



REPORT

CITY OF HARTSVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA
COUNCIL AFRICAN-AMERICAN CEMETERY COMMITTEE
May 22, 2017 AT 3:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL – 100 EAST CAROLINA AVENUE

Committee Members Present: Adlena Graham, Chair; Johnny Andrews

Staff Present: Mary Catherine Farrell

Guests Present: Willie Williams, Brian Gandy (Darlington County Historical Commission), Marva Serrano, Luis Serrano, Steven Wild, Patricia Wingate, Pecolia Grove, Ruth Segars

Councilwoman Graham called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm.

The following matters were discussed:

Staff reported that \$3,640 had been raised to date, including a donation from Ms. Grove. Councilwoman Graham reported that an additional \$500 donation is expected.

Staff updated the group on the status of the abatement bid and award. One bid was submitted and it was within budget. Said bid was slated for approval at the upcoming Council meeting. Concessions made to accommodate bidder feedback included the postponing of work until October to allow for some of the foliage to die off and make the most densely overgrown areas more accessible while reducing risk of snake and mosquito bites. Low PSI equipment will also be allowed for debris removal on identified paths. The City will commit labor and equipment to hauling off debris from designated drop sites to reduce labor and dumping cost burden on the contractor. Mr. Gandy asked if the arborist might be able to notate plants to be removed or kept before the fall. Mr. Wild (City Arborist) affirmed that this might be possible. This phase will not include mulching, as graves must first be surveyed.

Mrs. Serrano suggested that the committee reach out to members of the community who are planning/attending family or class reunions to increase awareness of the project and raise more funds. Staff committed to drafting a letter to give out to these community members, explaining the committee and its goals. Group discussed the possibility of each individual group member distributing copies of this letter to members of the community who plan to attend or host a family or class reunion. Mrs. Serrano shared that she and her sister would be making donations that day.

Staff has submitted an internal check request for payment of the historical marker to be installed at the site. This will then be sent with the application to the SC Department of Archives for review and approval (typically takes two weeks). Mr. Gandy noted that review and approval may take longer than that for the Rail Passenger Station given that the site is not yet on the National Register, and that marker casting takes roughly 18 weeks to complete. The marker will likely be installed after cemetery clearance is complete and the graves documented. The group's desire is to celebrate the marker's unveiling with a ceremony.

The next meeting will be held on June 26, 2017.

Councilwoman Graham closed the meeting at 3:58 pm.

This is our report and recommendations to the full Council.

Adlena Graham, Committee Chair