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By City Clerks Office at 8:46 am, Jul 23, 2026



CITY OF MELROSE

WYOMING CEMETERY

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Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

February 26, 2026, 8:35 A.M.

Melrose City Hall, Cassidy Conference Room, 562 Main Street, Melrose, MA 02176

Attendance:

Chairman, Daniel O'Neill (DO)

Commission Member, Susan Cann (SC)

Co-Chair, Eileen Hamblin (EH)

Cemetery Administrator, Denise Slane (DS)

DPW Director, Elena Proakis-Ellis (EPE)

Planning Department, Jane Pitts (JP)

Mayor, Jennifer Grigoraitis

Mayor's Office, Thomas Dalton

Call to Order

DO called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Review of Minutes

Meeting minutes from January 15, 2026, were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by EH and seconded by SC. Minutes accepted.

Financial Report

The financial report for January 2026, as prepared by DS was reviewed. A motion to accept the reports was made by EH and seconded by SC. Reports accepted.

Public Comment

A motion to open the meeting for public comment was made by SC and seconded by EH. All in favor. Floor opened at 8:36.

Resident Gene Yee introduced himself and explained his role as the overseer and caretaker of the Pingree Tomb. He explained that he will have some projects coming up for the tomb.

Resident Paul Cusolito introduced himself. It was explained that Paul is being presented to the City Council for the vacating position on the Cemetery Commission.

A motion to close the meeting for public comment was made by EH and seconded by SC. All in favor. Floor closed at 8:37.

New Business

Discussion and Vote on Veteran graves and requirements

The commission reviewed the spreadsheet showing the data of what other municipal cemeteries in the area are doing for Veteran burials. It was discussed that they would like more time to review.

Motion:	SC made a motion to table the vote so that further discussion can be had.
Second:	EH second the motion
Further Discussion:	None
Vote:	Tabled

Old Business

Update on Cemetery Equipment

DS gave an update from the cemetery foreman explaining that the backhoe is still not fixed and that the rental backhoe is having some issues. DO asked EPE for an update the backhoe and truck. EPE explained that the truck is up for replacement this year and the backhoe is planned for next fiscal year. DO requested that DPW include the cemetery foreman in the design of the specs for the equipment needed since he is the most knowledgeable of operation for a cemetery environment. He stated that in the past the foreman was not included and there were issues with not being able to operate the equipment ordered in the cemetery due to space constraints. EPE stated that they have had conversation with the foremen and he will be involved in the specifications needed. DO stated that the cemetery needs a V-plow for snow cleanup, as a V-plow can fit better down the narrow roadways and corners and asked that this item be considered when ordering new equipment for the cemetery.

Discussion and Vote on Sale of Lot

DO explained since there was no second to the motion put forth at the last meeting, that the motion is void. DO also stated that he verified with the city solicitor that the commission cannot offer a former member advanced right to graves as it could be considered bias. DO stated that the motion is void.

Discussion and Vote on Veterans Flag Policy

SC read the current policy on the placement of flags and the newly proposed policy. It was stated that the policy change will be submitted to the Veterans Advisory Board and Veterans Services for review and once they have had a chance to review the cemetery commission will bring the changes back to be voted on. EH stated that she is not in favor of leaving the flags up all year as she is concerned with the cemetery staff having to pick up flags that become damaged or fall over.

Future Cemetery Expansion

DO requested that when planning for future expansion the commission and DPW involve the cemetery foreman since he is the most knowledgeable of the grounds. He stated that two areas

have already been drawn out for expansion, Larch Ave. and Vinca Ave. have wider roadways and can hold double-depth graves. DO also stated that the commission should keep their eye on the Ripley School as a big piece of the land the school sits on is owned by the cemetery. SC said there is a planning committee that is looking into what type of business the Ripley School would be good for. She stated that if the city decides to keep the land and has another use for it, that there would need to be a land swap so that the cemetery continues to have room for expansion or if the decision is made to sell the land that the cemetery would need to be compensated for the land loss. SC stated this is early in the process and the commission will make sure to stay informed. EPE stated there is a grass area to the right of the school and that the commission should keep their eye on what use this will be for as it too could affect the cemetery.

Items not reasonably anticipated by Chairman at time of posting

~Veteran Items

Veteran Memorial - DO reminded the commission about a project for a Veterans brick walkway around the flag retirement firepit and asked that they keep in touch with the Veterans Advisory Board on this item.

Veteran Stone Cleaning – DO recommended recognizing a local resident that has working to document and clean all Veteran stones and markers. DO stated that cleaning these types of headstones and markers require proper cleaning and special solutions as to not damage the stone.

~ADA Compliance

DO asked if there were any future plans for ADA compliance for the cemetery based on a past study done by the city. EPE explained that with the paving projects roadways were widened and as faucets are replaced/repared they are measured to comply with ADA standards. DO asked if the walkway in the Evergreen section could be repaired this summer to meet the ADA requirements as it was earmarked as a priority. EPE will investigate this item for compliance. DO stated that a call box for the office is still an idea for access to the staff in the office building. SC suggested that perhaps the one in front of the Police station could be moved to the cemetery once the Police station is relocated. It was discussed that the commission keep looking into this. DS stated that when a box like this was investigated in the past that the department was told special wiring would be needed and that would need to be kept in mind when budgeting if we were able to do this. DO asked EPE if the cemetery office building is a historical building, it was stated that they were sure and that maybe the historical commission can help with this.

~Tree Work

EH asked EPE if DPW has an arborist on staff. EPE stated that they do have an arborist on staff and that he has been meeting with the cemetery foreman about trees in the cemetery. It was stated that once the weather allows, they can develop a plan for tree work in the cemetery.

Cemetery Digitalization Project

JP presented a power point presentation of the overall scope of work for digitalization that was completed. She presented the new database that is being built and the new mapping that has been completed so far. It was discussed that moving forward we will begin working on setting up access of burial locations on the website for residents. Updates will be given at future meetings. Everyone thanked all those involved in the project.

Retirement of Commission Member

Mayor Grigoraitis presented Cemetery Chair Dan O'Neill with a citation and thanked him for his 12-years of commitment to the cemetery commission.

DO made a motion to adjourn, SC second the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 a.m.