

# North Carolina Cemetery Commission

## Quarterly Meeting Minutes

### January 15, 2025

The North Carolina Cemetery Commission held a quarterly meeting on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, hosted at the Hilton in North Hills, Raleigh.

President William “Bill” Gaffney and the following Commissioners were present: Mr. Brian Hill, Mr. Bobby Townsend, Ms. Sharon Weaver, Ms. Bonita Caldwell, Mr. David Simmons, Mrs. Linda Cotten-Dodson, and Mr. Gantt Stephens, Director of Operations, were also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am. President Gaffney called for a moment of silence.

The first item of the meeting was the agenda approval. Ms. Cotten-Dodson moved to approve the agenda as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Caldwell. All voted in favor of accepting the agenda as written.

The second item of the meeting was the minutes approval. Ms. Cotton-Dodson moved to approve the agenda as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hill. All voted in favor of accepting the agenda as written.

#### **I. Conflict of Interest:**

President Gaffney declared that, in accordance with the State Government Ethics Act 138A 15E, it is the duty of every Commission member to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts regarding the matters being brought before them and to refrain from any undue participation in the matters involved.

Mr. Gaffney and Mr. Simmons declared a conflict of interest on agenda item 4 B.

- II. **Operations Report** - Mr. Stephens began by reviewing the financials and asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none. The operations report was provided to the Commissioners. No questions were received.

- III. **Requests from the Public to Address the Commission** - President Gaffney invited any member of the public wishing to address the Commission to come forward. Mr. Dorian Woolaston, newly appointed Special Deputy Attorney General, was in attendance for his first meeting. Mr. Woolaston introduced himself and provided his contact information for the Commissioners.

#### **IV. New Business-**

- a. **Change of control** – Polk Memorial Gardens to Pinnacle Corp – Mr. Gaffney directed the Commissioners to their packets of information containing the change of control application for Polk Memorial Gardens to Pinnacle of NC, LLC. Mr. Brian Metcalf and Ms. Stefani Midkiff were in attendance to represent the buyer and seller. Mr. Gaffney invited the Commissioners to review the materials and discuss with the representatives. No questions were received by the Commissioners. A motion was made by Ms. Caldwell to approve the change of control for Polk Memorial Gardens to Pinnacle Funeral Management d/b/a

Pinnacle of NC, LLC. The motion was seconded by Mr. Townsend and passed unanimously.

- b. Change of trustee requests– Multiple requests for change of trustee were received from Crown Memorial Park, Fayetteville Memorial Cemetery, Sunset Gardens of Henderson, Granville Memorial Gardens, Lincoln Memorial Gardens, Caldwell Memorial Gardens, Woodlawn Memorial Gardens of Hickory, Carteret Memorial Gardens, Highland Biblical Gardens of Raeford, Hills of the Neuse and Roselawn cemeteries. Each of these changes requests to change from the current trustee from to Pinehurst Funds.

Mr. Simmons and Mr. Gaffney recused themselves from voting on the agenda item. The gavel was passed to Ms. Cotten-Dodson to preside.

A motion was made by Ms. Caldwell to approve the change of trustee pending further discussion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Townsend and the floor was open for discussion. During discussion, concerns were raised that the events that precipitated the cemeteries' desire to change trustees have changed. Before entertaining the change of trustee request, the commissioners wanted assurance that each cemetery was basing their change of trustee requests on current information. When called for vote, all opposed. The motion did not pass. Requests for trustee change for the cemeteries above were denied. The Commissioners instructed the office staff to reach out to each cemetery to ensure they understand they are welcome to resubmit a change of trustee request to be heard at the next meeting.

## II. Old Business

- a. **LandQuest Legacy Receivership** – Mr. Stephens provided an update regarding the receivership at Landquest Legacy. The receiver, Mr. Mason, is in place at the cemetery and in the process of bringing all customer orders current and addressing immediate grounds concerns. Significant progress has been made with ordering a portion of the estimated 400+ delinquent merchandise orders. Complaints continue to dwindle as these issues are addressed. Mr. Mason provided details of his progress with each property to the Commissioners via email.
- b. **Shepherd Memorial Park Receivership** – The court determined that Shepherd Memorial Park will be placed for auction with a reserve price of 1.1 million within 60 days. The receiver, Mr. McDowell continues to do a good job and has brought the cemetery back in good standing with its community.

## III. Reminder of next meeting date

Mr. Gaffney reminded all in attendance that the next scheduled quarterly meeting will take place on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at the Hilton in North Hills, Raleigh.

## IV. Adjournment

Ms. Cotten-Dodson moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Caldwell. The meeting was adjourned.