I. Call to Order
   The meeting was called to order at 4:04 pm by Chair Patsy Pohl.

II. Roll Call

   Commissioners Present
   Clay Sullivan
   Fay Clieett Gillham
   Gina Eben
   Brenda Butler
   Tim Bauer kemper
   Patsy Pohl

   Commissioners Absent
   Cindy Casparis

   Staff Present
   Jamie Lee Case, Director
   Jessica Ramos, Assistant Director
   Valerie Valdez, Administrative Coordinator

III. 30 Minute Citizen Comment Period: Each speaker signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will be called in the order in which they signed-up. Each speaker will be provided up to three minutes to speak. Persons wishing to participate (speak) during the Citizen Comment portion of the meeting must email jcase@sanmarcostx.gov prior to 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. A call-in number/link will be provided for participation. Written comments can also be submitted to jcase@sanmarcostx.gov for distribution to the board prior to the meeting.

   - No comments were made.

MINUTES

1. Consider approval, by motion, of the November 15, 2023, regular meeting minutes.

   A motion was made by Fay Clieett Gillham, seconded by Gina Eben, to approve the November 15, 2023, Regular Meeting minutes.

   The motion carried by the following vote:

   For: 6 - Clay Sullivan, Fay Clieett Gillham, Gina Eben, Brenda Butler, Tim Bauer kemper, Patsy Pohl

   Against: 0 -

   Absent: 1 - Cindy Casparis
ACTION

2. Consider approval of the annual renewal of the contract for Management & Operations of the San Marcos Cemetery with Gene Bagwell, DBA Maintenance Management for the term of April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025, in the amount of $172,244.11.

Gene Bagwell excused himself while the commissioners discussed the contract. Fay Cliett Gillham asked how long Gene’s company has been in business with the city. Jamie Lee Case stated Gene has been doing this a long time. This is a 5-year contract with an annual renewal. Every five years the city puts out a bid. Gene’s company is the only applicant that applied at this time. The last bid went out in 2017.

A motion was made by Clay Sullivan, seconded by Brenda Butler, to approve annual renewal of the contract for Management & Operations of the San Marcos Cemetery with Gene Bagwell, DBA Maintenance Management for the term of April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025, in the amount of $172,244.11.

The motion carried by the following vote:

For: 6 - Clay Sullivan, Fay Cliett Gillham, Gina Eben, Brenda Butler, Tim Bauerkermer, Patsy Pohl

Against: 0 -

Absent: 1 - Cindy Casparis

DISCUSSION

3. Hold discussion regarding the request to establish a Jewish area in the cemetery.

Patsy Pohl stated that her understanding from the minutes is that this item was postponed while staff waits to hear back from the requestors. Jamie Lee called on Tim Bauerkermer to see if he had any communication with the rabbi. Tim Bauerkermer stated he had not had any conversations but had conducted some of his own research. Patsy Pohl asked if the synagogue could buy land to create their own cemetery. Gene Bagwell explained there is a law in place that states a cemetery must be contiguous or adjacent to a current cemetery. Tim stated it would likely be vandalized if it were placed outside of the city limits, and it makes more sense to place their cemetery somewhere with more people watching. Brenda Butler asked where they buried their loved ones before this. She asked why they needed a separate section. She recalled having Jewish friends buried in the San Marcos cemetery without separation. Tim Bauerkermer stated there are a wide range of Jewish practices so there could be several reasons for the separation request. Gene Bagwell shared his insight on the practices that he has seen in other cemeteries. The separation can be done with fencing or vegetation. He stated that if they are orthodox and in good standing with the synagogue, then they would be buried in their own section as that is dictated by their religion. Jamie Lee stated she would try to contact Mr. Sergi. She needs information regarding the design plans if the request is approved. Patsy Pohl asked the commission if this item should be removed until a date is set by Mr. Sergi.
Bauerkemper suggested when Jamie Lee speaks to Mr. Sergi to let him know this is now a time-sensitive issue. Fay Clieit Gillham asked what the process for the formal request is. Jamie Lee explained they are currently following ordinance as a formal request. Jamie Lee stated she would ask for a better proposal from Mr. Sergi. The commissioners agreed the requestors should be available in person to answer questions. Jamie Lee stated this item will not be placed on the agenda until there is more information.

4. Receive a staff update and hold discussion regarding the results of the ground penetrating radar project.

Jamie Lee shared the information that was provided by Dr. Davio, including a map of the discovered anomalies. The Commissioners agreed the GPR project was very interesting.

5. Receive a staff update on Wreaths Across America.

Patsy Pohl requested this item be the first discussion item to accommodate the staff. Lisa Morris, Recreation Programs Manager and the Location Coordinator for Wreaths Across America, reported to the commissioners. She stated this is the third year she has led this event, and this year’s goal of 820 wreaths was met. She explained Sharon Lawrence, a volunteer, conducted research over the summer to locate all the veterans in the cemetery. Ms. Lawrence found 850 veterans. Lisa stated she is raising the goal for next year. She listed several high school clubs, Boy Scouts, Texas State University students, Kissing Tree residents, and more come to volunteer to lay the wreaths and pick them up. Patsy Pohl suggested advertising the code that is needed when paying for the wreaths. Fay Clieit Gillham stated she did not have that information and believed her donation was not counted. Lisa Morris explained that the cemetery will receive their donations; however, adding the code would count as a double donation. Gene Bagwell stated Lisa is doing a great job in growing this event. Gina Eben agreed the program is growing and noted this is the first year the Texas Confederate Cemetery signed up for Wreaths Across America. Lisa Morris explained that people can list a grave-specific site if they would like a wreath laid for a veteran and that it does not matter what military or country they served. Tim asked how Lisa decides what number of wreaths are needed for the goal. She explained she sets the goal based on the information she has on her list. Tim suggested advertising to the public that people should notify the city staff if their family member is a veteran. Valerie Valdez explained Scott McElland, the caretaker, and she have changed their sale process to include asking purchasers if they are veterans or to notify the staff at internment so that they can add those names to the list for the event.

6. Hold discussion regarding the request to film and/or hold special events in the cemetery.

Patsy Pohl requested this item be the second discussion item to accommodate the staff. Christie Murillo, Marketing and Outreach Coordinator, spoke to the commissioners regarding upcoming requests for cemetery use. She explained the city is working on putting out a streamlined process for public events request. She would like to receive feedback from the commissioners regarding their thoughts on the types of events they would approve of. Christie stated she received a request from the Hays County Historical Commission to conduct Tours of the Cemetery. She received a request from a sorority to hold a walk/run with vendors; however, the sorority selected a different location. Neither Christie nor Jamie had a film request at this time. Christie introduced Linda Coker to speak about the cemetery tours. Linda Coker, a member of the San Marcos Heritage Association and the Hays County Historical Commission, explained the tours were held in the past by the Friends of the Cemetery. She does not have information if the group is
getting back together. She stated the Hays County Historical Commission would take on the tours if the Friends of the Cemetery does not. She requested to hold the tours on the third week of October because they already have yard signs from the previous years. She stated they will select a date once a Texas State football schedule is made available so that they are not scheduled on the same day as a game. The money collected would be split 50/50 between the Heritage Association and the cemetery. A tent will be placed for ticket sales. Golf carts will be used for people who cannot walk the tour. Tours will include volunteer reenactors from Texas State University, San Marcos High School, and San Marcos Academy. Ms. Coker stated she believes other civic groups such as the Rotary Club, Lions Club, and The Daughters of the Texas Republic will help during the events. Gene Bagwell stated cemeteries in the surrounding areas host these events as well. He invited Ms. Coker to attend one or some of the meetings to get ideas for the process. Brenda Butler stated she always enjoyed the cemetery tour event. Patsy Pohl stated this item will be moved to an action item next month for the commission to vote on. Christie Murillo stated through the special event request process that the city staff would vet any request before presenting it to the board. She noted the discretion does go through the Parks Department and then anything Jamie Lee feels the board needs input on will be sent to them. Jamie Lee circled back to the filming request. She stated staff has received a few requests from Texas State film students in the past. She noted San Marcos is a film-friendly city; however, the cemetery is not listed on the location sites. Jamie Lee has not yet received a request for large commercial filming for the cemetery. Patsy Pohl stated she believes the request for filming will increase because of the filming degree offered at the university and the new filming studio in San Marcos.

REPORTS

7. Receive a staff update regarding the possibility of offering larger niche space to hold larger urns in future columbariums.

Valerie Valdez stated that she had reached out to Eickhof to find out if their company is seeing a trend for larger niche spaces. She is waiting to receive feedback from Eickhof. She stated she will forward any information received to the commissioners.

8. Receive a brief report from scheduled commissioners who checked the condition of the cemetery and update the schedule.

Gina Eben stated she saw trees that were cut down and mulch put out in the cemetery. Jamie Lee Case stated there are several Red Oaks that are dead or dying. Kelly Eby, the Urban Forrester, has plans to replant. Gina Eben asked if there is oak wilt spreading in the cemetery. Jamie Lee stated there has not been any reports of oak wilt.

9. Receive a brief staff report on the status of the cemetery expansion project.

Jamie Lee stated we are currently in the design phase. She reported that a detention pond may have to be installed and that she is waiting to find out about the placement of the Jewish section if it is approved.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

10. Commission Members may provide requests for discussion items for a future agenda in accordance with the board’s approved bylaws. No further discussion will be held related to
topics proposed until they are posted on a future agenda in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

- Recommendation Resolution
- Approval of the Cemetery Tour
- Updated walk-through schedule

IV. Question and Answer Session with Press and Public.
This is an opportunity for the Press and Public to ask questions related to items on this agenda.

- No were no questions from the Press or Public.

V. Adjournment

Gina Eben moved to adjourn at 5:21PM. Tim Bauer kemper seconded the motion.

Patrik Pone
Cemetery Commission Chair

Vanice Valdez
Staff Liaison