



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF MAY 24, 2022

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT, HELD TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2022 AT 5:30 P.M. AT THE ARBOR VITAE CEMETERY LOCATED AT 1301 ROBERTS AVE., MADERA, CA 93637

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

DAVID NEMETH (via Zoom)
JIM HARPER
LOIS BETTY
MAURICE CAPPELLUTI

PUBLIC/EMPLOYEES PRESENT:

ARTHUR GARDNER - DISTRICT MANAGER
STEPHEN CLOETERS - H.R. GENERALIST
TRACY ISAAK - OFFICE TECHNICIAN
RONNIE RAMIREZ - OPERATIONS MANAGER
MARK MARSHALL - GSRMA
GARRY RIEZBOS - ADAIR & EVANS

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson David Nemeth called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF BOARD:

Chairperson David Nemeth took roll of the Board. David Nemeth (via Zoom), Jim Harper, Lois Betty, and Maurice Cappelluti were present. Candy Talley had notified in advance she would not be in attendance.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:

Trustee Lois Betty presented the flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM:

None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Next meeting will be held June 28, 2022. Candy Talley will not be in attendance. The Board will need to approve her being gone for three meetings. Trustee Jim Harper so moved to approve the consent calendar. Maurice Cappelluti seconded and all were in favor. David Nemeth pointed out that the month on the warrants report was incorrect and that they were for April, not March.

DISCUSSION OF RENEWAL OF AGREEMENT WITH GOLDEN STATE RISK MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY:

Mark Marshall of GSRMA said he received our notice of intent to withdraw from GSRMA and stated he would like to encourage the District to stay. If MCD decides to withdraw, it cannot reapply for five years. Trustee Lois Betty asked about the increase for 2023. Mr. Marshall explained that increases are due to payroll increases, the international insurance market, and because of insurance claims. He said MCD has been an excellent member of GSRMA for years and that the District's safety practices are outstanding. Trustee Jim Harper voiced his opinion that GSRMA has taken good care of the District and he moved that we proceed forward with GSRMA. Trustee Lois Betty seconded and all the Board was in favor. Lois Betty asked how long claims would affect MCD's premiums and Mr. Marshall said we should start to see our decrease in 2024-2025.

DISCUSSION/REPORT/APPROVAL OF 2020/2021 AUDIT BY ADAIR & EVANS:

Garry Riezbos of Adair & Evans stated that he'd tracked down a couple of things since he'd presented the audit to the Board in March, 2022 and had the final copy. There were no material changes to the draft. Mr. Riezbos said the District does quite well and there were no major issues. Trustee Jim Harper moved to accept the audit, Maurice Cappelluti seconded, David Nemeth, aye; Jim Harper, aye; Lois Betty, aye; Maurice Cappelluti, aye. District Manager Arthur Gardner said MCD paid \$16,614 for the completed audit and the quote for 2021-2022 is \$17,600. Lois Betty moved to accept the proposal, Maurice Cappelluti seconded, and all present voted in the affirmative.

RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION:

Chairperson David Nemeth asked for a closed session.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION - REPORT OF ANY ACTION TAKEN DURING

No action taken

DISCUSSION/REPORT IF NEEDED ON OPERATIONS OF M.C.D. CEMETERIES:

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez said all is going well and everyone is working hard to prepare for Memorial Day.

DISCUSSION/REPORT/APPROVAL OF BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023:

District Manager Arthur Gardner said the budget, as presented, factored in a 5% pay raise for District employees. Maurice Cappelluti moved to accept the budget, Jim Harper seconded and all trustees in attendance were in favor.

Arthur pointed out that the bulk of the budget goes to personnel and structures and improvements. He also said that Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez is looking into electric utility vehicles. The cost is \$26,000, but San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is offering a rebate of \$20k. Ronnie said they look good, but that we will get a chance to see a demo before purchasing. Most utility vehicles have plastic bodies, but these are made of steel. Lois Betty asked if MCD would have to get approval to get a guarantee on the rebate. Ronnie said yes. Arthur Gardner said we are exploring purchasing an electric cart for Arbor Vitae.

DISCUSSION/REPORT/APPROVAL OF SALES & SERVICE FEE INCREASE:

Trustee Jim Harper suggested that, in light of the raise given to District employees, the District should raise fees 5%. Maurice said the Ossuary price should not be changed. Jim moved to raise Sales & Service fees by 5%, except for the Ossuary. Lois Betty seconded. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION/REPORT/APPROVAL OF POLICY ON HOLIDAY WEEKEND SERVICES:

Arthur Gardner read the proposed policy. According to the new policy, MCD will offer burial services on holiday weekends only if employees are willing and available to do so. Lois Betty moved to accept the new policy, so long as the second sentence of the second paragraph be amended to read, "...the request for Saturday services will **not** be granted." Maurice Cappelluti seconded. The Board was polled: David Nemeth: aye; Lois Betty: aye; Maurice Cappelluti: aye; Jim Harper: aye.

DISCUSSION/REPORT/APPROVAL ON NEW DISTRICT OFFICE AND ARBOR VITAE MAUSOLEUMS:

Arthur Gardner reported that Larry Moore of Berry Construction said he got two quotes from architects, the second coming in on the day of the Board meeting. Mr. Moore said he would meet with Gardner by the end of the week.

DISCUSSION/REPORT/APPROVAL OF SOLAR POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENT:

Manager Arthur Gardner reported that, per the Board’s request, he’d solicited bids on Power Purchase Agreements and check references. In addition to TurnKey Solar, he’d spoken with Forefront Power. He said that he believes a PPA would be beneficial to the District because it requires no money and will lower electricity bills. Maurice asked how much would be saved. Gardner responded that the savings would come with longevity on the system. This item will be on June’s agenda.

Jim Harper suggested Arthur contact Sanden Shorts with MUSD and tell him Jim sent him.

DISCUSSION/REPORT RE: LOCAL CORONAVIRUS FISCAL RECOVERY FUND:

Arthur Gardner said there was no progress to report. Trustee Lois Betty said she’d spoken with County Supervisor Tom Wheeler but had nothing to report.

DISCUSSION/REPORT ON I.T., INTERNET, AND SECURITY CAMERAS:

District Manager Arthur Gardner said Comcast had obtained permits from the City of Madera. High speed internet should be installed at the District office within a month.

DISCUSSION/REPORT ON CEMETERY MAPPING SOFTWARE:

Arthur Gardner said he had nothing to report at the moment. He likes PlotBox but will have to look at the costs.

DISCUSSION/REPORT/APPROVAL OF NORTH FORK OFFICE REFURBISH:

Arthur Gardner said he had nothing to report. This item will stay on the agenda.

DISCUSSION/REPORT OF WESTLAKE PROPERTY CLEANUP:

Trustee Lois Betty said Sierra Foothill Conservancy had purchased 1,729 acres by the Westlake property. Chairman David Nemeth said that would mean that those acres would remain undeveloped. Lois posited selling the Westlake property to the Conservancy.

Arthur Gardner reported that he'd placed two calls to Hunter Comstock with CalFire but had not been able to contact him. He will keep trying.

DISCUSSION/REPORT OF MOSQUITO & VECTOR REPORT:

Arthur reported Mosquito Abatement has been coming out. Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez said they are dropping pellets and doing a good job.

DISCUSSION/REPORT ON CEMETERY SECURITY REPORT:

Arthur Gardner said there was nothing to report.

DISCUSSION/REPORT/DECISIONS ON INVESTMENTS FOR E.C. AND PRE-NEED AS PER SANDRA WHEELER/STIFEL INVESTMENTS IF NEEDED:

Board Chair David Nemeth stated we had \$200k in pre-need funds that came due. \$150k went to Allied Bank security and \$50k went to Discover Bank.

DISCUSSION/REPORT OF BELVA BARE APPOINTED AS TRUSTEE:

Arthur Gardner reported that paperwork was turned in to the County Board of Supervisors, but he was not sure of the process. Jim Harper said that if Belva hasn't been appointed by the next Board meeting, he would come in.

DISCUSSION/REPORT OF JIM HARPER RETIREMENT:

Trustee Jim Harper said he had mixed emotions with his departure from the Board. He was pleased and grateful for his time with MCD and was happy for the friendships he made and the things he'd learned.

Arthur Gardner presented Jim with a glass award to recognize his 18 years of service as a trustee. Jim said MCD is in good shape and that it is moving forward in a positive direction.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:15 p.m.