FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Historic Beech Grove Cemetery Revitalized Under New Management**

Beech Grove Cemetery, a historic landmark dating back to 1841, is seeing new life under a new superintendent. Troy Watters, a lifelong Muncie resident with a history of public service, was appointed to the position in July, and has accomplished noticeable change in just a few months. “He’s out there working with the guys,” said Muncie resident Mary Stilts at September’s City Council meeting. “He’s not a sit in the truck kind of supervisor.” Since July, the Beech Grove crew has removed 9 dead trees, restored a fountain, kept the grounds maintained, and repaired the historic Chapel, which has been closed for years.

Watters’ passion for Muncie history is evident to anyone fortunate enough to take a walking tour of the cemetery. Watters can point out founding Muncie families, veterans from every American war, and family plots that are visited on a weekly basis by Muncie residents. Watters admitted that some might find it odd or morbid to enjoy walking through a cemetery, but he understands the appeal. “There’s a lady that drives up all the way from Marion just to walk her dog,” Watters remarked.

Some of the improvements were showcased on Sunday, September 10, at the Chapel Ribbon Cutting and open house. During the ceremony, Watters thanked City Council and the board of trustees for their support, the workers for their service, and Mayor Ridenour for helping straighten out the budget. “Everyone’s been so supportive…Muncie Sanitary and the Streets Department has helped so much with equipment.”

At Monday’s City Council meeting, Watters presented the 2023 budget for Beech Grove, which included some additional building repairs and upgraded equipment. New mowers, a backhoe, and some other upgrades are slated to save money and allow the cemetery to preserve the historical site. The Council also approved an ordinance to allow the public to walk dogs on leashes within the cemetery.

Beech Grove Cemetery is open to the public on weekdays between 8 and 4. The public is also invited to join the Old West End Neighborhood Association’s guided cemetery tour on Saturday, October 8. The $10 tour includes refreshments, and will begin at 3:30.