

# DIVISION OF CEMETERIES

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GOVERNOR

CEMETERY BOARD

WALTER T. MOSLEY  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
CHAIR

LETITIA JAMES  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

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

## Cemetery Board Minutes September 19, 2025

Department of State  
One Commerce Plaza, 99 Washington Avenue, 11<sup>th</sup> 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  
Stephanie Shulman, Department of Health

Jill Faber, Office of the New York Attorney General

### OTHER ATTENDEES:

Cavon Butler, Division of Cemeteries  
Charles Crane, Division of Cemeteries  
Jeff Hardwick, Division of Cemeteries  
Nathan McCarthy, Division of Cemeteries  
Lewis Polishook, Division of Cemeteries  
Natesha Salmon, Division of Cemeteries  
Steven Troutman, Division of Cemeteries

Michael Catena, Division of Cemeteries  
Brendan Dunn, Division of Cemeteries  
Sarah Levin, Division of Cemeteries  
Michael Morris, Department of State  
Jessica Rosario, Division of Cemeteries  
Michael Seelman, Division of Cemeteries  
Robert Vanderbles, Department of State

### GUESTS:

Adam Ginsberg, Cedar Grove Cmty.  
Anthony Biolsi, Montefiore Cems.  
Douglas Wasiura, Mount Calvary Cmty.  
Katie Kramer, Mt. Calvary Cmty.  
Richard J. Moylan, Green-Wood Cmty

Andrew Krawczyk  
David F. Fleming, FCM, NYSAC  
Justin Locke, Pinelawn Mem. Pk.  
Marc Gronich  
Sahgara Orr

### Opening Remarks

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



Department  
of State

## **25-09-A-74 – Minutes of Previous Meetings**

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the minutes of the August 15, 2025, meeting as submitted to the Board.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the minutes of the August 26, 2025, meeting as submitted to the Board.

## **25-09-B-75 – Legislation and Regulation**

### 1. Pending Legislation

Board counsel Robert Vanderbles relayed there was no Legislative Report this month.

### 2. Regulations

Mr. Vanderbles reported no further update beyond last month's update.

## **25-09-C-76 – Division Report**

Division Director Lewis Polishook updated the Board on recruitment within the Division. Alicia Young has accepted the position of Assistant Director. We are in the process of hiring for an Investigator, two Senior Accountant, and one Associate Accountant position, and another Associate Accountant position is vacant.

Mr. Polishook highlighted upcoming community outreach programs. We have two upcoming Cemetery 101 courses and will be rolling out additional courses beginning in the upcoming months, including a course aimed to educate the public on cemetery operations; Assistant Deputy Secretary Michael Morris provided additional details on the public-facing program.

Mr. Polishook reported on the number of annual reports received to date and the percentage submitted electronically.

## **25-09-D-77 – Vandalism, Abandonment and Monument Repair or Removal Fund Report**

Director Polishook referred the board to the circulated Vandalism Report.

There are five applications for funds from the vandalism fund to be reviewed at this meeting.

Yorkshire, No. 05-048 (Cattaraugus), \$24,366.15

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 24 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 \$24,366.15, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 8:09-10:28.

Mount Calvary, No. 15-066 (Erie), \$16,287.66

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 19 dangerous monuments. Mount Calvary has taken and accepted a quote for use of the Monugrid foundation system for this repair.

After extended discussion of the use of Monugrid, 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 \$16,287.66, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 10:29-29:29.

Pompey Hill, No. 34-041 (Onondaga), \$119,196.24

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 70 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 \$119,196.24, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 29:30-33:02.

Howard, No. 51-031 (Steuben), \$48,840.39

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 28 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 \$48,840.39, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 35:02-38:32.

Greenmount, No. 58-007 (Washington), \$80,158.14

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 59 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 \$80,158.14, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 38:33-41:08.

**25-09-E-78 – Mount Calvary, No. 15-066: Columbarium and PM Loan**

Mount Calvary Cemetery seeks approval of the installation of a columbarium, to be funded by a PM loan.

After discussion, two separate motions were made, seconded, and unanimously adopted:

1. Approving the columbarium application as submitted in a cost not to exceed \$2.2 Million, subject to Supreme Court approval of the association's petition for approval of a PM loan and all required local permits; and
2. Recommending that Supreme Court, Erie County, approve the requested loan, in the amount and on the terms described in the accompanying draft petition.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 41:20-48:33.

**25-08-F-79 – Wiltwyck Rural, No. 56-037: Major Alteration and PM Loan**

Wiltwyck Rural Cemetery seeks approval of a major alteration project, consisting of roof repairs, to be funded by a loan against the cemetery's permanent maintenance (PM) fund. After Division review, the Division determined that this project is a repair, not a major alteration, not requiring approval of an application, and therefore made no recommendation to the Board concerning the major alteration application.

After discussion of the proposed PM loan proposal, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted recommending that Supreme Court approve Wiltwyck Rural's application for a PM Loan, in the amount and on the terms proposed in the draft petition submitted to the Board.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 48:34-52:08.

### **25-08-G-80 – Sheridan Park Crematory, No. 15-078: Request for Additional Report**

Mr. Vanderbles addressed an additional item. Given recent changes to New York State law concerning grandfathered standalone crematories subject to a consent order from the Department of Environmental Conservation, Mr. Vanderbles recommended that Sheridan Park Crematory be required to submit a report demonstrating their compliance with the law as amended, including its relationship with Amigone Funeral Home.

After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted directing the Division to request the filing of such a report.

The discussion of this can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 52:10-55:28.

### **Public Comment**

Sahgara Orr addressed questions about Oakwood Cemetery in Syracuse. She is concerned with recent vandalism and potential security issues at the cemetery. Mr. Polishook explained that only cemeteries could apply for vandalism funds and that if she had an issue with the cemetery itself, she could submit a complaint to the Division.

Marc Gronich addressed the board regarding vandalism at several religious cemeteries in Schenectady County. Mr. Polishook stated that he had visited these cemeteries and seen the damage, and that all of the damage appeared to be in synagogue-owned cemeteries, which the Division did not regulate. Mr. Polishook also stated that he had been in touch with the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York concerning this matter.

The next regular Cemetery Board meeting is scheduled for October 16, 2025, at 12:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.