

Lewiston Urban Forestry and Cemetery Commission Agenda MINUTES

February 28, 2024 – 4:00PM

**LEWISTON COMMUNITY CENTER
1424 Main Street, Lewiston**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Roll Call

Introduction of guest Dennis Hastings, Vassar-Rawls Funeral Home

Commission Members: Shirley Philips, Brian Hensley, and Elizabeth Goetzinger, Maxine Miller

Council Liaison: Jessica Klein

Staff Liaison: Tim Barker

The meeting was called to order at 4:00PM

2. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

This is an opportunity for citizens to address the Commission on agenda items or other items they wish to bring to the attention of the Commission or Staff.

Comments may be made: (1) in-person, (2) by emailing the Parks and Recreation Director at tbarker@cityoflewiston.org or (3) by calling (208) 746-2313 x6102 and leaving a message.

Comments submitted by email or phone will be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission. If you would like your comment to be read aloud during the meeting, please so indicate in your message. Members of the public who wish to provide in person comment, but who are unable to secure a seat in the designated meeting space and/or overflow room(s) due to occupancy or gathering limits, will be rotated in and out of the designated meeting space in order to provide comment.

There were no citizen comments at the meeting.

3. **CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approval of Minutes from January 24, 2024 (Action Item)

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Commissioner Hensley which was seconded by Commissioner Goetzinger. All were in favor of approving the minutes as presented.

4. **REPORTS Presentations, Communications and Correspondence**

A. January Parks and Recreation Department Monthly Report

There were no commissioner comments related to the monthly report.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Normal Hill Cemetery Master Plan Review and Update Continued Discussion

a. February 5th Work Session Review and Video

The commission members were shown recorded video of the comments from the City Council Work Session meeting that were made by the Mayor and Council members at the work session presentation. This was shown prior to starting the commission's discussion on the Master plan review with guest Dennis Hastings.

b. Governance and Operation Recommendation Review

Director Barker and the commission provided guest Dennis Hastings a brief background on the master plan and the review process and thanked him for being willing to take time to meet with them to discuss his interactions and thoughts related to the operations of the cemetery. Dennis made the following comments related to his thoughts on the operations at the cemetery. He first felt that having a singular contact for their needs has been positive. Knowing that there will be a staffing change in the future, he also felt that creating a cross-over between an upcoming retirement and a new employee, having them work together to share history and to meet all of the partners, would be a really good idea so information can be passed forward. Accessibility and willing to get the work done were two traits that he feels are important in the role of managing the cemetery, prior knowledge in the field isn't always the biggest need. Most cemeteries that the funeral home works with are similarly run where there isn't a constant number of hours that their office is open for operations, so how Normal Hill is set up is more common than not. He felt that having flexibility of the working hours for the individual in the position 7 days a week would be important for them if possible. The availability of plots isn't a big issue on their end, as there is usually a way to accommodate a need. He also noted that burial options at Normal Hill Cemetery are better than other locations that they work with. Having a greater number of options for individuals from a family is appealing, to be able to use the same plot. Dennis has been aware of the previous conversations related to development or not of the south end of the cemetery and is an advocate of retention of the undeveloped property for use as cemetery development now and in the future. He stated that whether it be now or later, space will all get used. When shown the plan for development around the mausoleum, he stated that the columbarium concept will be a major money maker for the cemetery in his opinion. He lastly commented on the two scattering gardens that are in the plan. He felt that these are not common or found within our region at any other site, but with his business would be a huge money maker for the cemetery.

B. Arbor Day April 26th

a. Location at Modie Park and combined event with the Modie Park Conservancy and Lewis Clark State College

i. Update Following Modie Park Conservancy February Meeting

Director Barker updated the commission on the Arbor Day Celebration event. The Conservancy would like to host a Saturday event at the park so more community members are able to attend but we will need to check in with the Idaho Department of Lands as well as the LCSC Tree Committee

to see if a Saturday would work for them. Otherwise, the group may have to hold two separate events between that Friday and Saturday. Barker let the commission know that he will provide them with updates as it gets closer to the end of April. The commission agreed that they would make themselves available for a Saturday celebration in coordination with the Modie Park Conservancy on Saturday, April 27th.

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

A. Current and Upcoming Development Review

a. Development Review Committee Items from the past month

The group discussed the Bryden Canyon Golf Course cart barn and how the renting of cart stalls provides revenues as does selling niches in a columbarium. No other projects were discussed.

7. **COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Philips noted tree topping that has occurred within her neighborhood and has also seen synthetic turf being installed as opposed to leaving the turf area as natural grass. There are concerns with the creation of heat islands due to this practice. Commissioner Miller mentioned that until we have solid code that can hold tree topping accountable, it is difficult for us to educate and hold the public accountable.

8. **CITY COUNCIL LIAISON COMMENTS**

Councilmember Klein commented that she enjoyed the February 5th presentation from staff and the Commission Chair when they attended to provide an update on the master plan review process.

9. **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

A. UFCC March 27, 2024 @4PM at the Lewiston Community Center

- i. Scattering Garden examples
- ii. Fee Recommendations for FY '25 to include inflation

10. **FUTURE AGENDA TOPIC**

- A. 2025 Fiscal Year Fee Recommendations
- B. Tree Selection Guide
- C. Restoration of damaged headstones
- D. Urban Forestry Management Plan Review
- E. UFCC Presence at Community Events to Promote Urban Forestry

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Goetzinger seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:04PM.