

The Cemetery Commission met in the Mount Vernon City Hall Conference Room on Tuesday, August 12, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. Commissioners present were: Mary Evans, Eric Siggins, Ruth Horton, Mike Woods and Machele Pelkey.

Teresa Cox attended as a guest.

Minutes of the July 8, 2025 meeting were approved.

The following topics were discussed:

Maintenance of cemetery records and documents - Mary reported that Joe Jennison has completed the documents project. City staff are using the digitized inventory and the data will be added to the Cemetery Commission's laptop.

Restoration and preservation of cemetery monuments - The Commission had favorable comments regarding the John Heider educational session and hands-on workshop. It's hoped that John will be available to conduct another session in the Spring of 2026.

Mary outlined the following process for coordinating trained volunteers in monument restoration:

- 1) The commission will identify which stones may be restored.
- 2) Volunteers will choose which stones they would like to work on. All volunteers must work in a team of at least 2 (no one may work alone). Untrained volunteers must work with a trained volunteer.
- 3) Each team will communicate with Mary regarding the date and time they expect to be working in the cemetery.
- 4) Mary will unlock the cemetery building that contains supplies so team(s) will have access to necessary tools. Team(s) will be responsible for locking up the building when they've finished their work.

Restoration efforts won't begin until cooler weather in September. Mary will email all volunteers to inform them of the process.

Maintenance of cemetery grounds - The commission agreed that the mowing/trimming of the cemetery is going well. Machele voiced her disappointment with the amount of regrowth that has occurred with the shrubs that had been cut back this Spring. Mike commented that he had received a complaint from a Mount Vernon alum regarding how 'weedy' the grass in the cemetery is. The commission discussed whether shrub/tree trimming and removal, grass maintenance, including application of herbicide and fertilizer, as well as other grounds maintenance needs, might be items to add to the mowing contract.

Mary will walk the cemetery with Ted Seiter on Friday morning at 7 a.m. to identify shrubs/trees that can be trimmed as part of an Eagle Scout project for Kate O'Connor. Kate had originally been scheduled to clear a fence line but because of overgrowth and the presence of poison ivy, a safer project has been decided upon.

Promoting and publicizing the cemetery - The commission voiced appreciation for the coverage of John Heider's workshops that Nathan Countryman provided in The Sun.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Machele Pelkey