



MINUTES

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

OF THE **MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT**

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024, 2:30 p.m.

1301 ROBERTS AVE., MADERA, CA 93637

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT, HELD TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 AT 2:30 P.M. AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE BUILDING IN ARBOR VITAE CEMETERY, LOCATED AT 1301 ROBERTS AVE., MADERA, CA 93637

TRUSTEES PRESENT:

LOIS BETTY
BELVA BARE
DAVID NEMETH
CELESTE VOYLES

PUBLIC/EMPLOYEES PRESENT:

ARTHUR GARDNER - DISTRICT MANAGER
RONNIE RAMIREZ – OPERATIONS MANAGER
STEPHEN CLOETERS – H.R. GENERALIST
TRACY ISAAK – OFFICE TECHNICIAN
JOE RIOS – GROUNDSKEEPER II

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chair Lois Betty called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF BOARD:

Vice Chairperson Lois Betty took roll of the Board. Trustees Lois Betty, Belva Bare, David Nemeth, and Celeste Voyles were present. Board Chair Candy Talley was not present with an excused absence.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:

Groundskeeper II Joe Rios led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM:

None

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

Because Sandra Wheeler was present for the meeting via Zoom, this item was moved forward on the agenda to accommodate her schedule.

Ms. Wheeler reviewed market trends and the performance of the District's investments. Bond rates are dropping which is resulting in lower returns as the

District's bonds mature and monies are reinvested. Ms. Wheeler said the Fed is forecast to lower interest rates.

Trustee David Nemeth reviewed some recent investments and their yield rates.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Trustee Lois Betty pointed out that the fiscal year printed on the Budget sheet was incorrect. The balances of the funds held with the County are incorrect because the County has not provided reports since June, 2024. The next Board meeting will be October 22, 2024.

Trustee David Nemeth moved to approve the Consent Calendar, Trustee Belva Bare seconded and all voted in favor.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION:

Vice Chair Lois Betty asked for a closed session.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION - REPORT OF ANY ACTION TAKEN:

Vice Chair Lois Betty reported that no action had been taken in closed session.

DISCUSSION/REPORT IF NEEDED ON OPERATIONS OF MCD CEMETERIES:

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez reported the new security cameras at Calvary have been installed. The new camera mounted at the main gate takes a picture of every vehicle that enters and exits the cemetery, and its license plate. This will help law enforcement in any potential investigations. There is no need to post a sign notifying people they are on camera because it is a public space.

The painting of the buildings at Calvary is almost complete and the new wall leading to the Oakhill office is almost done.

The District is no longer using fax machines and is transmitting pdf documents via cell phone.

REPORT/DISCUSSION OF ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING:

District Manager Arthur Gardner spoke with Oakhill Foreman Robert Ellis regarding reading the water meter. Ellis said he would find out if he can read it.

Gardner confirmed that sales tax tied to pre-need sales should be paid to the state at the time of use and not at the time of purchase.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISIONS ON ARBOR VITAE SOLAR, PLOTBOX CEMETERY MAPPING, ELECTRIC VEHICLES, OAKHILL RETAINING WALL CONSTRUCTION, AND ARBOR VITAE MAUSOLEUM:

District Manager Arthur Gardner shared pictures of the plans for the solar array. PlotBox is progressing. HR Generalist Stephen Cloeters has taken the lead on learning the program and will be doing training with cemetery managers.

The rebate check for the Oakhill electric cart has been received.

The plans for the Arbor Vitae mausoleums has passed plan check with the city. It will be necessary to remove the existing trees from the mausoleum site because the new mausoleums are larger than the originals.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION OF PUBLIC REQUEST FOR SPECIAL HEADSTONE:

District Manager Arthur Gardner stated that a Mr. Chen had requested placing nine small headstones across the width of three plots he'd purchased at Arbor Vitae. Vice Chair Lois Betty stated that we must abide by our policies and suggested Gardner provide some other options to the gentleman and report back to the Board.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF QUICKBOOKS:

District Manager Arthur Gardner said there was nothing to report.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION OF ADJUSTMENTS TO 2024/25 BUDGET:

District Manager Arthur Gardner asked for this to be shelved for another meeting.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON UPDATE TO PURCHASING POLICIES & PROCEDURES:

There have been some issues with recent projects for which the work was outsourced to outside vendors. Two vendors submitted bids without calculating prevailing wages into their prices. After work was started, both vendors claimed they were not told about prevailing wage and requested a change to their payment from the District.

In response to these issues, District Manager Arthur Gardner presented the Board with proposed changes to the Purchasing Policies and Procedures and a proposed form to use when bids are solicited to help ensure vendors include prevailing wage and the project specifications are clear.

This item will be on the October agenda with further discussion on the dollar threshold that will require Board approval. The Board will also discuss whether to authorize the allocation of more funds for the vendor that sealed the roof at Calvary.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON NICHES AT OAKHURST LUTHERAN CHURCH:

Trustee David Nemeth reported that the Lutheran church is not ready to make a decision yet. This agenda item will be shelved until further notice.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CAPC CONFERENCE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11 IN SAN LUIS OBISPO:

Reservations are made for everyone. District Manager will be driving his own vehicle.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON DISTRICT MANAGER'S COMPENSATION:

The Board reviewed the employment agreement as drafted by Atty. Bob Hunt. Due to concerns with the wording about vacation accrual, this item will be on the October agenda.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON MCD HISTORY COMMITTEE:

Trustee Belva Bare stated that she, Trustee David Nemeth, Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez, and District Manager Arthur Gardner should meet to go over what needs to be saved. She suggested things could be stored in the vault in the old District office.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON ACCEPTING CREDIT CARDS FOR ALL TRANSACTIONS:

The Board did agreed that it would be okay to accept credit and debit cards for a wider number of transactions. The directed District Manager Arthur Gardner to look into this further.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON TIMING OF NEW HIRES:

With the impending retirement of Maintenance Specialist Fred Verduzco, management would like to fill the opening prior to his departure so the new hire can get up to speed. The Board approved hiring early, so long as it fits in the budget.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON COUNT CLAWBACK OF PROPERTY TAX REVENUE:

The Board was presented with reports from the County showing how much money was taken back and when it was done. Trustee David Nemeth questioned the ethics of clawing back the money without notifying the District and said we should find out the statute or law the County used to govern whether the money could be taken back and how far back they could go. Trustee Belva Bare said the Auditor-Controller should inform the Board via a letter. Trustee Celeste Voyles she could potentially go to County Supervisor Robert Poythress for remedy.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON OVERTIME STAFFING FOR DIA DE MUERTOS AT CALVARY – SATURDAY NOV 3, 2024:

Because Dia de Muertos falls on a Saturday this year, the District would have to pay two employees eight hours of overtime. Gatekeeper Ruben Guerra would not have to work a full day. Trustee Celeste Voyles stated that we should have a strong presence that day and Trustee David Nemeth said our presence would be a goodwill gesture to the community. Nemeth moved to approve OT for two employees on November 2, Voyles seconded, and all voted in favor.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON GSRMA LETTER OF NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL:

Trustee David Nemeth moved to sign the letter to GSRMA notifying them that the District may cancel, Trustee Belva Bare seconded, and all voted in favor.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CEMETERY SECURITY:

There have been no security issues reported.

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

No additional items were raised.

ADJOURNMENT: 5:36 p.m.