

Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries

Minutes

October 23, 2020



BUSINESS MEETING: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The meeting site is accessible to people with disabilities. Special accommodations for the meeting – including translation services – may be made by calling (503) 986-0690 at least 72 hours prior to the start of the meeting.

Location: Conference call

OCHC Business Meeting

1. Welcome and Introductions – 1:00
 - a. Commissioners – Bev Power, Milo Reed, Charlotte Lehan, Sarah Silbernagel, Shawn Steinmetz
 - b. Staff – Kuri Gill
 - c. Public – Steve Sprenger, Mark Petrie, James Boehme, Diane Elder
2. Approval Minutes (July) 1:05
 - a. Moved by Lehan, Approved
3. Public Comment – Mark Petrie – former commissioner, attending to see how people are doing. He is glad Shawn has joined. 1:10
4. Commissioner appointments update 1:25
 - a. Shawn Steinmetz – Appointed to fill the position open two years of someone with a Tribal perspective. Not a formal representative of the Tribes. He is an archaeologist who works for Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.
 - b. Recruitment is still open for the coastal and central Oregon areas, some interest, but no submissions.
5. Acknowledging unmarked graves document 1:30
 - a. Complete and posted online
6. Confederate Flags in Historic Cemeteries position paper 1:35
 - a. Present the language – Kuri Gill presented a summary of the updates.
 - b. Commission discussion – Corrections offered for clarity and references. Commissioners all made comments in support of the position. Lehan brought up concerns about push-back from the public. Other commissioners pointed out that this is a position of the commission and not a legal mandate. Thanks to Silbernagel for drafting the document.
 - c. Commission vote – moved by Reed, seconded by Steinmetz. Approval unanimously.
7. Fire response & OPRD update 2:50
 - a. Fire response – summary of cultural resources work, sharing of resources and the guidance document.
 - i. Planning a workshop related to response and disaster preparedness.
 - b. OPRD -staffing reductions remain, we are hoping for the grant to be the full amount next year.
 - i. The change of historic cemetery designation to 75 years or older will go through the OPRD process as a legislative concept.
8. Cemetery Stories Discussion & Workplan 3:10
 - a. Update from each commissioner on their work on this project
 - i. Lehan – Hasn't done anything on this. Committed to two articles.
 - ii. Reed – OPRD has made an agreement with Multnomah County to develop stories. They have had layoffs, once things settle he will get going on it. He is now project manager for Our Story.

- iii. Silbernagel – She hasn't put together her story, but will do it now that the position paper is done.
 - iv. Power – Will work on a mausoleum story.
 - v. New ideas – Steinmetz noted that work with remote sensing for detecting burials could be good. This could be based on past work for OPRD.
- 9. SOLVE outreach 3:20
 - a. Shifted to a winter presentation due to fires.
- 10. Invasive Species/Native Planting discussions 3:30
 - a. Sarah is collecting resources for this issue.
 - b. Shawn – counties offer resources for each county, Union County reimburses for weed control.
 - c. Charlotte – One issue that may come up is the conflict that heritage plants can be invasive species. How do you deal with this issue? Problem plants that are native like Poison Oak, can also be an issue.
- 11. Commissioner action reports and issues for the commission 3:50
 - a. Lehan – Working on the Boon headstone project. Invited to the cemetery at McLaren School to discuss their efforts. Pleasant View Cemetery has discovered there may be a possible Chinese Cemetery on the adjoining property. They are working through possible property line changes with the owners of that neighboring property. They are running out of space for burials. Having discussion about raising the price of plots. Looking at purchasing back unused graves. Did an interview with KGW.
 - b. Reed – Not too much at this time. He will reach out to METRO on their process to see if he can offer resources for their grant project.
 - c. Silbernagel – Worked on the position paper. Looked into invasive species resources and will continue. Maybe can work with Shawn on GPR.
 - d. Steinmetz – Joined the commission! GPR survey, they get calls from people regularly. Important to think about why you are doing it (potential burial locations, irrigation, roads, etc.). Also try to point them into low cost ways to do it. AOA is trying to put on a workshop about remote sensing, look for that in the future.
 - e. Power – Will try to reach out to Dunkard and other impacted by the fires.
- 12. Items for future meetings
 - a. July meeting & event planning – requested commissioners start thinking about this now for the next meeting
- 13. Upcoming Meetings & Workshops
 - February 5 – 1:00 – 4:00 teleconference
 - April 23, 2021 – teleconference, Summit also online
 - June 11, 2021 – grant approval
 - July 15, 2021 – afternoon meeting, evening event
- 14. Final Comments –
 - a. Steve Springer (public) – Experience GPR scan for historic cemetery. It was interesting to see the preliminary results, Silverton had a GPR firm come from the east coast, and they were pleased with it. Thanks to Charlotte for conversation about grave witching. Tried to contact the forensic dog company, but haven't heard from them. Trying to find lost people in the cemetery. GPR data was the firm. Charlotte mentioned google earth before as a good tool for satellite photos as good. Steve did have a drone view of the cemetery – for locations. Fly through, with quads and stills.
 - b. Diane Elder (public) – They had a fire nearby the cemetery, but no damage. The more remote burials may have been impacted. They had a good experience with GPR at the Paisley Cemetery.

XIII. Meeting Adjourned – 2:51