

# 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

**DRAFT**

## Cemetery Board Minutes May 12, 2026

**Crowne Plaza Albany  
660 Albany Shaker Road  
Albany, New York 12211**

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

### BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Morris, Department of State, Chair                      Stephanie Gilman, Department of Health  
Jill F. Faber, Office of the New York State Attorney General

### OTHER ATTENDEES:

Zakir Ahmed, Division of Cemeteries	Lisa Dooley, Division of Cemeteries
Brendan Dunn, Division of Cemeteries	Jeff Hardwick, Division of Cemeteries
Nathan McCarthy, Division of Cemeteries	Sarah Levin, Division of Cemeteries
Lewis Polishook, Division of Cemeteries	Jessica Rosario, Division of Cemeteries
Natesha Salmon, Division of Cemeteries	Michael Seelman, Division of Cemeteries
Steven Troutman, Division of Cemeteries	Robert Vanderbles, Department of State
Alicia Young, Division of Cemeteries	

### GUESTS:

Adam Romagnola, White Haven Mem. Pk.	Bill Lane, Greenwood Union Cmty.
Bill Reilley, St. Raymond's Cmty.	Brendan Boyle, FWC, NYSAC
Brennan Ryan, Ryan Agency, Inc.	Cathy Vail, Holy Sepulchre Cmty.
Charles Orlando, White Haven Mem. Pk.	Chris Converse, Forest Lawn Cmty.
David F. Fleming, Featherstonhaugh & McCardle, NYSAC	Douglas Wasiura, Mount Calvary Cmty.
Frederick Zindell, Renewed Roots	Gino Merendino, Merendino Cemetery Care
Jamie Lotz, Forest Lawn Cmty.	John F. Kennedy, Catholic Cmty's of Long Island
Judie Lynn Nassar McAvinney, WH Mem. Pk.	Katerina Kopanygin, Global Bronze
Katie Kramer, Mount Calvary Cmty.	Leo Kellogg, East Nassau Rural Cmty.
Margie Ferraraccio, Holy Sep. Cmty.	Mark Farrell, Oakwood Cmty.
Megan Hahin, Mount Calvary Cmty.	Michelle Menter, Greensprings Natural Cmty.
Nate Romagnola, White Haven Mem. Pk.	Pam Marziani, Global Bronze
Patrick Smeretsky, Creter Vault Corp.	Richard Bie, Cath. Cmty.'s of Long Island
Richard Freiman, Richard Freiman + Associates, PLLC	Rob Baker, Matthews Cmty.
Sara Durkacs, The Green-Wood Cmty.	Stephanie Slawatycki, Mount Calvary Cmty.
Stuart Irwin, Biopdan North America	Mark Pattison



**Department  
of State**

## **Opening Remarks**

Chairman Michael Morris called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Chairman Morris introduced himself and the other board members. Chairman Morris thanked previous Board Chair Mark Pattison, who was in attendance, for his service on the Board. Chairman Morris asked that Division staff that were in attendance introduce themselves as well for the benefit of NYSAC conference attendees.

Chairman Morris noted the special setting of this month's meeting and thanked NYSAC for its continued cooperation and partnership. Chairman Morris also highlighted Division outreach throughout the year, particularly Caring for Your Cemetery Day.

## **26-05-A-27 – Minutes of Previous Meetings**

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the minutes of the Board's April 14, 2026, meeting, as submitted to the Board.

## **26-05-B-28 – Legislation and Regulation**

### 1. Pending Legislation

Division Counsel Robert Vanderbles referred the Board to the published Legislative Report.

### 2. Regulations

Mr. Vanderbles reported on draft rule revisions currently in process.

## **26-05-C-29 – Division Report**

Assistant Director Alicia Young thanked Mark Pattison, the previous Board Chair, for his years of service on the Board. Assistant Director Young updated the Board on recruitment within the Division. We currently have one auditor and one investigator position that we are recruiting for.

Assistant Director Young highlighted community outreach programs. This year's Caring for Your Cemetery Day was well received and well attended. We are holding "Everything You are Dying to Know About Cemeteries" classes targeted toward the public in the upcoming months. We are holding Cemetery 101 courses across the State. There are many scheduled dates and locations across the next several months, which can be found at [dos.ny.gov/cemeteries](https://dos.ny.gov/cemeteries).

Assistant Director Young reported on annual report statistics. Cemeteries have filed 1,172 reports have been filed for 2025, approximately 49% of which were completed online. Assistant Director Young also highlighted a new feature of the Division's website, allowing appointments with Division staff to be scheduled online.

## **26-05-D-30 – Vandalism, Abandonment and Monument Repair or Removal Fund Report**

Assistant Director Young referred the Board to the previously-circulated Vandalism Report.

There are six applications for funds from the vandalism fund before the Board at this meeting.

Forest Lawn Cemetery Group (Clarence Fillmore), No. 15-027 (Erie), \$26,258.09

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 20 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 \$26,258.09, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 11:32-13:51.

Forest Lawn Cemetery Group (Griffins Mills), No. 15-027 (Erie), \$21,619.25

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 18 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 \$21,619.25, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 13:52-15:52.

Newport Cemetery, No. 22-025 (Herkimer), \$117,843.14

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 95 dangerous monuments. After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the application by this cemetery for funds to repair this dangerous monument for a total cost of \$117,843.14, subject to availability of funds. Investigator Michael Seelman explained the reason for the large number of monuments being approved at once.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 15:53-22:01.

Poland Cemetery, No. 22-031 (Herkimer), \$50,124.04

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 40 dangerous monuments. After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the application by this cemetery for funds to repair this dangerous monument for a total cost of \$50,124.04, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 22:02-24:08.

Evergreen Cemetery, No. 23-012 (Jefferson), \$33,403.82

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 36 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 \$33,403.82, subject to availability of funds. Investigator Seelman stressed the importance of posting legal notices regarding these application that are in compliance.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 24:09-28:15.

North Gage Cemetery, No. 33-039 (Oneida), \$87,023.18

This cemetery seeks funds to repair 63 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 \$87,023.18, subject to availability of funds.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 28:16-30:04.

### **26-05-E-31 – Forest Lawn Cemetery Group, No. 15-027: Amendment to Land Sale Approval**

The cemetery seeks to amend the Board's previous approval of a land sale to decrease the amount the cemetery needs to deposit into its permanent maintenance fund to cover necessary expenses.

After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted:

1. Finding that this land sale application, as amended, involves an unlisted action under SEQRA;
2. Finding that the sale of the land will have no or minimal environmental impact;
3. Issuing a negative declaration; and
4. Authorizing Board Chairman Michael Morris to sign the draft Short EAF Part 3 accompanying the Division's recommendation to the Board.

After the Board adopted that motion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted amending the Board's November 13, 2025, approval of the sale to allow the Cemetery to deposit the sale proceeds, net of \$55,578.85 in necessary expenses, into its permanent maintenance fund.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 30:05-34:58.

### **26-05-F-32 – Mount Calvary Cemetery, No. 15-066: Amendment to Columbarium Approval and PM Loan**

The cemetery seeks to amend the Board's previous approval of a columbarium application and recommendation for approval of a permanent maintenance fund loan to delay the cemetery's first repayment to January 15, 2027.

After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted amending its September 19, 2025, approval of the columbarium and recommendation of approval of the PM loan, to recommend Supreme Court approval of a modification of its previous Order to allow the Cemetery to begin repayment on January 15, 2027.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 34:59-37:53.

### **26-05-G-33 – Oakwood Cemetery, No. 28-024: PM Loan Modification**

The cemetery seeks to amend a previously approved PM Loan application to provide for a fixed repayment schedule of \$1,106 per month.

After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted recommending Supreme Court approval of the modified terms of the existing PM Loan, on the terms described in the accompanying draft petition and order.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 37:54-42:00.

### **26-05-H-34 – Greensprings Cemetery, No. 55-034: Major Alteration**

The cemetery seeks to add a toilet on cemetery grounds.

After discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously adopted approving the project at a cost not to exceed \$8,545.20.

The discussion of this application can be found in the video recording of this meeting at 42:01-46:45.

## **Public Comment**

David Fleming, representing the NYS Association of Cemeteries, thanked previous Board Chair Mark Pattison for his service on the Board.

An in-person attendee asked for clarification on the definition of what is considered a "hazardous monument" by the Division. Investigator Seelman responded, explaining that monuments that have already fallen are not generally considered hazardous.

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. at the One Commerce Plaza, in Albany.

The meeting adjourned at 1:52 p.m.