



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF JUNE 28, 2022

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT, HELD TUESDAY, JUNE 28, 2022 AT 5:30 P.M. AT THE ARBOR VITAE CEMETERY LOCATED AT 1301 ROBERTS AVE., MADERA, CA 93637

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

DAVID NEMETH
CANDY TALLEY (VIA ZOOM)
LOIS BETTY
MAURICE CAPPELLUTI

PUBLIC/EMPLOYEES PRESENT:

ARTHUR GARDNER - DISTRICT MANAGER
STEPHEN CLOETERS - H.R. GENERALIST
TRACY ISAAK - OFFICE TECHNICIAN
RONNIE RAMIREZ - OPERATIONS MANAGER
MICHAEL MARTINEZ - PUBLIC MEMBER

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, Lois Betty, and Maurice Cappelluti were present. Candy Talley was present via Zoom. Belva Bare was in attendance as an appointed trustee but had not yet taken the oath of office.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:

Belva Bare presented the flag.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Next meeting will be held July 26, 2022. Candy Talley will not be in attendance. Trustee Lois Betty moved to approve the minutes for the May 24, 2022 Board Meeting, Trustee Candy Talley seconded and all were in favor. Trustee Maurice Cappelluti so moved to approve the warrants for May, 2022, Lois Betty seconded and all were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM:

District Manager Arthur Gardner introduced Mike Martinez. Mr. Martinez explained he has several relatives in Arbor Vitae Cemetery whose headstones are *district markers*, or cement markers with stamped writing. He would like to stain his family's markers to add color to them. A licensed dealer could do it or, if he himself were allowed, he would use a drop cloth to protect adjacent headstones. Board Chair

David Nemeth expressed concern about too many colors in the cemetery. Mr. Martinez suggested a limited palette and stated he wants to make the headstone less plain and cannot afford to purchase a headstone. David Nemeth said to give the District one month to figure out what can and can't be done. Mr. Martinez thanked the Board and said he would attend the July meeting.

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 reported the new well pump at Calvary Cemetery has required a few adjustments. David Nemeth queried about California's phasing out of gas equipment. Ronnie reported that a vendor had recently done a demonstration of electric equipment and that the District is purchasing a few tools to try out. San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District has a great redemption package and the District will receive a large rebate. We will switch from gas to diesel mowers but can switch some smaller tools from gas to electric. Arthur Gardner said the District will purchase several trimmers and a power saw that would normally cost around \$9,000 but will be under \$1,000 after the rebate.

REPORT/DISCUSSION OF BELVA BARE APPOINTMENT AS TRUSTEE:

District Manager Arthur Gardner read from an email from the office of the Board of Supervisors regarding the process of getting Belva Bare sworn in and taking the oath of office. Her file was moved to the *priority stack* by the County.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF CHANGES TO SALARY SCHEDULE:

District Manager Arthur Gardner said the current salary schedule does not jibe with the new changes to the scheduled pay increases. New employees' pay would never match up because the math doesn't work. Most current employees with over five years of employment will continue on Salary Schedule A, while newer employees will be put on Schedule B. Employees who are promoted or receive raises will be switched to Schedule B. David Nemeth said that, in time, all employees will be on Schedule B. Belva Bare suggested Gardner check with CalPers and said the schedule needs to be posted on the District's website. A discussion was had about the levels at which new hires would be on the schedule. When persons with specialized skills or knowledge are hired, they may need to be offered a higher salary than usual.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON MADERA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS EXTRAVAGANZA:

Arthur Gardner reported on the District's participation on the business extravaganza presented by the Madera Chamber of Commerce. He was told that attendance was much lower than usual. He was able to talk with Madera County Mosquito Vector and with a business that offers first aid training. A discussion ensued over whether the District would be liable if a District employee administered

first aid. Gardner asked what the Board's purpose was in attending the extravaganza. Lois Betty and David Nemeth said it was for exposure and public relations. Belva Bare said next year's event would be different. Gardner said that if there's not an improvement in attendance, he didn't believe the District should continue participating.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON NEW DISTRICT OFFICE AND ARBOR VITAE

MAUSOLEUMS:

Arthur Gardner reported that Larry Moore of Berry Construction suggests building the office and mausoleum at the same time because having a single superintendent overseeing two projects would reduce overhead. Larry suggested building a storage structure attached to the new restrooms and adding niches to the exterior of the glass-niche section of the mausoleums. There was a discussion on the slow progress of the project. Gardner said he would check with Larry Moore about a time frame.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF SOLAR POWER PURCHASE

AGREEMENT:

Manager Arthur Gardner said that he'd solicited more bids, per the Board's request, but wasn't able to get any more. The project is too small for the big guys, and too big for the little guys. So far, only a bid from TurnKey has been received. David Nemeth asked what the annual rate increases would be, to which Gardner said they increase at a fixed annual rate. Lois Betty suggested we could try one cemetery first and then add another later. Maurice Cappelluti asked if the rate would be consistent. Rates would increase from 2.5%-3% each year. Lois Betty said Gardner ought to get more information. Candy Talley suggested checking with Madera Unified.

REPORT/DISCUSSION OF BIDDING POLICY:

Arthur Gardner said that it may be good to look at the policy later because he and Stephen Cloeters are working on a revision of the Policies and Procedures Manual. A discussion was had about the price point at which projects need to go out to bid and whether current levels are too low based on today's market. H.R. Generalist Stephen Cloeters stated that Orange County Cemetery District does not require bids for anything under \$200k. Gardner said the Board will be presented with a proposed revision to the Policies and Procedures Manual at a future meeting and will be given time to review and annotate it.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/APPROVAL ON PROOF OF RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT:

Arthur Gardner said the District requires no proof of residency and asked whether proof should be required. Stephen Cloeters said he'd researched it and a lot of cemetery districts do require documentation. David Nemeth said to require proof of residency.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF REVISION OF POLICY ON DECORATING GRAVES:

The amended policy was read to the Board. It prohibits painting or staining of markers unless it is touching up engraved lettering and performed by a licensed monuments dealer. Lois Betty moved to accept the policy, Maurice Cappelluti

seconded it. David Nemth, aye; Lois Betty, aye; Candy Talley, aye; and Maurice Cappelluti, aye.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF INCREASING MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATE TO \$0.625 PER MILE:

The IRS has temporarily raised its recommended mileage reimbursement rate to \$0.625 per mile. Candy Talley moved to follow their guidelines, Lois Betty seconded, and all were in favor.

Arthur Gardner said employees should always be reimbursed when they use their personal vehicles for District business. Belva Bare said they can drive District vehicles and there is no need for business use of a personal vehicle.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF CLARIFICATION ON NON-RESIDENT CHARGE OF NO LESS THAN 15%:

District Manager Arthur Gardner said the District charges a non-resident fee to those who live outside District boundaries. Per the Health & Safety Code, the fee should be not less than 15% of the fees charged to residents. Is this 15% on each item individually or in the aggregate? District's current fees are at least 15% on everything except for mausoleum crypts. The Board determined that at least 15% needs to be charged on the final pre-tax amount of each transaction, so the non-resident fee for mausoleums should be raised.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/APPROVAL DECEMBER BOARD MEETING:

December 13, 2022 was discussed as a possible date for a December Board meeting, but a decision will be made later when it can be determined whether a meeting is necessary. Lois Betty reminded that a planning meeting will be held in November. David Nemeth said the planning meeting will be over two days, November 7 & 8, in the same room as the 2021 planning meeting.

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

Per Arthur Gardner, he and Stephen Cloeters now have their own email addresses using Microsoft Outlook. Email still needs to be set up for Ronnie Ramirez, Kerry Smith, and Tracy Isaak. The Comcast cable for high-speed internet has been pulled to the District office building and services should start July 8. New cameras have been installed at Oakhill Cemetery: a high-resolution one on the front of the church that can capture license plates, one inside the church that overlooks the entrance and donation box, and one inside the office. Belva Bare asked how long the DVR retains video. Ronnie Ramirez answered two weeks.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CEMETERY MAPPING SOFTWARE:

Arthur Gardner said he would be going to Colma, California for a demonstration of PlotBox' product on July 12.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF NORTH FORK OFFICE REFURBISH:

Nothing to report.

REPORT/DISCUSSION OF WESTLAKE PROPERTY CLEANUP:

Arthur Gardner said he heard back from Hunter Comstock with CalFire. Arthur and Groundskeeper Huston Petterson viewed the Westlake property with Hunter. Mr. Comstock said the project was too large for Cal Fire and suggested the District contact Shawn Fairbanks, Coarsegold Battalion Chief. The project could take up to two years to get started due to environmental impact studies. Mr. Comstock questioned whether the cleanup was necessary because of the condition of the surrounding properties.

Arthur questioned how to proceed. The recent appraisal of the property came in lower than what the District paid for it. He suggested the District could cut its losses and sell the property, or rezone it to residential. Trustee Candy Talley suggested the rezone may not cost the District. David Nemeth reminded that the District had talked about selling or trading the property for another parcel. He also suggested a minor cleanup done by District employees to make it look better. Candy Talley questioned whether we want to throw money away if the cleanup is not necessary. David Nemeth said we will wait until after Summer to do anything.

REPORT/DISCUSSION OF MOSQUITO & VECTOR REPORT:

Arthur reported Mosquito Abatement has been going well. He got to speak with the district manager and a couple other employees of Madera County Mosquito Vector Control District at the Chamber of Commerce' Business Extravaganza.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CEMETERY SECURITY REPORT:

Nothing to report.

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

Board Chair David Nemeth said Sandra Wheeler emailed him the day before regarding endowment care being due. He would take care of it tomorrow.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:00 p.m.