



RESOLUTION 2026-034

AN RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA,
AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO
NEGOTIATE THE TERMS FOR CONVEYING A
PORTION OF CITY CEMETERY PROPERTY TO
THE QUTEKCAK NATIVE TRIBE

Documents:

- Agenda Statement
- Resolution 2026-034
- Attachments:
 - Jesse Lee Cemetery Proposed Outline



City Council Agenda Statement

Meeting Date: April 13, 2026

To: City Council

From: Kat Sorensen, City Manager

Subject: Resolution 2026-034: Authorizing the City Manager to Negotiate the Terms for Conveying a Portion of City Cemetery Property to the Qutekcak Native Tribe

Background and justification:

The Jesse Lee Cemetery is located within the City of Seward cemetery reserve and is currently owned by the City. The site contains historic burials associated with the former Jesse Lee Home, an orphanage that operated in Seward from the 1920s through the 1960s. Over time, portions of the cemetery have become overgrown and have not been actively maintained by the City.

In recent years, the Qutekcak Native Tribe has undertaken significant voluntary efforts to research, restore, and preserve the cemetery. These efforts have included historical research to identify individuals associated with the Jesse Lee Home, clearing vegetation and debris from the cemetery grounds, identifying grave locations, and conducting site investigations using technologies such as LiDAR and ground-penetrating radar to better understand the location of burial features. The Tribe has also begun planning for long-term preservation of the site and development of a memorial to honor the individuals buried there.

Following discussions between City staff and representatives of the Qutekcak Native Tribe, staff presented the concept of conveying the portion of the cemetery containing these historic burials to the Tribe for continued stewardship and preservation. On March 9, 2026, the Seward City Council discussed the concept and provided direction to staff to pursue preparation of a resolution that would authorize conveyance of the property.

Historically, the Seward cemetery reserve has included sections owned and maintained by community and fraternal organizations, including the American Legion, the Masonic Lodge, and the Pioneers of Alaska. The proposed conveyance would be consistent with this longstanding pattern of shared stewardship within the cemetery reserve. Conveying the property to the Qutekcak Native Tribe would allow the Tribe to continue its ongoing restoration and preservation work while ensuring long-term care and cultural stewardship of this historically significant burial site.

Adoption of this resolution would provide staff direction to begin the process necessary to pursue conveyance of the property, including preparation of a subdivision plat and coordination with the Kenai Peninsula Borough platting process. Final conveyance of the property would occur at a later date and would require City Council approval of the associated plat and any subsequent documents necessary to complete the transfer.

Comprehensive and Strategic Plan Consistency Information

This legislation is consistent with (citation listed):

Comprehensive Plan: Vol 1, Chapter 3.9 Quality of Life

- 3.9.1.2 Encourage the recognition, rehabilitation, and preservation of prehistoric and historic sites, transportation routes, trails, buildings, objects and artifacts.

Strategic Plan: _____

Other: _____

Certification of Funds

Total amount of funds listed in this legislation: \$ _____

This legislation (✓):

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Creates revenue in the amount of: | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Creates expenditure in the amount of: | \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Creates a savings in the amount of: | \$ _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Has no fiscal impact | |

Funds are (✓):

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Budgeted | Line item(s): _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not budgeted | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Not applicable | |

Fund Balance Information

Affected Fund (✓):

- | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | General | <input type="checkbox"/> | SMIC | <input type="checkbox"/> | Electric | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wastewater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Boat Harbor | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parking | <input type="checkbox"/> | Water | <input type="checkbox"/> | Healthcare |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Motor Pool | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other | _____ | | | |

Available Fund Balance \$ _____

Finance Director Signature: n/a

Attorney Review

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Yes | Attorney Signature: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Not applicable | Comments: _____ |
| _____ | | |

Administration Recommendation

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Adopt Resolution | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: | _____ |

**CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA
RESOLUTION 2026-034**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA,
AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE THE TERMS FOR
CONVEYING A PORTION OF CITY CEMETERY PROPERTY TO THE QUTEKCAK
NATIVE TRIBE**

WHEREAS, the Jesse Lee Cemetery is located within the City of Seward cemetery reserve and is currently owned by the City, and the site contains historic burials associated with the former Jesse Lee Home, an orphanage that operated in Seward from the 1920s through the 1960s; and

WHEREAS, over time portions of the cemetery have become overgrown and have not been actively maintained by the City; and

WHEREAS, the Qutekcak Native Tribe has undertaken significant voluntary efforts in recent years to research, restore, and preserve the cemetery, including historical research, clearing vegetation and debris, identifying grave locations, and conducting site investigations to better understand the location of burial features; and

WHEREAS, the Qutekcak Native Tribe has also begun planning for the long-term preservation of the site and development of a memorial to honor the individuals buried there; and

WHEREAS, following discussions between City staff and representatives of the Qutekcak Native Tribe, the concept of conveying the portion of the cemetery containing these historic burials to the Tribe for continued stewardship and preservation was presented to the Seward City Council; and

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2026, the Seward City Council discussed the concept and provided direction to staff to pursue preparation of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to begin the process necessary to convey the property; and

WHEREAS, historically the Seward cemetery reserve has included sections owned and maintained by community and fraternal organizations, including the American Legion, the Masonic Lodge, and the Pioneers of Alaska, and the proposed conveyance would be consistent with this longstanding pattern of shared stewardship within the cemetery reserve; and

WHEREAS, authorizing the City Manager to begin the conveyance process will allow staff to pursue preparation of a subdivision plat and coordinate with the Kenai Peninsula Borough platting process, with final conveyance of the property subject to future City Council approval.

**CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA
RESOLUTION 2026-034**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA:

Section 1. The City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager to pursue the conveyance of a portion of City cemetery property to the Qutekcak Native Tribe.

Section 2. This resolution shall take effect 30 days after approval.

APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEWARD, ALASKA THIS 13TH DAY OF APRIL 2026.

Sue McClure, Mayor

AYES:

NOES:

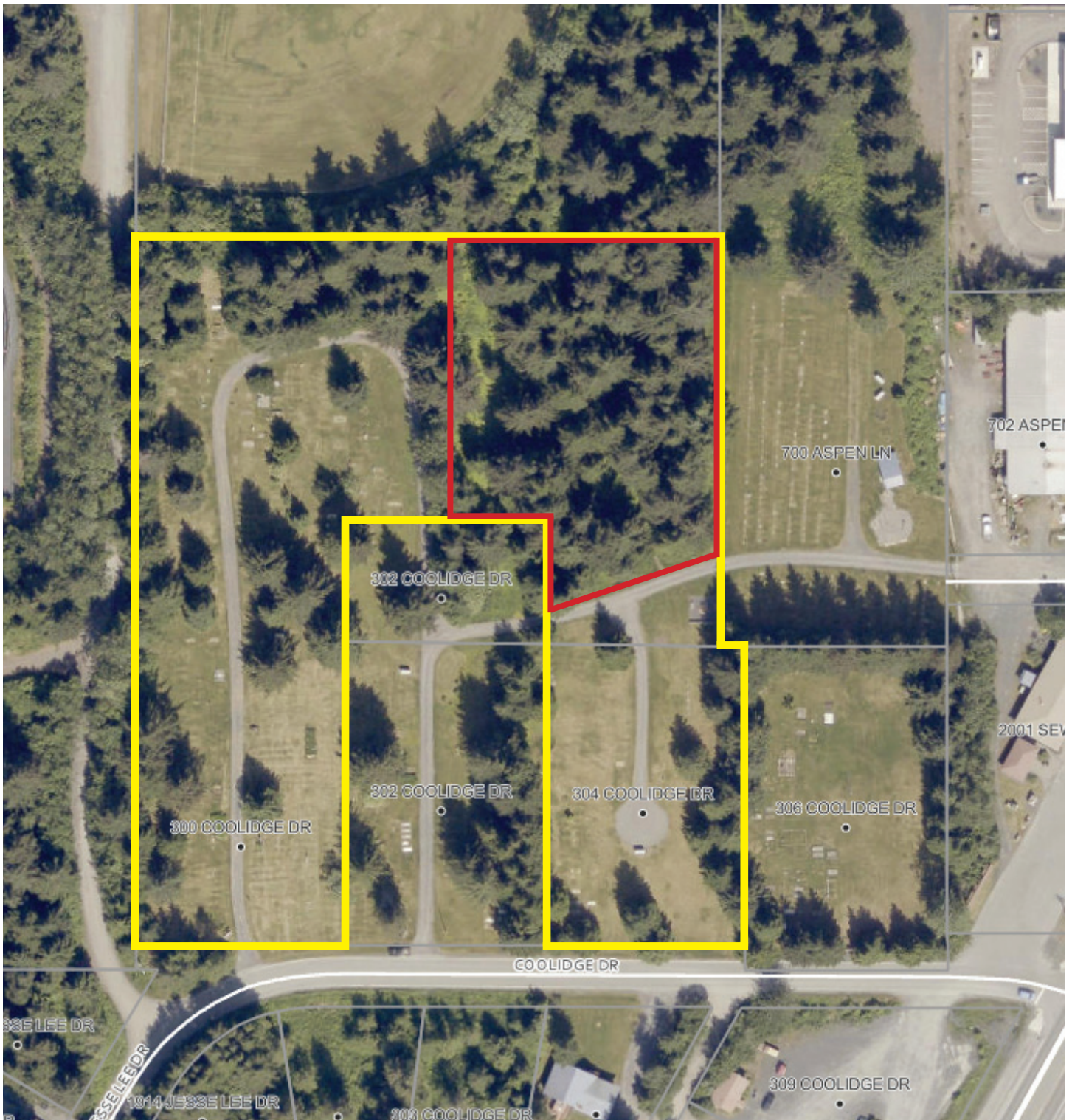
ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

ATTEST:

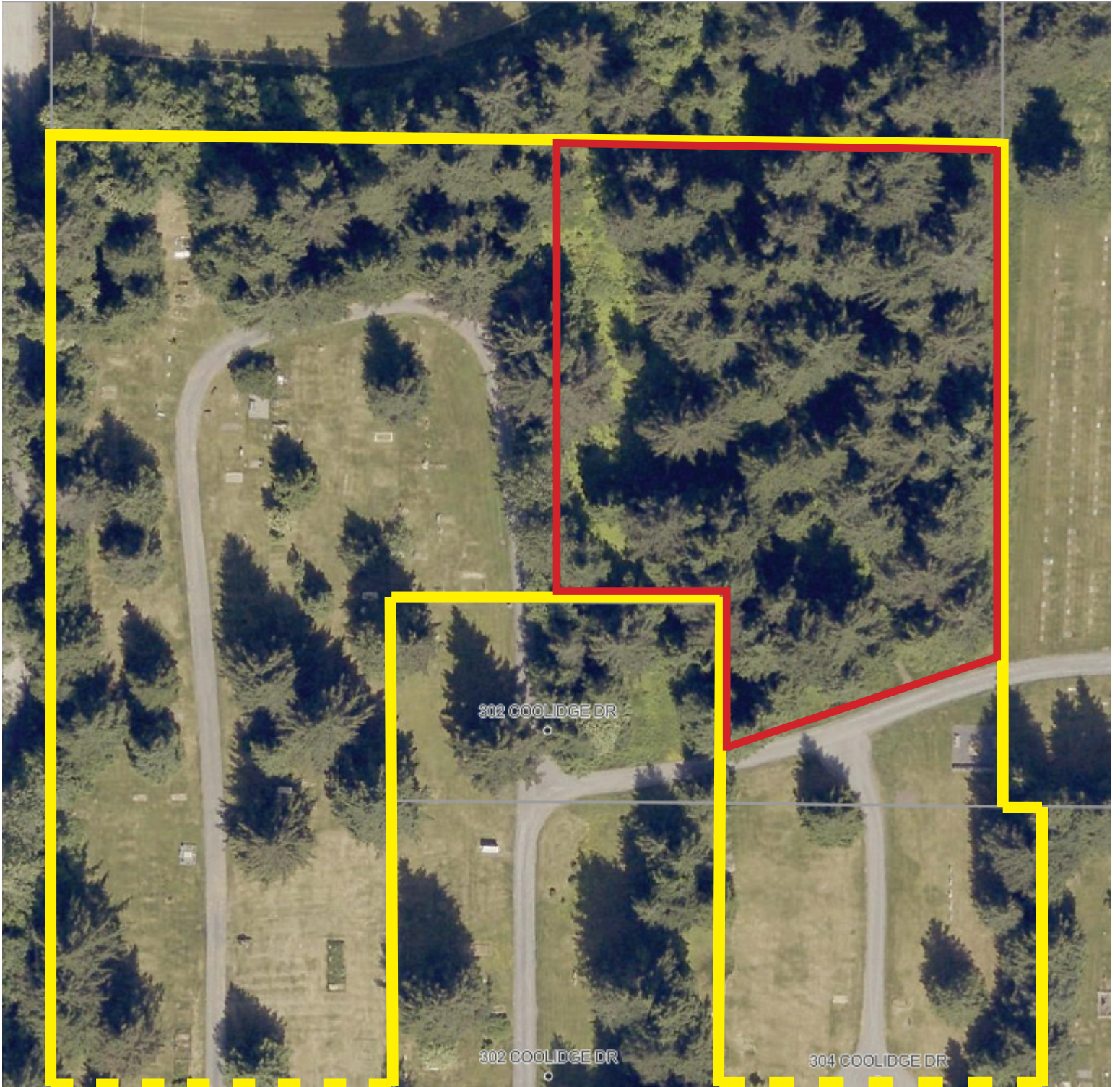
Kris Peck
City Clerk

City of Seward Cemetery



Yellow = City of Seward cemetery boundaries

Red = Proposed area to give to the Qutekcak Tribe to own and manage



302 COOLIDGE DR

302 COOLIDGE DR

304 COOLIDGE DR