

DIVISION OF CEMETERIES

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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CEMETERY BOARD

WALTER T. MOSLEY
SECRETARY OF STATE
CHAIR

LETITIA JAMES
ATTORNEY GENERAL

JAMES V. McDONALD, M.D., M.P.H.
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH

DRAFT

Cemetery Board Minutes November 12, 2024

Department of State
One Commerce Plaza, 99 Washington Avenue, 11th Floor, Room 1112
Albany, New York 12231

Office of the Attorney General
44 South Broadway
White Plains, NY 10601

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mark Pattison, Department of State, Chair

Jill Faber, Office of the New York State Attorney General

Thomas Fuller, Department of Health

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Emmanuel Blugh, Division of Cemeteries

Lisa Dooley, Division of Cemeteries

Sarah Levin, Division of Cemeteries

Kerry McGovern, Division of Cemeteries

Michael Morris, Department of State

Natesha Salmon, Division of Cemeteries

Steven Troutman, Division of Cemeteries

Alicia Young, Division of Cemeteries

Michael Catena, Division of Cemeteries

Brendan Dunn, Division of Cemeteries

Nathan McCarthy, Division of Cemeteries

Corey Moore, Division of Cemeteries

Lewis Polishook, Division of Cemeteries

Michael Seelman, Division of Cemeteries

Robert Vanderbles, Department of State

GUESTS:

Michael Austin, Elmlawn Cemetery

Richard Bethel, Wellwood & Beth Moses, Counsel

Brendan Boyle, Featherstonhaugh, Wiley & Clyne, LLP, & NYSAC

Adam Ginsberg, Cedar Grove Cem.

Justin Locke, Pinelawn Cem.

Kevin Persico, Wellwood & Beth Moses

Eric Barna, Green-Wood Cemetery

Anthony Biolsi, New Montefiore Cem.

David Fleming Jr., FCM, LLP, & NYSAC

Matthew Ivler, Mount Lebanon Cem.

Richard Moylan, Green-Wood Cem.

Some "guests" attended solely via Webex phone call-in; their names may not be listed above.

Opening Remarks

Chairman Mark Pattison called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. Mr. Pattison introduced himself and had the other Board members introduce themselves.

24-11-A-64 – Minutes of Previous Meetings

Counsel to the Board, Robert Vanderbles, proposed an amendment to the minutes of the October 15,



Department
of State

2024, meeting concerning the exempt session held. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the amendment. Another motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted amending the minutes of the October 15 meeting as amended.

Counsel to the Board, Robert Vanderbles, proposed an edit to the minutes to clarify that

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the amended minutes of the October 15 meeting.

24-11-B-65 – Legislation and Regulation

1. Pending Legislation

Robert Vanderbles stated that there is no legislative report this month as the legislature is out of session.

2. Regulations

Robert Vanderbles indicated that there is no regulation updates this month.

24-11-C-66 – Division Report

Director Lewis Polishook reported that we have filled one accountant and one investigator position in Syracuse, with both new hires starting in November 2024. The Division has re-posted one Investigator position in Binghamton. Alicia Young is scheduled to move from the Assistant Director position to a Senior Accountant position with the Division on November 21, 2024. Kerry Forezzi is scheduled to move from the Associate Accountant position to the Assistant Director position with the Division on November 21, 2024. An Associate Accountant position will be vacant as of November 21, 2024.

Director Polishook referred the Board to the abandonment report that was previously circulated and posted.

Director Polishook invited board and staff members to our annual Division meeting on December 10 after the next scheduled Board meeting.

24-11-D-67 – Vandalism, Abandonment and Monument Repair or Removal Fund Report

Assistant Director Alicia Young reported that we have allocated 100% of our available vandalism funds but will continue to approve restoration applications and make payments, as the payments are not expected to be paid until work is completed on each project.

Assistant Director Young reported that we have received 43% of our annual reports online this year and over 66% of our annual reports in total that are due.

There is one application for funds from the vandalism fund to be reviewed at this meeting.

33-005 Beechwood Cemetery (Oneida), \$57,315.19

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 45 dangerous monuments. After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the application by this cemetery for funds to repair these dangerous monuments for a total cost of \$57,315.19, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 6:53-9:23.

24-11-E-68 – 52-044 Pinelawn - Lease

Pinelawn Memorial Park seeks approval of a long-term lease of just over 100 acres to a developer and approval of a major renovation for construction by the developer of a light industrial park on the site.

This application was also reviewed during our April 2023 and May 2024 meetings.

After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted adopting a resolution drafted by the Division and Counsel commenting on the Town of Babylon’s Draft Environmental Impact Statement as part of SEQRA review.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 9:27-23:42.

24-11-F-69 – 52-059 Wellwood – 52-005 Beth Moses – Merger

Director Lewis Polishook recused himself from this agenda item.

These cemeteries seek approval for a merger. The proposed new cemetery organization would be called “Wellwood – Beth Moses Cemetery Corporation.” The cemeteries already share identical boards of trustees and are located adjacent to one another. The merger will not cause any hardship to either cemetery organization or the surrounding community. The merger would allow for a simplification of cemetery operations.

Richard Betheil, counsel to both Beth Moses and Wellwood addressed the board. Mr. Betheil noted a date adjustment to one of the proposed documents and the planned retirement of one of the board members who has served on the Wellwood and Beth Moses boards of trustees in the near future.

After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the drafted resolution approving this merger.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 23:46-31:18.

Public Comment

David Fleming informed the Cemetery Board that NYSAC will begin lobbying to increase funds available to the Division vandalism fund from \$2 million to \$2.5 million. Mr. Fleming personally thanked Assistant Director Young for her exceptional service in her role.

The next Cemetery Board meeting is scheduled for December 10, 2024, at 10:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.