

Agenda Item Details

Meeting	Dec 10, 2024 - Bryan City Council Second Regular Meeting
Category	6. Statutory (Automatic Approval) Agenda - This agenda consists of items previously approved by Council action such as adoption of items that are part of an approved budget or capital improvement projects, first and only readings of ordinances, interlocal agreements, or action that is required by law or delegated to the City Manager. Items may be removed from the statutory agenda for separate consideration at the request of two Councilmembers.
Subject	E. Consideration of an ordinance of the City of Bryan, Texas amending Chapter 22 "Cemeteries"; adding a new Section 22-19 "Columbaria" which will provide for administration of the columbarium
Type	Action (Statutory)
Preferred Date	Dec 10, 2024
Absolute Date	Dec 10, 2024
Fiscal Impact	No
Budgeted	No
Budget Source	No Fiscal Impact
Goals	Service Quality of Life

Summary:

On September 27, 2023, the City of Bryan had four (4) columbaria installed within the Bryan City Cemetery for the interment of cremains. To provide for the proper administration of the new columbarium, City staff recommends amending the City's Code of Ordinance, in particular Chapter 22 "Cemeteries" to add Section 22-19 "Columbaria".

A columbarium is a structure that consists of a number of niches, which includes a vault for the interment of cremains and a granite faceplate covering the entrance. The face plate is utilized similar to a general headstone and marks the final resting place for the cremains within. The City has designated two of the four existing columbarium as a Veteran's section. These units are installed north of the existing Veteran section located in Block 28 of Bryan City Cemetery. The remaining two columbarium have been designated for use by the general public.

A person may purchase a license for a niche in a columbarium for the interment of up to two (2) sets of cremains. The license will permit the person to inter cremains at the next available niche at the time of interment, with the exception that a second set of cremains may be interred in the same niche. In the Veteran's section, a niche may only be occupied by the Veteran and his or her spouse. Niche licenses are non-transferable. In the event a person no longer needs a license, it may be sold back to the City for cost, less any administrative fee assessed by the City.

For a niche within the designated Veterans' section, the person responsible for interring cremains shall apply for a government issued plaque from the Veteran's Administration. These plaques are provided at no cost to Veterans who have been honorably discharged. A standard design is found at all national cemeteries and will provide similar uniformity to the columbarium within the Bryan City Cemetery. Once the plaque is obtained, the person shall acquire from the cemetery sexton a faceplate from the next available niche in the Veterans' section. The person then provides a third-party engraver with the plaque and faceplate, so the plaque can be attached to the faceplate.

If a granite faceplate is lost or damaged during engraving or attachment of a plaque, the person who requested the faceplate is responsible for the cost of a replacement. Replacement must be approved in advance, in writing, by the cemetery sexton. Cremains may not be interred until the faceplate is replaced. If the faceplate is not replaced within six (6) months of removal from the niche, the license may be forfeited. Any previously interred cremains can be removed to the pauper's section of the cemetery and the fee paid for the niche will be forfeited. For good cause, the cemetery sexton may approve more time to obtain a replacement, which approval shall be in writing.

For general public niches, the person responsible for interring cremains is responsible to prepare the granite faceplate for the niche. The person shall obtain from the cemetery sexton a faceplate from the next available niche and have it engraved by a third party. The color of engraving shall be of natural stone or white, shall not exceed six (6) lines, font and letter size shall be at the purchaser's discretion, may contain up to three symbols (emblems of belief, zodiac sign, etc.), three pictures, or a combination of symbols and photographs that will count towards one of the six allowable lines of engraving, and shall not include an object, symbol, or emblem that protrudes from the granite niche faceplate surface. All designs shall be pre-approved by the cemetery sexton as noted in Section 22-7 (e) titled "Monuments, headstones, and markers" of the City Code of Ordinances.

The cemetery sexton will be responsible for placing remains in the niche and installing the faceplate for both the designated Veterans section and the general public section. Once the final faceplate is engraved or assembled, the faceplate shall be delivered to the cemetery sexton.

The Bryan Cemetery Advisory Board reviewed the amendment during their October 24, 2024, meeting and unanimously agreed to recommend these changes to the City Council. The Board agrees these changes will better provide for the prudent operation of the cemetery.

Staff Analysis and Recommendation:

After considerable review and approval by the Bryan Cemetery Advisory Board, City staff recommends the City Council approve amending Chapter 22 of the Bryan City Ordinance to include "Columbaria".

Options:

1. Approve the Ordinance thereby revising Chapter 22 "Cemeteries"
2. Revise and then approve the Ordinance, which may require consideration at a future City Council meeting
3. Do not approve the Ordinance and provide staff direction

Attachments:

1. Proposed Ordinance amending Chapter 22 "CEMETERIES", adding a new section 22-19 "COLUMBARIA"
2. Rendering of recommended columbaria niche faceplate design template

Cemetery Ordinance Chapter 22 Amendment- Columbarium.pdf (167 KB)

Niche Template.pdf (439 KB)