

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
UNION CEMETERY COMMITTEE
Mayfield Village Main Conference Room-Mayfield Village Civic Center
6622 Wilson Mills Road, Mayfield Village, Ohio
Monday, March 30, 2026 – 5:00 p.m.**

The Union Cemetery Committee met on Monday, March 30, 2026 in the Main Conference Room at the Mayfield Village Civic Center. Mr. Murphy called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Ms. Finney Brown (Mayfield Heights)
 Mr. DiLalla (Highland Heights)
 Mr. Murphy (Mayfield Village)

Also Present: Mrs. Betsa

. **Election of Chair for 2026**

Mr. DiLalla, seconded by Ms. Finney Brown, nominated Mr. Murphy as Chair for 2026.

Mr. Murphy asked, any other nominations?

There were none.

. **Motion to close the nominations**

Mr. DiLalla, seconded by Ms. Finney Brown, moved to close the nominations.

ROLL CALL:	Ayes: All	Motion Carried
	Nays: None	Mr. Murphy Elected Chairman of the Union Cemetery Committee for 2026

Chairman Murphy stated, thank you everyone.

. **Election of Vice-Chair for 2026**

Chairman Murphy, seconded by Ms. Finney Brown, nominated Mr. DiLalla as Vice-Chair for 2026.

Chairman Murphy asked, any other nominations?

There were none.

. **Motion to close the nominations**

Chairman Murphy, seconded by Ms. Finney Brown, moved to close the nominations.

ROLL CALL:	Ayes: All	Motion Carried
	Nays: None	Mr. DiLalla Elected Vice-Chair of the Union Cemetery Committee for 2026

. **Approval of the Minutes of Thursday, September 18, 2025**

Mr. DiLalla, seconded by Ms. Finney Brown, moved to approve the Minutes of Thursday, September 18, 2025 as written.

ROLL CALL:	Ayes: All	Motion Carried
	Nays: None	September 18, 2025 Minutes Approved as Written

. **Review of Rules and Regulations**

Chairman Murphy asked, does anyone have any questions on the Rules and Regulations? We've only changed a couple of things. Mayfield Union Cemetery was originated for residents in Highland Heights, Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, and Gates Mills back in 1847. Gates Mills has dropped off for one reason or another. So it remains with our three municipalities. There are no graves available for sale, but there are a couple of graves that are open. One of the revisions to the Rules and Regulations that we passed in the past year or so was we increased the interment fee from \$6.00 to \$1,000 which is still a pretty good deal. Not that we anticipate there being anyone buried here, but just in case. We don't want to take the loss.

We have done some work on the cemetery and have tried to get as many grants as we can. The road in and out, we've gotten a grant for, and we fixed up a little bit. At one point, there was a lot of brush coming in over the road, so we cut that back. And then there was a big pile of brush and trees in the center, and we've gotten rid of that.

The biggest issue we have are these headstones from the 1800's and early 1900's that are in kind of disrepair. I don't know if you're aware, but the way cemeteries work is they kind of rob Peter to pay Paul. Ideally, you create a slush fund for maintenance in a cemetery by people when they purchase a grave, and that's invested and paid over time to use for the maintenance. The problem is there's only a limited amount of graves in this, and none have been that recent, so there's really no inflows coming from people, so it's kind of been stuck to the three municipalities here keep it going and keep it looking nice.

A couple of years ago we received a quote from Milano Monuments. They walked the grounds and looked at all the monuments. Milano came in at about \$100,000 to repair and replace about

80-90 headstones. At that point, the committee members and the Mayors met to talk about how to handle the cost. Discussion included whether we pay it all off right now or over time. For one reason or another, it didn't go anywhere. We were left with trying to find options. From that, we have been researching grants. Mrs. Betsa has been trying to pinpoint the Veteran's graves as the Cuyahoga County Veterans' Services may be able to help out with the expense. The major problem is a lot of the files for the cemetery were in a building that caught on fire, so we lost a lot of the files. So now we're left with trying to decipher which of the graves are Veterans and which are not to try to get help from Cuyahoga County. Mrs. Betsa mentioned to me not long ago that there is a Boy Scout troop that sets American flags on Memorial Day at the gravestone of Veterans. Mrs. Betsa, if you don't mind, could you reach out to the Boy Scout troop to see if they have a list of the Veterans' gravesites?

Mrs. Betsa replied, yes.

Fast forward to end of 2025, we got a grant for \$2,500. The Committee decided to match the grant to \$5,000. The cemetery needs it and we just kind of want to dot our i's and cross our t's. I've been in contact with the representative from Milano. I asked them if they could do some of the work ideally by the end of June up to the \$5,000 cost. They are slated to do work in the cemetery once the weather officially breaks. I kind of gave them the direction of getting the most bang for our buck while also repairing the ones that are in the worst disrepair. The thing I want to follow up with though is if we can get that listing from the Boy Scouts, I can let Chris from Milano Monuments know not to touch any of those headstones because we could be getting money from Cuyahoga County to reset those.

So, that is kind of where we're at besides discussing the yearly dues for each municipality. Right now it is \$1,000 a year. We're spending more than we're bringing in basically without any grants so we need to try to increase that just so that we can build some up and put money towards these monuments and things like that. Kind of where we left it was, I think Highland Heights had a levy on the November ballot. So I know Highland Heights was a little bit hesitant about doing anything. It helps that Mayor Snider from Mayfield Heights was on this Committee so I think she may be able to help out. Frank, I think the load is going to come on you and dealing with Mayor Brunello.

Mr. DiLalla stated, yes, obviously we had to plan for that Safety Service levy so we were being very cautious about what we did and did not commit to. That went in our favor in November. I knew this would be a topic for tonight and I'm happy to bring back to Council something that we did originally discuss and see what the temperature of the room is. Was there a number that you wanted annually? Did anybody ever discuss that or should we be determining that? Because it's \$1,000.00 now.

Chairman Murphy stated, let's discuss this more as we move on. Did anyone have any questions on the Rules and Regulations?

There were none.

. **Review of Financials**

Chairman Murphy stated we got \$5,500 in this year which is nice; \$1,000 from each municipality and \$2,500 from the grant which they paid us early on. Typically if we don't get a grant, we're looking at annual revenue of about \$3,000. If you look at the longer list, the expenses, they are as follows:

- . Westfield - umbrella or property casualty policy
- . Tru-Green – landscaper – treats the grass
- . Mary Solomon – gardener
- . Mayfield Village Service Department – this has been a topic between the three municipalities. Mayfield Village cuts the grass there. When all of the Mayors attended a meeting, they discussed whether or not they should split up the work. After discussion, having Mayfield Heights cut it one week, Highland Heights cut it one week and Mayfield Village cut it one week, it probably would be more cumbersome to your service departments than it is for us to just cut it. We know how to cut it, it would probably be more cost-effective. It's usually between \$1,500 to \$2,500 a year and it comes to an average of \$26.72 per hour.
- . Illuminating Company – lighting.

So with that being said, you are looking at \$5,000 of expenses average on a recurring basis. We are bringing in \$3,000 annually. If we could bump it up to \$5,000 annually for five years and then after five years we could reevaluate it and then we're really kicking into the slush fund and we could really get those headstones repaired. I'm not saying it's got to be \$5,000 forever. I don't think it does. Another discussion item is whether we bite that bullet of \$100,000 and everyone pay \$33,000 right now or do we kind of kick up the fees?

Mr. DiLalla replied, I can't speak for everybody on Council but for me I like the, hey let's bump it up for a period of years and tackle it in order of priority. I don't think \$5,000 is unreasonable.

Ms. Finney Brown asked, so would that be yearly?

Chairman Murphy replied, yes, \$5,000 yearly.

Mr. DiLalla stated, I am happy and comfortable bringing that back to Council.

Chairman Murphy stated, we didn't have to bite off the whole bullet. If we put money towards it and go with Milano and have them do \$10-20,000 worth of work every year for the next five years, I think we're in good shape. Relative to Milano, there's not a lot of companies that do this type of work.

Ms. Finney Brown asked, where are they based out of?

Chairman Murphy replied, they are in Brookpark. There's another company out of State. A lot of the other companies like Johns Carabelli and Sheffield Monuments they don't do this work. Let's reconvene maybe in a couple of months before summer hits, like the end of May.

Mrs. Betsa will coordinate dates.

. **Restoration Work at Union Cemetery**

Chairman Murphy passed around the photos of the cemetery taking in 2004 to compare against the ones taken in 2023. These are some of the bad ones that would need help.

Mr. DiLalla stated, they are not completely reset. These are on the ground.

Chairman Murphy stated, I even went to our Service Department and see if they would be comfortable with making some of the repairs. They are not really comfortable doing it. We are just going to rely on Milano Monuments and let the professionals do it. They have to bring in a crane in certain situations. Are there any other questions?

Mr. DiLallo stated, I think it's straightforward. I am going to bring back the approach and ideas and the need to increase the annual cost. I will also let them know that it makes sense to continue using the Mayfield Village Service Department for maintenance. I'll also remind Council that there was a grant for \$2,500. It was matched. We are going to use it to the best of our ability.

Chairman Murphy stated, let them know that says, "Any grant funds not expended or obligated by June 30, 2026 shall be returned." "All funds properly obligated by June 30, 2026 must be expended by December 29, 2026." To me, that reads, decide what you are doing with it and then we have until December 29th. Ideally I would like to get it expended by June 30th so we don't run into any issues. To me, obligated seems like designated, like we are going to designate these monuments for repair.

The Committee agreed.

Chairman Murphy stated, I will touch base with Milano again and hopefully we can get the funds expended by June 30th. This Committee also gets audited by the State of Ohio. They have assigned a third-party to perform the audit for submission to the State. The auditors reached out to me and asked me some general questions.

Mr. DiLalla stated, it's pretty straightforward.

Chairman Murphy agreed. This is just FYI in case they reach out to you. Also, there was a woman that reached out to me relative to doing some work at the Cemetery. The Service Department only

cuts the grass. They're not planting flowers. So, there have been people that reached out to me. One of them and I have to follow back up with her I think she won't do it out of the kindness of her heart and then I talked to another woman about planting flowers at the cemetery and she wanted to get paid to do it. I responded that at this point we are running a tight budget. There was also another woman who Patsy Mills knows who is in the business of setting monuments.

Mrs. Betsa added, she knows how to restore some of them. I don't know if it's a business.

Chairman Murphy stated, I thought that was more like gardening.

Mrs. Betsa stated, this is a different person. I will resend the information to you.

Chairman Murphy stated, I will go back to the e-mails and reach out to these women. The one was talking about working at the Cemetery. She mentioned she would be taking monument resetting classes.

Mrs. Betsa stated, that's the same individual.

Chairman Murphy stated, I will reach back out to her and she what she has to say.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

Chairman Murphy asked, are there any other matters to come before this Committee?

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further matters, Mr. DiLalla, seconded by Ms. Finney Brown, made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. Betsa, MMC, Secretary