

Lewiston Urban Forestry and Cemetery Commission Minutes

September 27, 2023 – 2:00PM

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Roll Call

Present: Shirley Philips, Maxine Miller, Elizabeth Goetzinger and City Council Liaison John Spickelmire

Absent: None

City Staff in Attendance: Tim Barker, Parks and Recreation Director

Called to order at 2:00pm

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 citizens in attendance at the meeting.

3. **CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approval of Minutes from May 24, 2023 (Action Item)

A motion was made to approve the minutes by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Goetzinger. All approved the motion.

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

A. May, June, July and August Parks and Recreation Department Monthly Reports

Director Barker noted that there was a lot to review prior to the meeting since the group had not met since May. Commissioner Goetzinger asked about the Senior Nutrition Program that the city offers and what that program was in relation to Meals on Wheels.

B. Discussion regarding the meeting with Matt Perkins of the Idaho Department of Lands
Director Barker opened the discussion with comments on the informal visit that occurred with Mr. Perkins and the services that he could provide back to help the commission

move forward with some of our ongoing guides and policies. Barker opened up the discussion to the commissioners that were in attendance to make additional comments. Chair Phillips stated that it was a great opportunity for the commission to hear what he can offer to assist the department. Barker added that he could assist with some of the larger items that the commission has been trying to accomplish. Councilor Spickelmire asked about timelines for submitting grants and when those occur. Staff will track and plan to submit for urban forestry grants in the future. Spickelmire also mentioned that he wanted to follow up on an invite for Mr. Perkins to speak to the City Council. Barker will flow up with the request to have Matt speak on heat islands and storm water at an upcoming meeting.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**
ACTION ITEMS

A. Plot Maximum Cremated Remains

Director Barker noted that in review of Master Plan recommendations from LEES + Associates and in looking towards ways to increase inventory and revenues at the cemetery, city staff would like the commission to consider supporting an increase of cremated remains with full body plots. Currently you are allowed to have up to 4 cremated remains per full body plot. Staff would like to increase that number to 6. The commission discussed the advantages for infill options and potential concerns regarding headstones or number of markers that would be allowed. The commission provided consensus for staff to amend the policy to allow for up to 6 cremations on a full body burial plot.

B. Dogs in the Cemetery

Director Barker reminded the commission that there is current signage that states that dogs are not allowed within the cemetery. There is no reference within code that outlaws pets of any kind to be in the cemetery. As the commission continues to promote the cemetery as a “park” setting, staff would like to continue to have signage at the cemetery related to dogs, but to note that they must be on a leash, stay on pathways and pick up after your animal. The commission discussed the proposal and felt that changing the signage and adding dog bag stands would be a good change moving forward. The commission provided consensus for staff to amend the policy to create signage that allows for dogs in the cemetery and only on leash and to pick up after them.

C. Perpetual Care Fund Update

In the Commission packet, the latest presented update regarding the Perpetual Care Fund was included. The fund had recorded losses during the 2022 fiscal year but is beginning to recover back to 2020 and 2021 levels. The city is also researching and looking at ways to increase revenues, the fund and reduce the burden on property taxes to operate the cemetery and to incorporate those changes into the annual budget process.

D. Trees Are Good

This agenda item is being moved to a future meeting for discussion and combined with the UFCC Presence at Community Events to Promote Urban Forestry topic. Chair Phillips mentioned the resources that she had come across at the Moscow Farmer’s Market recently that spurred on a discussion about utilizing the information to help promote forestry in the community

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Current and Upcoming Development Review Process and Plan
The most current month of development items were provided within the meeting packet for review. The commission discussed the Port of Lewiston mixed use park and dock plan that is currently going through the review process. Barker discussed the details of the plan to give the commission a better understanding of the proposal. Barker also added that there will be a new Nissan dealership going into north Lewiston and its plan will be under review soon.
- B. Cemetery Columbarium Project
Director Barker noted that due to inflations in pricing, the project will need to go out through a formal bid process this fall.
- C. Cemetery Pricing Approved by City Council for Fiscal Year 2024
Director Barker reviewed the price increases that were occurring for opening and closing through Wilbert's. Staff are currently looking at putting this service out for contract or managing it in house. This research will be shared with the commission once all of the research has been completed. This information is expected to be available at one of the winter meetings.

7. **COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Goetzinger recommended that the group consider paying for a booth at the fair to help promote urban forestry. The commission also felt that recruiting for the open commissioner positions needs to occur more. The city could consider using a QR Code for commission position descriptions on the website. The Master Plan notes that there should be a position filled with someone that has business management and finance focus for one member. Another idea is that someone from LCSC or their Tree Committee fills the other vacancy.

8. **CITY COUNCIL LIAISON COMMENTS**

Councilor Spickelmire asked that Matt Perkins be added to either the November or December City Council Work Session.

9. **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

- A. Monday, October 2nd @3PM City Council Work Session, Normal Hill Cemetery
Presentation on Operations and Finances
Director Barker noted that the Mayor will be presenting his thoughts regarding the operations and finances of the cemetery and will also be providing his recommendations related to the undeveloped property at the site.
- B. UFCC Wednesday, October 25th @4PM at the Lewiston Community Center

10. **FUTURE AGENDA TOPIC**

- A. Tree Selection Guide
- B. Urban Forestry Management Plan Review
- C. UFCC Presence at Community Events to Promote Urban Forestry

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Goetzinger seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:19pm.