

A workshop meeting of the City Commission was held on February 18, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. in the Commission Chamber at the Municipal Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Eugene Fultz.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Michael S. Carter; Betty Wojcik; Christopher Lutton; Jonathan Thornhill; Eugene Fultz, Mayor

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Kenneth Fields, City Manager; Clara VanBlargan, City Clerk; Jennifer Nanek, Deputy City Clerk; Albert C. Galloway, Jr., City Attorney

[Full staff memos are incorporated into the minutes. Meetings are recorded, but not transcribed verbatim.]

Agenda Item 2. Proposed Preliminary Plans for the New Cemetery

[Begin agenda memo]

SYNOPSIS

The City Commission will review and provide comments for the proposed design for the new Lake Wales Cemetery and the construction of the first five acres of the new cemetery.

RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation is for the City Commission direct staff to continue moving forward with the design process taking into consideration any comments from the commission.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on June 18, 2013, the City Commission directed staff to begin the design and engineering phase for the new cemetery.

The City of Lake Wales proposes to construct a new cemetery located at Hunt Brothers Road and Lake Bella Road. The City owns approximately fifty (50) acres of land, north of Hunt Brothers Road, in the vicinity of the Southside Elevated Storage Tank. This land is referred to as "The Billy Allen Groves." The land was purchased in January 2007; additionally the City may set aside up to 5% (2.5 acres) of the property for the location of a water tower. The land is currently under a three (3) year renewable lease (starting in 2012) and is being used for citrus production.

The Willow Lawn Cemetery, approximately ten (10) acres, is at capacity and the Lake Wales Cemetery, approximately twenty eight (28) acres, contains approximately eleven thousand five hundred sixty one (11,561) burial sites and a Mausoleum. This cemetery was recently re-platted to allow for an additional three hundred eleven (311) burial lots.

The City previously developed a conceptual design with the assistance of AMEC Environmental and Infrastructure to convert 20 acres of "The Billy Allen Groves" between Hunt Brothers Road and Ray Martin Road and east of Lake Bella Road into a new cemetery.

The City has asked Metzger & Willard, Inc., who is currently under contract with the City for engineering services, to propose services for the final development of the conceptual and final engineering and design of the cemetery and assist with bidding, permitting and construction services. The understanding is that the City plans to construct the cemetery in four (4) phases of five (5) acres each.

FISCAL IMPACT

Debt issuance funds this project.

OTHER OPTIONS

The City Commission has directed staff to move forward with this project.

[End agenda memo]

Teresa Allen, Public Services Administrator, introduced a representative from Metzger-Willard to review the plans for the new cemetery and answer any questions.

Loren Jones, Senior Project Manager, at Metzger-Willard presented and reviewed the draft plan. The design allows for the 20-acre cemetery to be designed in 5-acre phases. He explained that a retention pond is necessary because of various contaminations from runoff. A landscape artist, Dave Connor, has created visualizations of what the cemetery and the plantings will look like. Commissioner Carter asked about the retention pond, if it is on the left side. Mr. Jones explained there will be five retention ponds, one for each section along the left.

Commissioner Lutton asked if the phases will be overlaid or if pipes will be between them. Mr. Jones responded that the first five acres will be graded and they will discharge off the back side into a common area. It won't collect at the bottom.

Commissioner Wojcik asked what the difference is between detention and retention. Mr. Jones explained that detention is to discharge the water off-site while retention is to keep the water on-site to treat it. Commissioner Wojcik asked how it was treated. Mr. Jones explained that it slows down the flow and dilutes it. These will be mostly dry ponds. Commissioner Carter expressed concern for the rare occasion where the ponds may over flow due to heavy rain. Mr. Jones said it would not go into the road but into the swell on Hunt Brothers Road. Commissioner Carter suggested using this water for irrigation. Mr. Jones said reclaimed water would be used for irrigation, as there is a reclaimed water line there.

Commissioner Lutton asked what the blue and green squares are. Mr. Jones said the blue squares are child lots, green squares are cremation lots. Commissioner Lutton asked if there are mausoleums. Mr. Jones responded no. Commissioner Wojcik asked about the scattering garden. Mr. Jones said that was for ashes to be scattered without having a specific location. Commissioner Lutton asked if it will all be graded flat and the ridge taken out. Mr. Jones confirmed it will.

Commissioner Thornhill asked if family plots would be available. Ms. Allen explained that families can buy a group of adult plots. If a child passes they can be buried at the foot of an adult grave, the ashes can be buried with an adult or they go into a separate section.

Commissioner Lutton asked about the circles. Mr. Jones said they could be used for landscaping or additional lots. Commissioner Carter asked who can purchase the lots. Ms. Allen said current lots are for residents or those coming back. Commissioner Lutton asked if non-residents can get a space. Ms. Allen explained that the rates will be higher than residents. Because we are trying to be self-sufficient all rates will be higher, but those haven't been established. Possible guidelines will be set in the future as to who can purchase lots. Policies will be established before lots are available for sale. Commissioner Carter suggested caution as we do not wish to run out. Ms. Allen said that with 11,000 lots it was highly unlikely we will run out for many years.

Commissioner Lutton asked about the landscaping. Mr. Jones said viburnums would border the area. Commissioner Thornhill asked about the crape myrtles, that they may not bloom enough. Ms. Allen explained that they would provide color year round. Pictures of the viburnum and crape myrtles were shared with the commission. Commissioner Lutton suggested against live oaks. Commissioner Lutton

asked about vertical headstones. Kenneth Fields, City Manager, recommended against vertical headstones as flat ones are easier and cheaper to maintain.

Commissioner Lutton recommended improving appearance of the entrance. Mr. Fields said they are open to ideas. The possibility of wall or fencing was discussed. Commissioner Lutton recommended wing walls for the front and wrought-iron fencing, and then hedges. Commissioner Carter asked about parking. Mr. Jones showed where cars can pull off. Commissioner Wojcik suggested flowers. Commissioner Carter asked if the maintenance facility was large enough and Mr. Jones said yes.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Mayor/Deputy Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk