In over five years of covering Yazoo news, I don't think I've encountered an issue that has as many people outraged as the current mismanagement of the maintenance of Glenwood Cemetery.

After receiving numerous complaints from both residents and visitors about the state of the cemetery, we began to monitor the situation daily.

Grass at least a foot tall is not an uncommon sight, and the weed trimmer is apparently only cranked up occasionally. What is a more uncommon sight is any work getting done, except by residents who have been forced to take matters into their own hands. There are some minimal efforts being made, but they are unacceptable.

But even if the cemetery crew could scrap up some more motivation, it's doubtful that they could get the job done as there are only so many hours in a day.

Glenwood Cemetery is so large that it takes around 10 people to keep it properly maintained. That is why inmate labor has always been used to help get the job done in an affordable manner.

Unfortunately Stacey Trotter, who serves as cemetery sexton, is prohibited from working with inmates because he has twice been found to have had improper contact with inmates while they were under his supervision.

Mayor McArthur Straughter and Ward 2 Alderman Jack Varner realized the absurdity of the situation and have tried to do something to fix the problem. Although in any kind of private business Trotter would have simply been fired for his inappropriate actions to begin with, Straughter and Varner realized that isn't a possibility because he is somehow politically connected to the remaining board members.

In hopes of reaching a compromise they suggested moving Trotter to the rubbish pit, one of the few positions within the city where he wouldn't have to work with inmates.

Trotter would continue to draw the same paycheck and benefits. That seemed like an easy solution to the problem, but aldermen Aubry Brent Jr., Charles "Mickey" O'Reilly and Clifton Jones voted against it.

O'Reilly's position doesn't surprise me. He sometimes seems to view city government primarily as an employment agency in which his friends and supporters can find job security. A position was created for his main campaigner immediately after O'Reilly was re-elected. Trotter is also a strong supporter during campaign time.

Jones usually tends to side with O'Reilly on most issues, so his stance wasn't really surprising. Jones would seem to be the most likely to not be politically beholden to anyone because he was

unopposed in his last election. He is anything but predictable, however.
I was surprised that Brent didn't vote for change because he has been such a strong advocate of cleaning up the city lately. Keeping the grass cut at the city's cemetery is a lot more serious than the overgrown yards that are often debated during meetings. People come there to remember loved ones and are understandably upset when they find the cemetery in such deplorable condition.
Brent deserves credit, however, for giving the matter further consideration and making the right decision. He told Herald managing editor Jamie Patterson Tuesday morning that we can expect to see a change after the next city board meeting.
That will be a tremendous relief to many Yazooans. Hopefully Glenwood Cemetery can quickly be restored to the beautiful condition that we all have known for so many years.