

Clayton County Pioneer Cemetery Commission
Meeting: April 27, 2024

The meeting was called to order shortly after 9:00 a.m. at the Elkader Genealogy office.

Attending the meeting were all the commission members: Chairperson Lee Embretson and members Sue Meyer, David Beck, Ellen Collins and Bruce Collins.

The agenda for this meeting was reviewed and a motion was made by Sue Meyer to accept the agenda as presented, seconded by David Beck and the motion passed.

The minutes for the prior meeting on April 13, 2024, which were sent to all members prior to the meeting, were briefly discussed. There being no additions or corrections, a motion was made by David Beck to accept the minutes as presented. That motion was seconded by Sue Meyer and passed unanimously.

Bruce Collins then presented the **treasurer's report**. On the county funds, since our last meeting, there was one disbursement for \$47.80 leaving a remaining balance of \$1,134.79. For the commission's account at Freedom Bank there was no activity since our last meeting, the balance remains \$1,470.64. A motion was made by Ellen Collins to accept the treasurer's report as presented, seconded by Sue Meyer and passed unanimously.

Old and Continuing Business

Barnum-King Cemetery

The primary topic of discussion for this meeting was to sort and prioritize how we proceed with restoring the Barnum-King Cemetery.

One of the topics discussed was the name Barnum-King. **In recent years this site was known as the King Cemetery. Why the name King was used is**

subject to speculation. When the initial work was done on “rediscovering” this burial site— Lawrence Fox found a gravestone inscribed with the name Vinton O. King, son of Mason and Phebe, who was buried here in 1856. Maybe that is why the King name was given to this site?

Today it was the consensus of our commission members to name (or rename) this cemetery site-- Barnum Cemetery. The Barnums were primarily responsible for making this space a cemetery. Recent research has revealed that one acre was reserved as a cemetery in 1863 when Elihu and Elouisa Barnum sold the surrounding field to a new owner. The Barnums had a son, Blakeslee, buried here in 1852. There was also another Barnum, Russell Barnum, age 54, buried here in 1859.

Chairperson Lee Embretson said that he had a discussion with Trace Bolsinger from Hertz Management, the person and the company that manages the farm land for the landowners Burt and Joyce Coulter on which the cemetery site is located. Lee said that Trace is concerned that the area that the commission designates as the cemetery memorial site be fenced. Trace has a certain type of fencing in mind that he may be able to obtain for that purpose.

The discussion turned to how much space should we ask the landowners to have for a cemetery memorial site. Various sizes and shapes were discussed. Lee showed a map of a space prepared by Sarah Gunderson from Monumental Restoration of the space she determined most of the burials were, which was a space 95' x 88'. **Bruce Collins made a motion to allocate this space (95'x 88') for CCPCC memorial space for the Barnum Cemetery. Sue Meyer seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.**

For reference purposes, the designated space noted above (95'x 88') is 8,760 sq ft., while an acre consists of 43,560 sq ft. This means the CCPCC is using 20% of the area that was originally designated for a cemetery.

Next there was a discussion of what type of ground cover there should be in the memorial space. The general consensus was some type of low

maintenance perennial grass type of product. Since Lee Embretson is very knowledgeable in plants and botany related science, **Bruce Collins made a motion that the area be planted with the type of seed Lee Embretson deemed appropriate. Sue Meyer seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.**

Lee Embretson said he would ask Bruce Glawe to do the work involved in planting this cemetery space since he has the ability to do this work.

The subject turned next to keeping the Barnum Cemetery, a cemetery, going forward when the land is no longer owned by the Coulters. This is a concern to the Coulters per their land manager, Tracy Bolsinger. Chairperson Lee Embretson said that he would talk with Trace about this and we would postpone any decision making on this for now.

We do know there have been relatively recently state laws enacted protecting cemeteries, and we know there are legal ways of tagging land records noting the cemetery designation. Some of us said that if we were the landowner wanting to protect the cemetery from destruction going forward after title passed to another owner, we would consult/hire an attorney familiar with such matters to do this legal work.

In addition, there was a brief discussion related to placing gravestones in the cemetery and having them set, as much as possible, as they originally were, as oppose to placing the gravestones on their side in a slanted cement holder.

Also it was mentioned to maybe have a Barnum cemetery sign made from fabricated metal similar to the pioneer cemetery signs made a number of years ago.

Other Issues

Bruce Collins presented a bill for \$99.91 from Bruce and Ellen Collins reimbursing them for paint purchased for the Meenan sign and for payment made to Charles Jaster for his work installing signs. Sue Meyer made a

motion to approve this bill, David Beck seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Since our commission met twice during this month of April, no plans were made at this time for a May meeting.

At 10:05 a.m. a motion to adjourn was made by David Beck, seconded by Bruce Collins and passed unanimously.

Bruce Collins Secretary/Treasurer