



Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries

Defined in ORS 97.778, the Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries (OCHC) is a group of leaders from across the state that works collaboratively to coordinate restoration, renovation, or maintenance of the state's historic cemeteries and to recommend projects and funding that help maintain and improve such historic cemeteries.

Commission Members:

Chair Sarah Baylinson, Vice Chair Lisa Sears, Peggy Drake, Johnny Edwards, Milo Reed, Sarah Silbernagel, Shawn Steinmentz.

February 2, 2024 at 1:00 pm PST

Virtually held via Zoom

Webinar ID: 820 7672 3899

Members Present: Chair Sarah Baylinson, Vice Chair Lisa Sears, Peggy Drake, Johnny Edwards, Milo Reed, Sarah Silbernagel, Shawn Steinmentz.

Staff Present: Kuri Gill, Oregon Heritage Grants & Outreach Coordinator; Mary Newcomb, Oregon Heritage Administrative Assistant, Koren Tippett, Special Projects Archaeologist

Guests: Those who attended part or all of the meeting included Cricket Soules, Diane Elder, Elizabeth Rapp, Randy Reese, Sherrill Beck, Sura Rubenstein, Trish Neal, Chad Dresselhaus, Shannon Blas-Blair

Meeting Notes

Meeting brought to order at 1:01pm by Chair Baylinson.

1. Commission Business

- a. Welcome and Introductions Information
 - i. The Commission welcomed Mary Newcomb, Heritage Division's new staff assistant. She will assist the Coordinator and Commission with administrative matters henceforth.
- b. Review of February 2, 2024 Agenda Action
 - i. Commissioner Edwards moved to approve the February 2, 2024 agenda as presented.
 - ii. Commissioner Steinmetz seconded the motion.
 - iii. Motion carried with a vote of 7 for, 0 opposed.
- c. Review of October 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes Action
 - i. Commissioner Sears moved to approve the October 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented.
 - ii. Commissioner Edwards seconded the motion.
 - iii. Motion carried with a vote of 7 for, 0 opposed.
- d. Review of October 20, 2023 Joint Meeting Minutes Action

- i. Commissioner Silbernagel moved to approve the Joint October 20, 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented.
- ii. Commissioner Sears seconded the motion.
- iii. Motion carried with a vote of 7 for, 0 opposed.

2. Public Comment

Information

- a. This is the time for the public to address the Commission. Speaking time is limited to 3 minutes. Chair Baylinson called for public comment.
 - i. Cricket Soules, a cemetery employee, made an inquiry about holding smaller, informational meetings. Kuri Gill advised about the history of Commissioners holding smaller meetings with mixed success, and suggested Commissioners consider pairing with local organizations as able.
 - ii. Diane Elder, a previous OCHC Commissioner, stopped in to say hello.

3. OPRD & Heritage Update

Information

- a. Commission Coordinator, Kuri Gill, provided updates to the Commission about Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation (OPRD) and Heritage Division business.
 - i. The Oregon Heritage Conference is coming April 17-20 to Forest Grove, Oregon. Some highlights include a Cemetery cleaning and restoration workshop, Heritage Excellence Awards and Banquet, _____. More conference information and registration will be released soon.
 - ii. The Division is pleased to have onboarded three new employees: Mary Newcomb, Val Ballestrem and Dylan Tsolakos. Compliance Bureau Program Analyst, MaryBeth Grover, has retired after 10 years of service in that position. Two OPRD staff members are on rotation to assist with project review and processes. The Division has lost Jason Allen, Shane James, and Jamie (?) and wish them well in their new positions.
 - iii. A bill has been created to establish a commission for the state's 250th birthday.
 - iv. There are several bills related to housing that will be watched closely for matters relating to historic sites.

4. Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board

Information

- a. Chad Dresselhaus, Executive Director of the Mortuary and Cemetery Board (OMCB) has attended to inform the Commission of the Board's history, functions, and current events.
 - i. The mission of the Board is to protect public health, safety and welfare by fairly and efficiently performing its licensing, inspection and enforcement duties; by promoting professional behavior and standards in all facets of the Oregon death care industry; and, by maintaining constructive relationships with licensees, those they serve and others with an interest in the Board's activities.
 - ii.

5. Project Updates

Information

- a. Cemetery Stories – Themes between now and the next meeting. Archives Month, Historic Cemeteries Month, Native American Heritage Month, Martin Luther King Jr Day, Black History Month, Japanese American Day of Remembrance,
- b. Heritage Bulletin Updates
- c. Commissioner Reed:
 - i. The Sun Music Company is a local amplifier company that has been revived.
 - ii. Black History Month – using newly available archives and reviewing black history.
- d. Commissioner Edwards:
 - i. In Yamhill County, there are a few Chinese burials from late 1800's to early 1900's. His history review has been thin and is wondering about resources available.
 - 1. Discuss was had about different organization to possibly involve including Chinese Benevolence Society, which has previously met with the Commission and may be a great resource,
 - 2.

6. Cemetery Records Project

Information

- a. Cemetery Records Position Paper Update by Commissioner Silbernagel and Vice Chair Sears
 - i. The document has been drafted and sent to the Commission for review. Discussion was had about the intent and purpose of the Position Paper, the scope and depth, especially when it comes to digitization processes, recommendations for finding organization to partner with, and with whom to share the resource with.
- b. Blog to bring up the issue and promote the updated position.
 - i. This item will be discussed at the completion of the Position Paper.
- c. Bulletin Discussion
 - i. The intent of the Bulletin would be to go above and beyond the minimum recommendations of the Position paper, such as digitization and records management.
- d. The next step for this project is for Commissioners to send their edits to Kuri Gill. A final draft will be compiled for Commission review.

A member of the public has reached out about a project to use GIS to map individual plots within historic and pioneer cemeteries. They are coordinating with the Department of Administrative Services, and Kuri Gill has

7. Upcoming Cemetery Resources

Information

- a. SOLVE Cemetery Clean Up
 - i. Historic Cemetery Clean up days sponsored by SOLVE will begin again. Individuals can register with SOLVE and will receive assistance with outreach, volunteer management, equipment, and insurance coverage for the event. A free

online workshop will also be taking place and will be included in the Heritage Bulletin. Another workshop may be held in March.

- b. Blog to bring up the issue and promote the updated position
- c. Bulletin discussion
- d. Historic Cemeteries Grant will open Sunday, 2/4/2024.
- e. The Oregon Historic Vitality Survey has been opened and the response deadline has been extended. The Vitality Report has been very informative in the past, and the hope is to get enough responses to continue to identify community needs and resource allocation.

8. Items for Future Meetings Information

- a. A call for location and topic ideas from the board from Chair Sarah Baylinson.
- b. Kuri suggested a talk by Mildred Knipe Park GPR project.
- c. Chair Sarah Baylinson suggested the artist that created the memorial at the Oregon State Hospital. Discussion was had about the complexities of the piece as it pertains to the use of human remains.
- d. Project update from last year's grantees, including the Roseburg area for October meeting.

9. Reports: Commissioner Actions and Issues Information

- a. No updates.

10. Commission Planning Calendar Information

- a. April 17, 2024 – 9:30 am – 12:30 pm Forest Grove
- b. May 20, 2024 – 1:00- 2:00 pm, online, grant approval online
- c. July 18-19, 2024 – TBA (Roseburg Area)
 - i. Chair requested Vice run meeting due to expected absence.
- d. October 24-25, 2024 – TBA
- e. February 7, 2024 - Online

Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.