

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF RENEWING THE)	RESOLUTION NO. 15-4599
HISTORIC CEMETERIES ADVISORY)	Introduced by Chief Operating Officer Martha
COMMITTEE)	Bennett in concurrence with Council
)	President Tom Hughes
)	
)	

WHEREAS, Metro operates 14 historic cemeteries in the Portland metropolitan region, established from as early as 1837 through the early homesteading period (circa 1850-1870) (the “Historic Cemeteries”); and

WHEREAS, in 1994, Multnomah County transferred responsibility to operate the Historic Cemeteries to Metro, and later, in 1996, conveyed ownership of the Historic Cemeteries to Metro, together with a covenant to care for them in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, Metro, under the governance of the Metro Council, manages the Historic Cemeteries to provide burial and remembrance options to the citizens of the region; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Cemeteries are strongly supported by the community through various community groups, the Lone Fir Cemetery Foundation, and historic societies; and

WHEREAS, Metro retained a contractor for the Historic Cemeteries who advised Metro to create a cemetery advisory committee; and

WHEREAS, Metro Code Section 2.19.060 provides for the creation of limited duration advisory committees lasting no more than one (1) year after creation, unless renewed annually for no more than three (3) years by subsequent Council resolution or permanently codified by an ordinance of the Metro Council; and


WHEREAS, on August 9, 2012, the Metro Council adopted Resolution No. 12-4354, For the Purpose of Establishing the Historic Cemeteries Advisory Committee; and

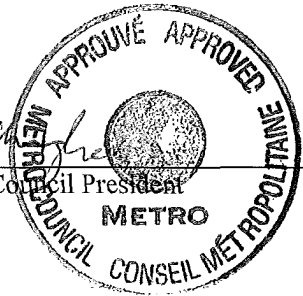
WHEREAS, the Metro Council acknowledges the important work completed by the Advisory Committee and supports the staff recommendation to extend the term of the committee for one year; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE METRO COUNCIL THAT:

1. The Metro Council hereby renews the Historic Cemeteries Advisory Committee for one year;
2. The Metro Council hereby confirms Council President’s appointment of the committee Chair and committee members, as set forth in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein. The Chair shall appoint a member of the Committee to serve as Vice-Chair; members shall be appointed to serve a one-year term; and
3. The Cemetery Advisory Committee shall comply with the requirements established in Resolution No. 12-4354.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this 15th day of January 2015


Tom Hughes, Council President



Approved as to Form:

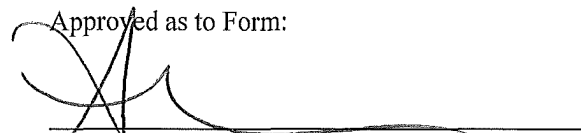

Alison R. Kean, Metro Attorney

EXHIBIT A
RESOLUTION 15-4599

The Cemetery Advisory Committee first met in December 2012 and meets quarterly to advise Metro on strategies to protect, preserve, and promote Metro's Historic Cemeteries Program. Verne Duncan, Former State of Oregon Superintendent Public Instruction shall continue to serve as Chair and appoint a member of the committee as Vice Chair.

Cemetery Advisory Committee Members:

Hannah Allan, Oregon Historical Society

Marie Henry, General Manager, Lincoln Memorial Park and Funeral Home

Terry McCall, former Chief Financial Officer, City of Gresham

Meg McCauley, Resource Development Director, Oregon Hospice Association

Bo Nevue, Principal of Nevue-Ngan Landscape Architects

David Noble, Executive Director, River View Cemetery

Laurel Smith, President, Genealogical Forum of Oregon

STAFF REPORT

IN CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 15-4599, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RENEWING THE HISTORIC CEMETERIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Date: January 15, 2015

Prepared by: Melisa J. McDonald
(503) 797-1856

BACKGROUND

In 2012, Metro Council established the Cemetery Advisory Committee under resolution 12-4354 for the purpose of promoting the Program's future, as well as addressing outreach, planning, programming, and operational challenges. The committee's formation was a direct outcome of recommendations from a cemetery business consultant plan presented to Metro Council on September 13, 2011.

Metro's Historic Cemetery Program has benefitted directly over the past year in having an Advisory Committee that has offered direct suggestions for continued improvements. By meeting periodically with committee members, each of whom holds a unique perspective, the program has been able to improve operations and engage in conversations about innovative and unique improvements to better serve our community.

ANALYSIS/INFORMATION

1. **Known Opposition**

There is no known opposition.

2. **Legal Antecedents**

Metro Code Chapter 2.19.060, governing advisory committees, limits the duration of advisory committees created by resolution to one year, subject to extension for a maximum three year term. Metro Code Chapter 2.19.030(b) requires that, except for MPAC and JPACT, members of advisory committees created by the Council must be appointed by the Council President subject to confirmation by the Council.

3. **Anticipated Effects**

It is anticipated the Committee will continue their role in providing outside perspective, industry knowledge, and governance oversight to the program. This expertise will guide the program on key issues as well as increase services to the public and adherence to excellence in industry standards. They will make recommendations for best options to enhance the properties for modern burials as well as a community gathering place for appreciation of art, culture, history, and wildlife.

4. **Budget Impacts**

Budget impact will continue to include the time for staff on research, technical support, and meeting time spent with the advisory committee.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends approval of Resolution No 15-4599.

Metro Historic Cemetery Program
Cemetery Advisory Committee
Annual Report – 2014

Who we are

The Metro Cemetery Advisory Committee was established in August 2012 to advise the Metro Chief Operating Officer and program staff on strategies to protect, preserve, and promote Metro’s Pioneer Cemeteries. The committee consists of community professionals who represent the many aspects of cemetery management, such as landscaping, finances, funeral services, genealogy, etc. (List of Members below will be added when the draft is finalized.)

Why we were created

The Portland metropolitan area houses fourteen historic pioneer cemeteries, some established as early as 1837. In 1994, Multnomah County transferred responsibility to maintain these cemeteries to Metro, and in 1996, they conveyed ownership. Under the governance of the Metro Council, Metro not only maintains the cemeteries, but also provides burial and remembrance options to regional citizens. Each cemetery presents its own logistical challenges, requiring special, individualized attention and maintenance. The Metro Cemetery Program also strongly supports and is aided by community groups such as the Lone Fir Cemetery Foundation and historical societies.

After the creation of a cemetery business operations plan in 2010, the cemetery program staff started working with consultants on cemetery operations to improve management of the cemetery program and determine investments that would generate future revenue and support. As a result of the Council and staff efforts to seek out partnerships and network opportunities, the Cemetery Advisory Committee was created.

Our overall goal as an advisory committee is to help improve and enhance the Metro Cemetery Program through strong communication between metro, the public, specifically cemetery patrons, funeral homes, arts organizations, historical resource, etc.

What We Do

The Cemetery Advisory Committee meets quarterly with Metro Staff to review the Cemeteries Program’s actions and provide advice

What We Have Done

Reclamation Project.

In 2013, the Office of Metro Attorney gave an overview of the history of resold interment rights in Metro Cemeteries. Past misunderstandings and mismanagement led to Metro selling unused gravesites that had been thought abandoned.

Metro developed a timeline to remedy the results of this action. The committee advised Metro on publicizing the timeline and plan to the public, and on locating descendants. The enacting of legislation, which allowed Metro to reclaim abandoned graves was also implemented. In 2014, the project continued. Approximately 350 letters were sent out to modern purchases whose spaces had been contested, letting them know that the reclamation process has been completed and that their burial rights are intact.

Lone Fir Re-Opening

In September 2014, Lone Fir Cemetery opened again to casket sales with approximately 2000 spaces coming back into inventory through the reclamation project. Cemetery Program staff held an open house with the Cemetery Advisory Committee members, Friends of Lone Fir representatives, and Lone Fir Foundation representatives in attendance to welcome professionals from the funeral and cemetery industry back to the site. The event was well attended and was much appreciated by the community as an opportunity to gather and celebrate the work of bringing the treasure back to availability for the area residents.

223rd Street Soil Stabilization Project.

In 2014, the Cemetery Program completed their work on the 223rd Soil Stabilization Project, reported to all the appropriate agencies, and fulfilled the consent agreement requirements with the Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board. The final work of installing native plants, shrubs, and trees will be completed by the Parks staff in February 2015. A final update will be given to the Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board at their quarterly board meeting on January 27th, 2015.

For several decades, Metro programs, including the cemeteries, have espoused extra soil at the 223rd Street site. As part of the settlement agreement with the Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board, it was agreed that a full stabilization project would allow Metro to check the area and soil for misplaced burial fragments, handle them appropriately, and level out the area. Several reports to the committee took place throughout the year, which allowed the Advisory Committee to stay up to date on the project and provide direction as needed.

In August and September 2014, many objects were found in the soil. Some of these objects appeared to be funerary, including possible bone fragments. All such objects were repatriated to Multnomah Park Cemetery, and a granite post memorial was

installed at the 223rd site (per agreement with the Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board).

To handle the vegetation, goats were used in a vegetation removal process. The goats were one of the most popular aspects of the project for the many neighbors who often stopped by to note progress at the site. The 223rd Soil Project has improved the relationship between the Interlachen community and Metro, specifically Blue Lake Park.

The Advisory Board also discussed plans for 2015, when 1300 bare root native plants, shrubs, and trees will be planted, with larger vegetation clustered in the middle of the site. The City of Fairview's grading permit also requires a natural drainage based on the grading that will carry water away from the road and levee toward the center of the property (a natural wetland). A map of the site will be presented to the Advisory Committee who will continue to help with the project.

Memorialization Task Force

The Cemetery Program in the past has had to deal with issues regarding memorialization and preservation of historic headstones. The Advisory Committee discussed the wide range of related issues and factors. The Committee then advised Metro to research how other operating pioneer cemeteries handle these issues. The Committee also discussed how involving the public through a focus group would benefit the cemetery program.

Public Input Into Policy. Metro staff, Ken Ray, provided a presentation to the Committee about the value of public engagement regarding Metro's activities and the most affective ways of engaging with the public. The Advisory Committee discussed and agreed that such engagement would be worthwhile and profitable for the Cemetery program. The Committee supported the recommendation for budget funding of no more than \$30,000 to fund public engagement.

Budget Amendment. In 2014, the Metro Council approved a \$105,000 budget amendment for FY14-15. The Funds will be used for the work of platting additional burial spaces in Multnomah Park Cemetery, as well as to continue work on resolving burial rights held in conflict with two owners that did not meet the criteria for resolution through the SB1537 process.