicating when clean-up occurs. There are some

citizens who are not pleased with these efforts, and attended the April 14th, 2010 Parks, Recreation and Cemetery meeting to express their views (see citizen comments above).

- B. **Riverbank stabilization:** The City was recently turned down for its National Fish and Wildlife Federation Grant which was anticipated to pay for about 50% of the Riverside Park bank stabilization project (close to \$35,000 for plants, rocks and materials). We will seek further funding from any available sources. The MDEQ permit for this project is good until 2013.
- C. **Skateboarding Facility:** Sample materials from a skateboard vendor were available at the April 14, 2010 meeting. Brand X Skate Park Equipment mentioned that they do not have Michigan representatives. Currently there is not much interest from parents of skateboarders and it's the city's determination that if interested parties come forward then it's upon them to take the initiative to work and maintain this effort.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **Cemetery Rules:** Copies of the proposed revisions to the cemetery rules were included in the Park packets. Changes to the rules were highlighted. The Commissioner's felt they received good input from citizens regarding the decoration of their cemetery spaces and listened to their concerns regarding the current rules and regulations. The Commissioner's agree that the rules and regulations are in need of further definition. Other topics were discussed:
 - 1. Purchase storage tubs to store removed items.
 - 2. Discuss the need for more signage with clearer rules.
 - 3. Placement of a mailbox type container at the cemetery that will hold cemetery rule booklets.
 - 4. A suggestion box.
 - 5. Repair of broken headstones.
 - 6. Research cost on cremation urn columbariums.

The Commission asked staff to acquire Cemetery Rules and Regulations from other municipalities and email them one week prior to the May 12th, 2010 Parks meeting for review. Staff has been instructed by the Commission to continue to remove silk/plastic flowers from cemetery spaces and purchase tubs for item storage.

- B. **Proposed Sponsorship at Ballpark:** Clay Summers has been looking into alternative revenue sources for DARA. The Commissioner's were provided a proposed policy that addressed a series of issues allowing signs to be purchased by a sponsor for the benefit of advertising to be displayed on ballpark fences. This would require that the City's zoning ordinance would need to be revised to allow for this. This topic was tabled until May 12, 2010 Parks meeting.

NEXT MEETING:

Set for May 12, 2010.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion by Hunsaker, second by Firth to adjourn at 9:22 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa M. Grysen,
Recording Secretary