



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF JULY 19, 2023

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT, HELD WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 2023 AT 5:30 P.M. AT THE ARBOR VITAE CEMETERY LOCATED AT 1301 ROBERTS AVE., MADERA, CA 93637

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

CANDY TALLEY
LOIS BETTY
BELVA BARE
DAVID NEMETH
CELESTE VOYLES

PUBLIC/EMPLOYEES PRESENT:

ARTHUR GARDNER - DISTRICT MANAGER
RONNIE RAMIREZ – OPERATIONS MANAGER
TRACY ISAAK – OFFICE TECHNICIAN
STEPHEN CLOETERS – H.R. SPECIALIST
JESUS BRAVO – GROUNDSKEEPER I

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Candy Talley called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF BOARD:

Chairperson Candy Talley took roll of the Board. Trustees David Nemeth, Lois Betty, Belva Bare, and Celeste Voyles were present.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:

Trustee Celeste Voyles led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Chair Candy Talley asked questions about items that were over budget in the 2023 fiscal year and asked whether the 2024 budget had been adjusted in those areas to accommodate for the increased expenses. District Manager Arthur Gardner stated that the budget for 2024 had been increased in those areas. Trustee David Nemeth made a motion to approve the consent calendar, Trustee Celeste Voyles seconded, and all were in favor.

RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION:

Chairperson Candy Talley asked for a closed session.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION - REPORT OF ANY ACTION TAKEN DURING

Chair Candy Talley reported that no action had been taken in closed session.

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

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez said things were running well.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON NOMINATING TRUSTEE DAVID NEMETH FOR CAPC BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Trustee Belva Bare moved to nominate Trustee David Nemeth for the board of the California Association of Public Cemeteries. Trustee Celeste Voyles seconded and all were in favor.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON PCA MEETING AUGUST 10-11 AND CAPC MEETING OCTOBER 5-7, 2023:

District Manager Arthur Gardner will attend the PCA meeting. Trustee Lois Betty said she may also attend.

Trustees David Nemeth, Candy Talley, Belva Bare, and Celeste Voyles, along with District Manager Arthur Gardner and Office Technician Kerry Smith will attend the CAPC meeting in October.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON DISTRICT OFFICE, CALVARY & ARBOR VITAE SOLAR, PLOTBOX CEMETERY MAPPING, AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES PROJECTS:

The Board viewed pictures of the construction of the new district office. They were briefed on minor issues that had been resolved.

The solar installation at Calvary Cemetery is operational, but credits for power produced have not shown up on the utility bill yet. PG&E said in a letter that it could take three months or more for credits to show, but that no credits would be lost.

District Manager Arthur Gardner said he had a phone call scheduled with the solar company to discuss the status of the solar installation at Arbor Vitae.

PlotBox continues to work on the mapping.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CONVERSATION WITH MADERA COUNTY REGARDING NEW HOPE CEMETERY:

Matt Skolnik, chief of staff to David Rogers of the County Board of Supervisors, met with District Manager, Arthur Gardner, for an exploratory conversation regarding the New Hope Cemetery, an abandoned cemetery in Madera County. Mr. Gardner gave him information on the function of the District. Skolnik said that Supervisor Rogers had received complaints about the condition of the cemetery and so the County was exploring potential solutions.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON NEW BUSINESS MACHINES FOR DISTRICT OFFICE:

District Manager Arthur Gardner told the Board that he'd solicited proposals for a new copier to replace the one currently used in the office. The current machine is 16 years old and parts are becoming scarce. Gardner decided to go with California Business Machines because of their price and the fact they are based in Fresno and customer service should be better than the current vendor's.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON TIME CAPSULE TO BE PLACED UNDER/IN NEW DISTRICT OFFICE:

Regarding the idea of placing a time capsule near the new office building, Trustee Belva Bare said that the City of Chowchilla had just opened a 25-year time capsule. Trustee Lois Betty suggested placing information on notable burials and stories and things of historical interest. Ms. Bare suggested pictures and videos. DM Arthur Gardner notified the County Board of Supervisors and invited them to participate. It was determined that the capsule will be sealed for 50 years and marked with either a brass plaque or granite marker.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON OFFERING STAFF THE OPTION TO OPT OUT OF HEALTH BENEFITS:

HR Generalist Stephen Cloeters informed the Board that CalPERS had announced the premiums for health care insurance for 2024. He put forward the idea of raising the cap on the District's contribution to medical insurance to \$904 per employee per month. This would cover 100% of the cost of medical insurance for every employee, based on the plans employees are currently enrolled in. Trustee Belva Bare said this would need to be done by Resolution. The Board agreed to consider a resolution to increase the cap in the next meeting of the Board.

Mr. Cloeters further addressed the Board regarding the idea of giving employees the option to opt out of health care benefits. He reviewed opt-out plans offered by other public agencies. Employees who opt out would receive payment of some sort in consideration. The payment could go into a tax-deferred account. Trustee David Nemeth said he did not see a downside to making this option available. Trustee Belva Bare said this idea should be explored further and more information gathered before being considered. Trustee Lois Betty said to investigate this further and to place it on the agenda for the next Board meeting.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON EXEMPT VS NON-EXEMPT STATUS FOR SUPERVISORS:

District Manager Arthur Gardner reviewed an email correspondence with attorney Patricia Ayers regarding the non-exempt status of District employees. Non-exempt employees are paid hourly and, thus, should either have their pay adjusted when they do not work a full 40 hours per week, or their vacation or sick time should

be charged. The idea of classifying superintendents and foremen as exempt employees was briefly discussed, but it was decided to leave things as they are.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON HOLIDAY SCHEDULE FOR 2024:

District Manager Arthur Gardner said that Madera Cemetery District follows the County's lead on its holiday schedule. He questioned which department of the County the District follows. One department observes 15 holidays and another observes 14. Trustee Belva Bare stated the District observes 12.5 holidays a year. When asked whether the District should follow County's lead or maintain the status quo, the Board instructed to keep the current schedule.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES IN DECEMBER, 2023:

The Board was questioned whether a meeting of the Board would be held in December. This question will be placed for discussion on the October, 2023 agenda.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CEMETERY SECURITY REPORT:

District Manager Arthur Gardner stated that Gatekeeper Ruben Guerra is doing a good job.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISIONS ON INVESTEMENTS FOR E.C. & PRE-NEED FUNDS WITH SANDRA WHEELER:

Trustee David Nemeth said there was nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:50 p.m.