



MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF OCTOBER 24, 2023

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT, HELD TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 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. GENERALIST

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 David Nemeth led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Trustee Belva Bare asked about some of the charges on the credit card bill. A review of the minutes from the September 26, 2023 board meeting showed that under *Discussion/ Report if Needed on operations of MCD Cemeteries*, the name Rob Hill should be corrected to Rob Ellis. The next Board meeting will be November 28, 2023, which Trustee David Nemeth announced he would not be able to attend. Trustee Belva Bare so moved to approve the Consent Calendar, Trustee David Nemeth 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:

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 reported that things are going well. He is working with Larry Moore of Berry Construction to prepare for the installation of a flagpole at the new office. They are going to bury pipe under the concrete so electrical lines can be pulled to light the flag. Trustee Lois Betty asked whether he was planning on posting signs to guide people to the new office, to which Mr. Ramirez answered in the affirmative. He also spoke regarding issues with the public misusing the gate at Calvary Cemetery by entering through the exit after hours.

REPORT/DISCUSSION CAPC MEETING OCTOBER 5-7, 2023:

Trustee Celeste Voyles reported that she learned a few things at the conference, but that one of the presentations on green burials seemed like a marketing pitch. Trustee David Nemeth said there were two presentations on green burials and that the presentation given by Davis Cemetery District was one of the best he's seen on the subject. He said that Davis also holds arts presentations in their office to attract patrons and promote their district.

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

District Manager Arthur Gardner reported that the new office's walls have been textured, doors are hung, kitchen cabinets have been installed, forms are being set for concrete in the parking area, and that all the furniture has been chosen.

Board Chair Candy Talley asked about solar. Mr. Gardner showed the Board a printout of the District's account with PG&E, which showed a credit of over \$10k. A revised agreement with GreenDay Finance for Arbor Vitae's solar was signed in September.

Management has come to terms with PlotBox regarding how much of the District's data they can import into their system. Because of inconsistent formatting in the data, Plotbox will be able to migrate current burials and completed contracts, but MCD will need to handle some of the other data input manually.

Rebate paperwork for Arbor Vitae's new cart has been submitted to the air pollution control district. The new cart for Oakhurst should be arriving soon.

Madera County Arts Council has been out to look at the new District office building and assess suitable areas where art could be displayed.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON INCREASING BUDGET FOR UNFORESEEN PURCHASES RELATED TO NEW DISTRICT OFFICE:

District Manager Arthur Gardner said that \$45k had been allocated in the 2024 budget for the purchase of computers, furniture, and other items for the new office. There are some items that had not been considered, primarily: a District sign for the

front of the building (\$4,515); a new flag pole (\$3,300); and window shades (\$5,800); for a total of \$13,615. Gardner said he'd received a quote for window tinting, but that he would wait and see if it is needed. Lettering indicating the entrance to the office and to the board room will be placed on the door glass at the front of the building.

Trustee David Nemeth said that he'd recently attended an Art Trails event in Oakhurst and thought it would be a good idea to commission a painting of each of MCD's five cemeteries to display in the board room. He showed a painting from the artist he had in mind. The Board agreed that Nemeth should look into it further.

Trustee David Nemeth so moved to allocate another \$15,000 to cover unplanned expenses for the new District office. Trustee Celeste Voyles seconded and all were in favor.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON RESOLUTION 146, RESOLUTION TO ADOPT REVISIONS AND ADDITIONS TO POLICIES REGARDING THE ACQUISITION OF BURIAL RIGHTS, FAMILY CREMATION PLOTS, INTERMENTS AND DISINTERMENTS, AND ENDOWMENT CARE:

District Manager Arthur Gardner reviewed with the Board the policy changes they had agreed to make in the September, 2023 Board meeting, which was now presented as a formal resolution. He pointed out one proposed change that had been added since the prior discussion regarding who is allowed to be buried in the Vets' Section. The Board decided that only veterans and their spouses should be allowed to be buried in the Veterans' Sections.

The Board also discussed whether Endowment Care should be charged for every burial and decided that the full endowment care should be charged with every burial. Per the resolution, this new Endowment Care policy takes effect 12/1/2023.

The Board voted on Resolution 146 as follows: Chair Candy Talley, aye; Trustee David Nemeth, aye; Trustee Belva Bare, abstained; Trustee Lois Betty, aye; Trustee Celeste Voyles, aye. All Trustees signed the resolution.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON UPDATING EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK SECTION CFRA/FMLA TO BE COMPLIANT WITH CURRENT LAW:

District Manager Arthur Gardner and HR Generalist Stephen Cloeters explained to the Board that California law now requires that employers continue to provide dental insurance to employees when they take leave to care for family or *designated persons*. An updated Employee Handbook section on FMLA/CFRA was presented for the Board's consideration, adding *dental* insurance and *designated persons* to the existing language. Trustee Lois Betty so moved to approve the update, Trustee David Nemeth seconded, and the Board was polled: Candy Talley, aye; David Nemeth, aye; David Nemeth, aye; Belva Bare, aye; and Celeste Voyles, aye.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON DECEMBER REGULAR BOARD MEETING:

Because of the Planning Meeting on December 5 and 6, it was decided to not hold a Regular Meeting of the Board in December. The Planning Meeting will be held at the District office rather than at The Pines Resort in Bass Lake.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CEMETERY SECURITY:

Calvary Cemetery continues to have the problem of cars entering through the exit gate after hours. Unless all cars are forced to exit the grounds prior to the staff leaving, people stay behind and pull up to the gate to open it. They then back up and allow cars to enter the grounds from the road. District Manager Arthur Gardner said that tire rippers had been discussed before by the Board. He said he'd spoken with the insurance representative from GSRMA, who said that if the District were to install tire rippers, it would be best to install them directly under the gate so that the teeth are not exposed while the gate is closed. The teeth must also be retractable so they don't present a liability while the gate is open during business hours. Trustee Lois Betty feels that tire rippers are too much of a liability. Chair Candy Talley suggested closing the gates at 4:00 p.m. and posting a sign at Calvary with the new hours.

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

Trustee David Nemeth reported that he'd spoken with Sandra Wheeler. The District has \$363,000 in pre-need available for investment, \$112,000 in Endowment Care principal and \$91,000 in Endowment Interest.

Preneed: \$240,000 CD due 10/28/23 with a yield of 5.7% (Pathfinder Bank)
\$121,000 due 10/27/23, yield of 5.582%, (Federal Farm Credit Bank)

Endowment Principal: \$111,111 due 9/28, yield of 5.614% (Federal Home Loan)

Endowment Interest: \$91,000 CD due 4/24/24, yield 5.4% (People's Bank Ohio)

ADJOURNMENT: 7:20 p.m.