



CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
Joseph E. Johnston III Council Chambers
201 Howell Avenue, Brooksville, FL 34601

Agenda

January 21, 2026

5:30 pm

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
 - August 27, 2025
 - November 19, 2025
- 5. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**
 1. Wreaths Across America Recap- Mission Barbeque
 2. Re-Appointment to Cemetery Advisory Board - Joseph Merritt
 3. Cemetery Supervisor Jason Raley Work Status
- 6. CITIZEN INPUT**
- 7. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**
- 8. NEXT MEETING**
 - April 15, 2026
- 9. ADJOURNMENT**

Please be advised that two or more City Council Members may attend and participate in this meeting. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with disabilities needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should

contact the City's ADA Coordinator no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting at (352) 540-3810. Meeting agendas and supporting documentation are available from the City Clerk's office and online on the City's website. Any person desiring to appeal any decision with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, may need a record of the proceedings including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based, and therefore must make arrangements for a court reporter to ensure that a verbatim record of the Please be advised that two or more City Council Members may attend and participate in this meeting. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons with disabilities needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the City's ADA Coordinator no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting at (352) 540-3810. Meeting agendas and supporting documentation are available from the City Clerk's office and online on the City's website. Any person desiring to appeal any decision with respect to any matter considered at this meeting, may need a record of the proceedings including the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based, and therefore must make arrangements for a court reporter to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made.



CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
Joseph E. Johnston III Council Chambers
201 Howell Avenue, Brooksville, FL 34601
Minutes

August 27, 2025

5:30 pm

Attending:

Present:

Joseph Merritt, Chair

Christopher Rhodes, Vice Chair

Sally Sperling

Ross L. Lamoreaux

Doug Chorvat

Absent:

Betty Erhard

Jan Knowles

Also Attending:

Jason Raley, Cemetery

Supervisor Linda Hauck,

Recording Clerk

1. CALL TO ORDER –

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE –

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

5.I MERRIT MONUMENT PROPOSAL

Cemetery Supervisor Raley addressed the proposal by stating the plans for the Monument project was approved.

He also stated he would be meeting with City Manager, Lisa Hendrickson and Parks and Recreation Director Jared Marsden to go over the particulars.

Chair Merritt questioned if the proposal still needed to go before City Council and Cemetery Supervisor Raley's response was no.

Chair Merritt was pleased with the outcome and stated would work out the details.

5.II GARDEN OWNERSHIP

Cemetery Supervisor Raley explained at the last Cemetery Board meeting the main concern of the citizen was that we were charging for plots purchased in the area of the cemetery known as the "Garden Section".

The citizen was under the impression that originally it was the intention of his relative when donating the land to the cemetery that those intended to use it would never have to pay fees.

It was at this time Cemetery Supervisor Raley had advised the citizen that research needed to be done and would revisit the issue at the next board meeting.

Cemetery Supervisor Raley was able to find in City of Brooksville records, the minutes from a City Council meeting held in 1972 having a discussion back and forth regarding the exact same topic in question.

He then proceeded to read out loud the last sentence of the paragraph "after further discussion motions made by City Counselor Nunn and seconded by City Counselor Varn on July 5th 1972 to continue under the present policy for burials in the approximately 2 ½ acre tract and to continue maintaining the area using any lots in the new section of the Cemetery to charge the same as present rate schedule motioned here."

Cemetery Supervisor felt as far as the pricing goes, the information provided should explain the reasoning to the citizen as to why we are charging fees.

He also advised he would reach out to the citizen to advise him of his findings since since he was not present at the meeting.

5.III CEMTERY CLEAN-UP/DECORATIONS

Cemetery Supervisor Raley emphasized the focus for the cemetery clean-up is for current decorations that are presently there and in preparation of Wreaths Across America upcoming event in December.

He mentioned signs have been posted on both gate entrances and Cemetery Staff as well as Parks and Recreation staff will begin moving unsightly and unauthorized decorations on November 1st as specified on the signs and no volunteers will be involved in this project.

Cemetery Supervisor Raley pointed out that moving forward, the Rules and Regulations of the Cemetery need to be enforced more stringently since presently we do have instances whereas the decorations are in direct violation of the rules and are now interfering with the daily maintenance of the Cemetery.

Chair Merritt spoke of the importance of having a cemetery being properly maintained and gave an example of another cemetery which he had business, and they did not have a caretaker or rules enforced and they had to hand dig graves because equipment was not able to get around in the cemetery.

Cemetery Supervisor Raley also mentioned another concern which was regarding possibly not having the help of the inmates and especially during the rainy season. They assist with the trimming and weeding which plays a big part in keeping the cemetery looking uniformed and manicured.

5.IV WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA UPDATE

Cemetery Supervisor Raley advised we've already begun preparing for this meaningful project.

We have recently met with one of our main supporters Pickett's Ace Hardware who be rounding up the change at their registers and setting up tables at there location for two weekends for donations and raffles on November 21, 22 and December 6th.

The cutoff date to send monies collected and advisement of wreaths to be purchased is December 1, 2025.

All the monetary donations will be deposited in a bank account specifically opened for Wreaths Across America through the City of Brooksville so a check can be issued and sent directly to them.

We are looking forward to this upcoming event which will be held on December 13, 2025 at 2 pm.

5.V INTERESTING HAPPENINGS/VAULT CAVE IN-(C-BLOCK)

Cemetery Supervisor Raley described this incident as interesting because originally it was thought that possibly when the Cemetery Technician was mowing and the back wheel went into the ground including the driver, was due to a covered over septic tank or well that had caved in.

It was later discovered after digging as far down as possible and then carefully using a backhoe about a foot and a half down, were veteran markers for a husband and wife.

The next plan of action was to raise it back up level to the ground and put the markers back.

We will then begin trying to research the individuals so we may have a record of it in our books.

This was a perfect example of showing how much the ground settles over time.

Thankfully no one was injured during this entire ordeal.

Chair Merritt then referred to a situation he had while setting a flat marker advising that while digging 8 or 10 inches down he also came across markers.

Supervisor Raley commented that you never know what you may find when digging and that we do have many artifacts at the cemetery office displayed for all to view.

6. CITIZEN INPUT

No citizens were present at the meeting.

7. BOARD COMMENTS

Chair Merritt welcomed back Board Member Rhodes and advised him of his new title now as Vice Chair mentioning the vote took place in his absence.

Chair Merritt also complimented Cemetery Supervisor Raley for the great job he's doing and how lucky we are to have him back working at the cemetery.

8. NEXT MEETING-

November 19, 2025

9. ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the board- meeting adjourned at 5:54 pm.

ATTEST:

Joseph Merritt, Chairperson

Linda Hauck, Recording Clerk



CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
Joseph E. Johnston III Council Chambers
201 Howell Avenue, Brooksville, FL 34601
Minutes

November 19, 2025

5:30 pm

Attending:

Present:

Joseph Merritt, Chair

Christopher Rhodes, Vice Chair

Jan Knowles

Ross L. Lamoreaux

Absent:

Doug Chorvat

Sally Sperling

Council Liaison– Betty Erhard

Also Attending:

City Manager- Lisa Hendrickson

Parks & Recreation Director- Jared Marsden

Grants Administrator- George Popovich

Jason Raley- Cemetery Supervisor

Valerie Bryan -Recording Clerk

CALL TO ORDER –

The meeting was called to order at 5:31pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE –

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes for August 27, 2025 could not be approved at this time due to an attendance error. Resubmission will be made on January 21, 2026.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

CEMETERY CLEAN-UP/DECORATIONS

Cemetery Supervisor Raley updated the Board that there were positive results and zero complaints about the removal of decorations from the public.

He explained to the Board that only the items 100% against the Cemetery Rules and Regulations were removed. Those guidelines would also be followed if Volunteers were participating as well.

This year the clean-up was done in house but Cemetery Supervisor Raley plans to make it a volunteer event in the future twice a year.

He advised four yards of decorations were removed with the help of Inmate Supervisor Mobley's crew and the Cemetery Staff.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

Cemetery Supervisor Raley informed the Board we are at 69% with 587 wreaths purchased and a goal of 850 wreaths.

He further mentioned although we are behind from reaching our goal, Nationally we have surpassed other organizations by double at this time. Cemetery Supervisor Raley asked the Board to pass on the information discussed to others for support.

He also made mention the Proclamation for Wreaths Across America will be read at the City Council Meeting on December 1, 2025.

He advised the deadline was December 1 2025 to submit payment to Wreaths Across America, but recommended donors use the QR code on the flyer or go on the website.

Vice Chair Rhodes asked if when using the QR code if funds go to the City of Brooksville Cemetery.

Cemetery Supervisor Raley replied yes and that alternately by going on Wreaths Across America website and selecting City of Brooksville was another option.

Cemetery Supervisor Raley advised the event was on December 13, 2025 at 2pm and we invited David Smith, owner of Central Florida Beef to speak.

He is a Green Beret Silver Star recipient.

Cemetery Supervisor Raley was hopeful that after the Christmas Parade, earlier that day, people would come straight to the event and help with the placing of the wreaths. Chair Merritt expressed concern about the number of volunteers and Cemetery Supervisor Raley explained we have the Hernando County Tax Appraisers employees and the Springstead High School Junior ROTC attending.

Board Member Lamoreaux mentioned his daughter, Cadet McCarthy, is involved with the event. Cemetery Supervisor Raley advised that he has been working with her to secure the other cadets and honor guards for the occasion.

FUTURE VOLUNTEER EVENTS

Cemetery Supervisor Raley addressed this discussion by first pointing out the Cemetery looked very clean, manicured and no complaints were reported for a few years. His thoughts are to have decoration clean-ups twice a year for volunteers to participate in and that would take place in the Spring and Fall due to the Summer temperatures.

He mentioned how much the people enjoyed participating and that it was always big turnout.

He also made mention of some small projects he would like to do after holidays, such as taking care of the buried headstones and various work in the Scattering Garden.

Chair Merritt commented on how good the Cemetery looked since he does frequent there often and that Cemetery Supervisor Raley was doing a great job.

CITIZEN INPUT

None

BOARD COMMENTS

Board Member Knowles questioned if Olive Street Cemetery was still being maintained. Cemetery Supervisor Raley advised he checks the area weekly mainly for fallen trees. He also mentioned that the Preschool had installed a plastic fence over the existing chain link fence for safety which he thought was Understandable, however this makes it difficult to view the Cemetery property. Cemetery Supervisor Raley pointed out that an inmate crew oversees the mowing and trimming under the supervision of Inmate Supervisor Mobley.

NEXT MEETING- January 21, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the board- meeting adjourned at 5:49 pm.

ATTEST:

Joseph Merritt, Chairperson

Linda Hauck, Recording Clerk