



# MINUTES

OF THE **REGULAR BOARD MEETING** OF THE **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

OF THE **MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2024, 5:30 p.m.**

**1301 ROBERTS AVE., MADERA, CA 93637**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT, HELD TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 2024 AT 5:30 P.M. AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE BUILDING IN ARBOR VITAE CEMETERY, LOCATED AT 1301 ROBERTS AVE., MADERA, CA 93637

**TRUSTEES PRESENT:**

CANDY TALLEY  
LOIS BETTY  
BELVA BARE  
CELESTE VOYLES

**PUBLIC/EMPLOYEES PRESENT:**

ARTHUR GARDNER - DISTRICT MANAGER  
RONNIE RAMIREZ – OPERATIONS MANAGER  
STEPHEN CLOETERS – H.R. GENERALIST  
ARMANDO VEGA – GROUNDSKEEPER II

**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 Lois Betty, Belva Bare, and Celeste Voyles were present. David Nemeth was absent.

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:**

H.R. Generalist Stephen Cloeters led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM:**

None

**CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Trustee Lois Betty expressed concern with the new wording used in the agenda to describe the closed-session conversations with employees who receive their annual evaluation. There was a discussion on what wording to use. *Review Employee Evaluation* will be used.

Trustee Lois Betty also pointed out wording in the agenda that says trustees “may discuss and/or act on those items listed”. She stated the Board does not act on any item in closed session. Management was asked to look at the wording in the agendas of other cemetery districts.

Trustee Lois Betty moved to approve the consent calendar with the changes, Trustee Belva Bare seconded, and all voted in favor.

**RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION:**

Chairperson Candy Talley asked for a closed session to discuss personnel matters and to meet with District employees.

**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 MCD CEMETERIES:**

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez said that all cemeteries are doing their spring cleanup of the grounds. Groundskeeper David Jaimes repaired the water pipes that lead to the eyewash station at Calvary and saved the District approximately \$3,000 by doing it in-house.

District Manager Arthur Gardner said that management is exploring automating the sprinkler system at Arbor Vitae.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION OF ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner reported he contacted the property manager of the property adjacent to Arbor Vitae regarding District trees along the property line. The neighbor is free to trim the branches on their side of the fence. No response yet from the property manager.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISIONS ON ARBOR VITAE SOLAR, PLOTBOX CEMETERY MAPPING, ELECTRIC VEHICLES, ARBOR VITAE MAUSOLEUM, AND CALVARY NICHE PROJECTS:**

Greenday Finance has proposed a different structure and pricing for the solar system at Arbor Vitae. The new array would be smaller, generate less electricity, and cost more. District Manager Arthur Gardner had reached out to the contractor that installed the solar panels at Calvary to explore options, and he was surprised because he had been told the project was canceled. Gardner had also reached out to County Counsel to discuss but hasn't made contact. It appears that Greenday is possibly trying to get out of the agreement. Trustee Lois Betty stated that Gardner needs to make sure that MCD does not have to honor the contract. Trustee Belva Bare suggested getting in touch with attorney Bob Hunt.

Gardner reported that PlotBox is a lot of work, but that a lot of progress had been made in the past few weeks. The go-live date is now May 12.

The new electric cart has arrived and been delivered to Oakhill Cemetery.

Larry Moore from Berry Construction has found an architect for the mausoleums at Arbor Vitae. New plans are needed because of design differences from the previous mausoleums and because of changes to the building code.

Concrete for the niches at Calvary has been poured and the niches are under construction.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/APPROVAL OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST CODE:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner presented the Board with an updated Conflict of Interest Code. It should receive approval from the County because it was drafted by County Counsel. Trustee Belva Bare made a motion to approve the COI as presented, Trustee Celeste Voyles seconded, and all voted in favor: Candy Talley, aye; Lois Betty, aye; Belva Bare, aye; and Celeste Voyles, aye.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON DATE/TIME OF BOARD VISIT TO OAKHILL CEMETERY TO CONSIDER DEVELOPMENT PLAN:**

Trustee Belva Bare suggested development plans be discussed in June at a board meeting held at the Oakhill Cemetery. All agreed. Trustees who live in the valley will meet June 25 at Arbor Vitae Cemetery at 1:30 p.m. and travel together to a 2:30 Regular Meeting of the Board.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON DATE OF SPRING PLANNING MEETING:**

Board Chair Candy Talley stated that the Spring Planning Meeting will be held April 23 at 2:30 p.m. and the Regular Board Meeting will follow at 5:30 p.m.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON HOLDING REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS DURING BUSINESS HOURS:**

A discussion was had on moving the Regular Board Meetings to an earlier time, during office hours. This is possible because of the new district office with a boardroom. Chairperson Candy Talley asked District Manager Arthur Gardner to present the Board with a resolution to amend the District's Bylaws to allow the changing of the time of board meetings.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION ON ANNEXATION OF LAND ALONG HWY 41 CORRIDOR:**

This agenda item was tabled for later discussion.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON TRANSITION FROM CURRENT BOOKKEEPING SYSTEM TO QUICKBOOKS:**

Trustee Celeste Voyles said she is working with Office Technician Tracy Isaak on cleaning up the books in preparation for the move to QuickBooks. District Manager Arthur Gardner asked whether he could move ahead with RSK Business Services and the switch to QuickBooks. All were in agreement to do so.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION ON MASTER PLAN FOR ARBOR VITAE'S 10 ACRES:**

Trustee Lois Betty shared that she'd spoken with Lee & Associates at the CAPC conference in San Diego and was impressed with their work. She requested that this item be placed on the agenda for the Spring Planning Meeting.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON RECORDS RETENTION POLICY:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner reported that he'd spoken to CalPERS about how long they hold onto records. The person he spoke with did not know. After a brief discussion, it was decided to put this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON ADDING GRANDPARENTS TO  
DEFINITION OF FAMILY IN POLICIES:**

A resolution to expand the definition of *family* to include grand/great grandparent, grand/great grandchild, and stepparent relationships was presented. Trustee Lois Betty made a motion to approve so long as step grandparents were added, Trustee Belva Bare seconded, and all voted in favor: Candy Talley, aye; Lois Betty, aye; Belva Bare, aye; Celeste Voyles, aye.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON PROVING FAMILY RELATIONSHIP WITH  
INTERRED PERSON(S) TO OBTAIN RIGHT TO BE BURIED:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner described a recent situation where a non-resident was dishonest about a family relationship with an interred person in order to purchase a plot. It was agreed that District employees should ask for proof of a family relationship.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON MADERA COUNTY SHERIFF'S REQUEST  
TO DISINTER FOUR GRAVES:**

Madera County Sheriff's Department is planning on disinterring four *John Doe* bodies to ascertain their identity through DNA testing. The District has not charged the Sheriff's Department disinterment fees in the past. Trustee Lois Betty made a motion to not charge this time, Trustee Belva Bare seconded, and all voted in favor.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON BOARD PHOTOS AND BUSINESS CARDS:**

Trustee Belva Bare pitched the idea of posting pictures of the Trustees in the office and printing business cards for them. This will be on the agenda of the next meeting.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CEMETERY SECURITY:**

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez and District Manager Arthur Gardner had met with the security camera vendor to discuss additional cameras at Calvary Cemetery.

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

Nothing to report.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION ON AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MONTH'S BOARD MEETING:**

There were no requests from the Board to place additional items on the April agenda.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 8:08 p.m.