



CITY OF NEW BRAUNFELS, TEXAS
CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEETING



LANDA HAUS
360 AQUATIC CIRCLE

THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2025 at 4:00 PM

AGENDA

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) Discuss and consider approval of the January 23, 2025 [25-372](#) minutes of the Cemetery Committee

4. CITIZEN'S COMMUNICATIONS

This time is for citizens to address the Board on issues and items of concerns not on this agenda. There will be no Board action at this time.

5. DISCUSSION AND ACTION

- A) National Register nomination of the New Braunfels Cemetery [25-377](#)
- B) Update on Field of Graves [25-373](#)
- C) Update on Cemetery Software [25-374](#)
- D) 2025 Soul Searching Event [25-375](#)
- E) Gate at the New Braunfels Cemetery [25-376](#)

6. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

No action may be taken.

7. ADJOURNMENT

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify the above Notice of Meeting was posted on the bulletin board at the New Braunfels City Hall.

Board Liaison

NOTE: Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aids or services such as interpreters for persons who are deaf or hearing impaired, readers, or large print, are requested to contact the City Secretary's Office at (830) 221-4010 at least two (2) work days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

3/27/2025

Agenda Item No. A)

PRESENTER:

Chad Donegan, Parks Director

SUBJECT:

Discuss and consider approval of the January 23, 2025 minutes of the Cemetery Committee

DISCUSSION:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

CEMETERY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, January 23, 2024 @ 4:00 pm, Landa Haus

1. CALL TO ORDER:

4:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

X	Lynn Thompson (Chair)	X	Cynthia Foster	X	Jeff Bransford (Park Staff)
X	Dana Watson (Vice Chair)	X	Jillian Bliss	X	Samantha Morrison (Park Staff)
X	Kyle Coker	X	Chad Donegan (Park Staff)		Gene Bagwell (Cemetery Manager)
X	Connie Krause	X	Geronimo Aguirre (Park Staff)	X	Hunter Haberly (Cemetery Sexton)
X	Jan Kingsbury	X	Shari Silvio (Park Staff)		

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Approval of regular meeting minutes from Oct 23, 2024

4. CITIZEN'S COMMUNICATIONS

5. PRESENTATIONS

N/A

6. DISCUSSION AND ACTION

a. Cemetery Software

Overview of New Software Deployment

- Collaboration with the City Secretary's Office on implementing new software for record-keeping.
- The software will manage records for the city secretary and provide public access to cemetery information.

Issue with Missing Records

- Initial Problem: Discovered nearly 9,000 names missing from cemetery records, primarily from the old section.
- Current Status: Reduced the number of missing plots from 9,234 to 8,852 through efforts by Hunter, Gail Wilkinson, and team members.

Data Collection Process

- Team members use smartphones or iPads with GPS to locate specific headstones.
- Data entry includes first name, last name, date of birth, and date of death.
- Challenges due to full-time jobs limiting time available for data collection.

Proposal to Hire Temporary Staff

- Proposal: Hire a temporary individual experienced with city work at \$15 per hour.
- Estimate: Approximately 300 hours needed to complete the remaining work.
- Budget Request: Up to \$5,000 to complete the task within 7-8 weeks.
- Rationale: Without hiring, completion could take nearly a year.

Motion and Approval

- Motion: Approve funding up to \$5,000 for hiring temporary staff.
- Outcome: Motion passed unanimously.

b. Field of Graves

Overview of Excavation Phases

- Phase One: Conducted in February (almost a year ago), involved scraping to a depth of 12 inches.
- Findings: Evidence of grave shafts, prehistoric artifacts, pottery.
- Phase Two: Initiated after feedback from the Texas State Archaeology, involved deeper excavation up to 3 feet.
- Completed in November.

Discovery of Human Remains

- During Phase Two, a human skull was unearthed, leading to immediate halting of work.
- The affected area was backfilled to protect the remains.
- Interpretation suggests burials may have been conducted in continuous trenches rather than individuals.

Next Steps for Memorial Redesign

- Redesign Requirement: Must adapt the original memorial design to account for newly discovered burial areas.
- Contact the original designer to obtain a cost estimate for redesigning the memorial.
- Ensure the redesign avoids subsurface work as per Texas Historic Commission (THC) guidelines.
- Potential for using above-ground materials like limestone rocks and signage for memorialization.

Motion and Approval

- Motion: Grant permission to contact designers for a redesign of the memorial without committing funds at this stage.
- Outcome: Motion passed unanimously.

Public Relations and Donor Communication

- Strategy to transparently communicate discoveries and redesign plans to donors and the public.
- Emphasis on maintaining trust and explaining the necessity of redesign due to archaeological findings.

c. 2025 Soul Searching

This year's theme was chosen: "*When cotton was king*"

- Theme Proposal: This year's theme will be the cotton industry, incorporating historical elements like fabric and sewing demonstrations.
- Additional thoughts: Ideas were to include interactive displays and historical reenactments related to the cemetery's heritage.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

- A. Field of Graves
- B. Cemetery Software (if needed)
- C. 2025 Soul Searching
- D. Gate at the New Braunfels Cemetery

7. ADJOURNMENT

4:14pm



Cemetery Committee Agenda Item Report

550 Landa Street
New Braunfels, TX

3/27/2025

Agenda Item No. A)

PRESENTER:

Katie Totman, Historical Preservation Officer

SUBJECT:

National Register nomination of the New Braunfels Cemetery



Cemetery Committee Agenda Item Report

550 Landa Street
New Braunfels, TX

3/27/2025

Agenda Item No. B)

PRESENTER:

Chad Donegan, Director

SUBJECT:

Update on Field of Graves



Cemetery Committee Agenda Item Report

550 Landa Street
New Braunfels, TX

3/27/2025

Agenda Item No. C)

PRESENTER:

Chad Donegan, Parks Director

SUBJECT:

Update on Cemetery Software



Cemetery Committee Agenda Item Report

550 Landa Street
New Braunfels, TX

3/27/2025

Agenda Item No. D)

PRESENTER:

Chad Donegan, Director

SUBJECT:

2025 Soul Searching Event



Cemetery Committee Agenda Item Report

550 Landa Street
New Braunfels, TX

3/27/2025

Agenda Item No. E)

PRESENTER:

Chad Donegan, Director

SUBJECT:

Gate at the New Braunfels Cemetery