



# City of Pensacola

## Miraflores Community Advisory Group

### Agenda - Final

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Friday, May 19, 2023, 9:00 AM

2nd Floor Hagler-Mason  
Conference Room

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#### CALL MEETING TO ORDER

#### ROLL CALL

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. [23-00246](#) MIRAFLORES COMMUNITY ADVISORY MEETING MINUTES FROM  
FEBRUARY 27, 2023  
  
**Sponsors:** D.C. Reeves  
  
**Attachments:** [2-27-23 Miraflores CAG minutes](#)

#### OPEN FORUM

#### BURIAL GROUND STUDY UPDATE

2. [23-00398](#) RESEARCH AND PROGRESS UPDATE  
  
**Sponsors:** D.C. Reeves

#### PRESENTATIONS

3. [23-00414](#) PRESENTATION REGARDING LAND OWNERSHIP HISTORY  
  
**Sponsors:** D.C. Reeves

#### NEXT MEETING DATE DISCUSSION

#### ADJOURNMENT

*The City of Pensacola adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act and will make reasonable accommodations for access to City services, programs, and activities. Please call 435-1606 (or TDD 435-1666) for further information. Request must be made at least 48 hours in advance of the event in order to allow the City time to provide the requested services.*

*If any person decides to appeal any decision made with respect to any matter considered at such meeting, he will need a record of the proceedings, and that for such purpose he may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.*

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# City of Pensacola

222 West Main Street  
Pensacola, FL 32502

## Memorandum

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**File #:** 23-00246

Miraflores Community Advisory Group 5/19/2023

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**TO:** Miraflores Community Advisory Group Members

**FROM:** Adrienne Walker, Cultural Resources Coordinator

**DATE:** 3/7/2023

**SUBJECT:**

Miraflores Community Advisory Meeting Minutes from February 27, 2023



## **MINUTES OF THE MIRAFLORES COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP**

**February 27, 2023**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairperson Wiley, Advisory Member Albrecht, Vice Chair Broughton, Advisory Member Hicks, Advisory Member Kyle, Advisory Member MacNeil, Advisory Member Stringfield, Advisory Member Villegas, Advisory Member Wesley

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Advisory Member Patton

**STAFF PRESENT:** Cultural Resources Coordinator Walker, Assistant Planning & Zoning Division Manager Harding, Digital Media Specialist Russo, Assistant City Attorney Lindsay, Mayor Reeves, City Administrator Fiddler, Public Information Officer Lagarde, Deputy City Administrator Miller, Deputy City Administrator Forte

**STAFF VIRTUAL:** Development Services Coordinator Statler, Urban Design Planner Bennett

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Dr. Katie Miller Wolf, Tom Garner, Ora Wills

### **CALL TO ORDER / QUORUM PRESENT**

Chairperson Wiley called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. with a quorum present.

Chairperson Wiley welcomed everyone to the first public meeting of the Community Advisory Group for the Miraflores Burial Ground Study. Mayor D.C. Reeves appointed the committee to assist the City of Pensacola in the assessment, interpretation, and commemoration of Miraflores Park. The group is tasked with gathering feedback from the community and to help generate ideas for eventual reinternment of the two individuals that were recovered from Miraflores Park. This is the first of several meetings that will include opportunities for community input, in addition to online engagement opportunities and a public-facing ground penetrating radar survey to occur in the future. Chairperson Wiley noted the group is happy to have members of the community in attendance today and look forward to hearing from attendees. After roll call for advisory members and ask that they briefly introduce themselves, there will be Open Forum where speakers may address the group. If anybody does wish to address the group, speakers will have five minutes. The meeting is being recorded and is live streamed and will have official minutes.

## **ROLL CALL**

### **OPEN FORUM**

No speakers.

Chairperson Wiley asked that each committee member briefly say who they are and what it is that brought them to say yes to serving on the committee. Moving counterclockwise, Advisory Member Broughton is Pensacola City Councilwoman District Five and was appointed to this committee by Mayor Reeves. Advisory Member Broughton stated that she, as it has been told to her by her elders for black Pensacola, is the chief, sole historian of this topic. Advisory Member Albrecht is a member of the Bream Fisherman's Association, a group that has been doing water quality monitoring for a number of years and became stewards of the Boy Scout Building in 1970. At that time the building had fallen into ruin and the group decided it would make a good club house. The group asked the City if they could fix up the building, put on a new roof and fix it up out of their own pocket, and that was agreed upon with a handshake and their word. The Bream Fisherman have worked on that building and share it with a number of other water quality groups. By way of inheriting the Bream Fisherman Association, Advisory Member Albrecht did so with the building as well.

Advisory Member Stringfield is an archaeologist at UWF and is based out of the Archaeology Institute. Advisory Member Stringfield has spent the last 22 years working with the cemetery resources in Pensacola, for the past 13 years with a heavy focus on the African-American cemetery complex. The Institute is involved heavily in what is being done to research all of the historic cemetery resources in Pensacola and bringing all of them recognition and awareness. Advisory Member Stringfield noted that it is a real pleasure to be asked to serve on the committee. Advisory Member Hicks is representing the Parks and Recreation Board as its current Chair. Advisory Member Hicks noted that when his family moved to Pensacola in 1995, Miraflores Park was one of the first places they went to play as kids and didn't realize they were on sacred ground. Advisory Member Hicks' brother was the 10,000<sup>th</sup> Boy Scout at the Boy Scout Building and was written up in the newspaper.

Advisory Member Villegas is a member of the City Planning Board and a supporter of this project and of historic Pensacola. Advisory Member MacNeil is a local architect and native of Pensacola. Advisory Member MacNeil has worked on a number of neighborhood initiatives including many parks and designed the Long Hollow Neighborhood park. Advisory Member MacNeil is the sole visionary for the Aragon Development, all the parks, choosing the layout, the streets, and writing the code. Advisory Member MacNeil served on the Architectural Review Board in the past, did the preliminary survey for the East Hill neighborhood to become a historic district, and is serving on the committee to offer design expertise depending on what the desires are of the community, the city, and the committee.

Advisory Member Kyle is a Pensacola native, daughter of Ora Wills, historian, author, and local celebrity. Committee Member Kyle over the last few years has been engaged with some of the larger public realm and public space initiatives in Pensacola and is working as a partner to SCAPE on the Bruce Beach project and working independently around advocacy for Carpenter's Creek and its black history, which is tied to Advisory Member Kyle's family. There are descendants of Advisory Member Kyle's family in Pensacola whose grave are unknown and this subject is personally very compelling and Pensacola is at a ripe moment to acknowledge cultural history and all of these aspects of history that have been glossed over and ignored.

Dr. Katie Miller Wolf from the University of West Florida is a subject matter expert and not a member of the advisory group. Dr. Miller Wolf was responsible for the analysis of the remains that were recovered at the park and is present to serve as an anthropology advisor and as a bio-archaeologist who deals with archaeological and historic sites especially as it relates to funerary remains. Assistant Planning and Zoning Division Manager Harding served as the Historic Preservation Planner and City Archaeologist when the project first started. Assistant Planning and Zoning Division Manager Harding is not a member of the advisory group but is serving as a member of city staff. Cultural Resources Coordinator Walker is the main staff person that is helping to put the study together and work with the advisory committee to assist the city with interpretation. Advisory Member Wesley is the pastor of Greater Little Rock Baptist Church in the City of Pensacola and is also a Pensacola native. After living in a couple of places, Advisory Member Wesley has been back in Pensacola to pastor Greater Little Rock Baptist Church for the past 18 years and noted it is a blessing to be back home and to serve the community. Chairperson Wiley is interested in the research that is going on and echoed what Advisory Member Kyle said in terms of graves being unmarked, it is so prevalent among certain cultures within the United States and here locally. Chairperson Wiley enjoys hanging out at graves because of her desire to trace where her history is as a south Georgia native, a non-Pensacola native. Chairperson Wiley is glad to be a part of this and is looking forward to where this leads and appreciates everybody taking the time to be a part of the committee.

## **1. OVERVIEW OF MIRAFLORES BURIAL GROUND STUDY**

Cultural Resources Coordinator provided a brief overview of what has occurred up to this meeting. Some of the material may be repetitive for some; all the material is online through the website that the city has dedicated to Miraflores which includes a GIS StoryMap. At the end of the overview, Chairperson Wiley was open to entertaining any questions from the advisory group or members of the public.

Tom Garner, a member of the public, addressed the group and asked if city staff had looked at the artificial terracing on the northern half of the park. Cultural Resources Coordinator Walker noted that it has not been fully investigated, but evidence for the terracing at Bayview Park was recently found, which could have happened around the same time but it is something to explore. Mr. Garner questioned if it might have been done by the WPA and there could be WPA records. Mr. Garner also noted that Quentin Black, now deceased, told him he was one of the Boy Scouts who planted the pine trees on the terraces.

Advisory Member Wesley noted that John the Baptist Church is recognized as the oldest African-American church in Pensacola. He asked about the Shiloh notation from 1895 on one of the presentation slides. John the Baptist was founded 1846 out of slavery, out what is known today as First Baptist Church downtown. He noted that staff should explore local religious congregations including Rising Star Primitive Baptist Church on Chase Street to see if they used the burial ground at Miraflores. Advisory Member Stringfield noted that John the Baptist cemetery has been known by different names including Montgomery cemetery and efforts are ongoing to call it Montgomery John the Baptist cemetery, that appears to have been established around 1870 with a deed. There are eight to ten sites that are extant on the surface, Spencer Bibbs is buried in John the Baptist cemetery. Florida death records, explored extensively by Jennifer Melcher and Erin Renfro, show that many people from John the Baptist are not shown on the surface to be buried there. That site has about 500 unmarked burials that have been identified to date. Advisory Member Stringfield noted it is very

difficult to find death records for prior to 1870 and also provided context for remote sensing technology and how it has been used at other local cemeteries. Advisory Member Broughton asked Staff about how the process works for the advisory group. Cultural Resources Coordinator Walker answered that the advisory group is meant to help gather community input and assess the site for interpretation and help generate ideas for eventual reinternment of the two individuals to have a proper burial place. Advisory Member Broughton noted that many elderly residents may not be able to attend meetings or go online, which reinforced the assistance needed from the advisory group to help gather that information. Chairperson Wiley stated that this study must honor the deceased, honor the community, and must include the voices of those that wish to have something to say. The bottom line is, whatever is done by the community, it must be respectful in honoring and make sure that voices have been heard. Chairperson Wiley instructed advisory members to write down community input if needed and bring it to the group.

Advisory Member Broughton and Advisory Member Wesley discussed the primitive Baptist religion, the religious tradition of foot washing, and the relationship to this study. Advisory Member Broughton noted that exploring all of the details in the sources regarding Ephraim Pleasure may help to identify more information. Advisory Member Broughton shared several ideas for a public event for the study that could include foot washers and a choir. Advisory Member Wesley provided background on the African-American religious community in Pensacola including connections to Greenville, Alabama and these details are additional research avenues to explore.

## **2. DISCUSSION OF CITIZEN SHARING FORM**

Cultural Resources Coordinator provided context for the Citizen Sharing Form as another means to gather input, memories, and information from the public. Chairperson Wiley likes the simplicity of the form, its broad enough for people to share and gather information. A colleague of Chairperson Wiley mentioned that duels were held in Miraflores Park, and this is the type of information that needs to be recorded. Advisory Member Albrecht noted that across the street to the south is a subdivision called Dueling Oaks. Cultural Resources Walker noted that a hardcopy template could be created for individuals who are not online or cannot attend in-person meetings. Advisory Member Kyle requested a more pointed question about people's relationship to the location. Advisory Member Kyle learned from a past project that understanding proximity is helpful. Advisory Broughton noted that someone told her that they remembered people worshipping in that area. Cultural Resources Coordinator Walker echoed what Advisory Member Stringfield mentioned, about Jennifer Melcher with the Archaeology Institute and her extensive research on land ownership in the area, and the potential of Ms. Melcher providing a presentation to the group. Advisory Member Villegas stated that a hardcopy is necessary for gathering input and there should be a specific search word to direct people to the form. It would be beneficial to have a direct way to find more about Miraflores. Cultural Resources Coordinator noted that there is a dedicated webpage [cityofpensacola.com/Miraflores](http://cityofpensacola.com/Miraflores). Chairperson Wiley noted that the group cannot make recommendations on what to construct until more research has been conducted. Advisory Member Broughton shared insights about African-American cemeteries and intentionality to let grave markers degrade, as the deceased become ancestors, and the deceased pass through the line of history. The goal should be to incorporate memory but keep the park space vibrant.

Dr. Miller Wolf noted the practice of living with the ancestors through mortuary space, that is often connected to living spaces. It is a practice, cross-culturally, that occurs in physical space and/or

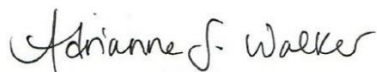
through social memory that is carried on. Advisory Member Stringfield noted that many people migrated to Pensacola after the Civil War and they may have brought traditions that were recorded and may be available at repositories in Alabama. Advisory Member Stringfield asked about who built the Boy Scout Building and if the labor force was local, Advisory Member Albrecht and Cultural Resources Coordinator Walker noted it was the CCC, Civilian Conservation Corps. Advisory Member Albrecht noted the bricks came from Pine Barren Creek and the Conecuh National Forest has a forester who specializes in the CCC and WPA and might have some records related to the Boy Scout Building and the potential recovery of skeletal remains. Advisory Member Stringfield suggested looking for records related to the organizations who built and/or oversaw the construction of the building. Advisory Member Broughton asked for clarification on the process of the advisory group. Cultural Resources Coordinator Walker noted that the group is tasked with gathering community input, providing suggestions for interpretation based on the ground-penetrating radar findings, and assisting with a community event as the culmination. Assistant Planning and Zoning Division Manager Harding clarified that the group is tasked with making recommendations to the Mayor and it might go to the Parks and Recreation Board too, but the group is representing the community's feedback. Public Information Officer Lagarde addressed the group about the citizen sharing form and sharing the Miraflores website, and a press release will go out to start generating input. Cultural Resources Coordinator Walker noted that the city is exploring options for the ground-penetrating radar survey in terms of planning, weather dependence, funding; there are local partners who have the technological ability to assist. Advisory Member MacNeil asked about Sanborn maps and city directories. Cultural Resources Coordinator noted that the Sanborn maps do not cover this area and the UWF Historic Trust archive has the city directories and other archival information.

Mr. Garner, member of the public, asked the group if the Boy Scouts had been asked about the history of the building and provided information about a Boy Scout column that was published in the newspaper in the 1930s. Advisory Member Albrecht has a booklet about the history of the scouts and can share with the group. Mayor Reeves thanked the group for serving on the committee and helping with the project. Several advisory members thanked Mayor Reeves for prioritizing the burial ground study. Cultural Resources Walker noted that any additional feedback on the citizen sharing form can be emailed and it can be adjusted as the study moves forward. Dr. Miller Wolf provided suggestions for streamlining the information gathering process and suggested that audio records be an option. Discussion occurred about the second meeting date and the group settled on Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. Assistant City Attorney Lindsay provided a presentation on Florida Sunshine Law. All advisory members will be provided City of Pensacola email addresses to utilize throughout the study.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Cultural Resources Coordinator Walker  
Secretary to the Community Advisory Group





# City of Pensacola

222 West Main Street  
Pensacola, FL 32502

## Memorandum

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**File #:** 23-00398

Miraflores Community Advisory Group 5/19/2023

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### **FOR DISCUSSION**

**TO:** Miraflores Community Advisory Group Members

**FROM:** Adrienne Walker, Cultural Resources Coordinator

**DATE:** 5/11/2023

**SUBJECT:**

Research and Progress Update

### **BACKGROUND:**

Adrienne Walker, Cultural Resources Coordinator, will provide updates on the ongoing research and a progress report for the Miraflores Burial Ground Study.



# City of Pensacola

222 West Main Street  
Pensacola, FL 32502

## Memorandum

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**File #:** 23-00414

Miraflores Community Advisory Group 5/19/2023

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### **FOR DISCUSSION**

**TO:** Miraflores Community Advisory Group Members

**FROM:** Adrienne Walker, RPA, Cultural Resources Coordinator

**DATE:** 5/11/2023

**SUBJECT:**

Presentation Regarding Land Ownership History

### **BACKGROUND:**

Jennifer Melcher, UWF Archaeology Institute Faculty Research Associate, will present on the land ownership history around Miraflores Park and historic court cases involving ownership disputes and the historic burial ground.