

**Michelle Lujan Grisham** *Governor*

**Sonya L. Smith** *Cabinet Secretary*

**DVS to Lead Multi-Agency Effort to Restore Historic Fairview Cemetery in Albuquerque**

DVS is leading a multi-agency effort to restore the Historic Fairview Cemetery in Albuquerque—where nearly 500 veterans are buried in gravesites that, along with the rest of cemetery’s 12,000 plots, have eroded to the point of needing major repairs.

DVS met with representatives from the Historic Fairview Cemetery nonprofit organization, State Historical Preservation Officer Jeff Pappas, and SBA New Mexico District Director John Garcia on March 9 in Santa Fe to discuss forming a partnership to make the badly needed repairs and install landscaping at the cemetery.

“I am overwhelmed with sadness seeing what I see,” said Secretary Smith after she was shown photos of the cemetery at the meeting and learning more about its history. “But yet I also have an overwhelming desire to fix this…to give these veterans the respect they deserve for having served our country. We *have* to do this!”

Among the veterans buried at the cemetery are those who served in our nation’s Civil War, and “Buffalo Soldiers”—African American members of the U.S. Army who were assigned to defend post-Civil War U.S. frontier outposts and forts, including many here in New Mexico. Other veterans buried there served in the Spanish-American War, World War I, and all war eras up until the cemetery’s last burial in 2012.

The 17.5-acre historical cemetery in the city’s southeast quadrant began in 1881 as an informal rural area burial ground where families who could not afford a proper funeral would bury their deceased members. It officially opened as a cemetery in 1882. In 1934, a newer burial ground was built to the south of the cemetery. A wall was built to separate the two areas. All focus shifted to the newer area that is currently Fairview Memorial Park, which continues with funerals and is the access point for the historical cemetery.