



# MINUTES

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

OF THE **MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2025, 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, JUNE 24, 2025, 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  
CANDY TALLEY  
MIKE FRANKLIN

**PUBLIC/EMPLOYEES PRESENT:**

ARTHUR GARDNER - DISTRICT MANAGER  
RONNIE RAMIREZ - OPERATIONS MANAGER  
STEPHEN CLOETERS - H.R. GENERALIST  
JESUS BRAVO - GROUNDSKEEPER I  
GARRY RIEZEBOS - AUDITOR  
SAMANTHA - CONCERNED CITIZEN

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairperson Lois Betty called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

**ROLL CALL OF BOARD:**

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

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:**

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM:**

None.

**CONSENT CALENDAR:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner pointed out an error on the agenda. The date of the next Board Meeting is July 22<sup>nd</sup>, not the 29<sup>th</sup> as printed.

Regarding the finances, Board Chair Lois Betty said that in the future she would like for the expenditures to stay closer to the budget.

Trustee Candy Talley made motion to approve the Consent Calendar with the date change for the July Board Meeting, Trustee David Nemeth seconded, and all voted in favor.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM:**

A member of the public arrived to the meeting after the Public Comment segment on the agenda. As a courtesy, Chairperson Lois Betty allowed her to speak. Samantha introduced herself to the Board and said the headstone on her son's grave at Calvary Cemetery has been vandalized several times. She also said there is "a dip" on his grave that is so bad, she and her family worry about hurting themselves. She said that Ruben, the gatekeeper, harasses her and her family on the weekends. She stated that the security cameras at Calvary are not able to capture the vandalizing of her son's grave and questioned what the cameras are for. She said the District should have cameras on Avenue 14 to capture car traffic footage. Board Chair Lois Betty asked Samantha if she'd spoken to the grounds crew at Calvary about the dip. Samantha said she had but was told that they were too busy to do anything about it.

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez stated that he'd been in touch with the Madera County District Attorney's Office on the vandalizing issue and that he is going to meet with the Sheriff's Office to explore solutions. He said he would go to Calvary to look into the "dip" issue.

Chairperson Lois Betty thanked Samantha for coming to meet with the Board on this matter and told her that the Board could not make a decision at this time, but that it would be discussed later. Ms. Betty asked Samantha to put her complaint in writing and submit it to the district manager, whose business card was provided to her.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

None

**REPORT/DISCUSSION ON AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2024:**

Garry Riezebos, auditor from the accountancy firm Adair & Evans, presented the 2023-24 Audit to the Board. He stated his opinion that the District is doing well financially, answered questions from the Board and management about some budget items, and said the office staff was good to work with. Management still needs to reduce the preneed accounts receivable balance and create schedules that detail the balances in the marker deposits account and the preneed account.

Chairperson Lois Betty noted that the agenda limited the Board's actions on the audit to *Report/Discussion* and did not include making a decision. She stated that a decision on the approval of the 2024 audit required immediate action and asked for a motion to add approval of the audit to the agenda as Item A.1. Trustee Candy Talley moved to add Approval of the 2024 Audit to the agenda as Item A.1, Trustee David Nemeth seconded the motion, and all voted in favor: Trustee Belva Bare, aye; Trustee David Nemeth, aye; Trustee Candy Talley, aye; and Trustee Mike Franklin, aye.

**DECISION ON APPROVING AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2024:**

Chairperson Lois Betty asked for a motion to approve the audit for the year ending June 30, 2024. Trustee David Nemeth made a motion to approve the audit as presented, Trustee Belva Bare seconded. Chairperson Lois Betty asked for a poll of the Board: Lois Betty, aye; Belva Bare, aye; David Nemeth, aye; Mike Franklin, aye; and Candy Talley, aye.

**RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION:**

Chairperson Lois Betty asked for a closed session.

**RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION - REPORT OF ANY ACTION TAKEN:**

Chairperson Lois Betty said no action was taken in closed session.

**DISCUSSION/REPORT IF NEEDED ON OPERATIONS OF MCD CEMETERIES:**

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez said that the solar project at Arbor Vitae Cemetery was underway. There have been a lot of delays with the project.

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

District Manager Arthur Gardner said that the County claw back of monies overpaid to MCD was complete.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON DISTRICT MANAGER'S COMPENSATION FOR 2025-26:**

Trustee David Nemeth made a motion to approve the contract for the district manager's compensation for 2025-26, Trustee Mike Franklin seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON CANCELATION OF CONTRACTS IN DEFAULT:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner presented to the Board a list of preneed contracts to be cancelled. Those on the list had not made any payments after receiving a collections letter in October, 2024 and a final notice in May, 2025. There was a brief discussion about a few exceptions. Trustee Candy Talley made a motion to cancel the contracts as presented on the list, with the exception that the contract for Linda Ortega not be cancelled and that plots 44 and 45 not be taken back from Clementina Perez. Trustee Mike Franklin seconded the motion and all voted unanimously in favor.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION ON NICHE AVAILABILITY AT OAKHILL & ARBOR VITAE CEMETERIES:**

The Board reviewed the number of available niches at Arbor Vitae and Oakhill cemeteries. Arbor Vitae has no companion niches available. Chairperson Lois Betty said she was under the impression that these two cemeteries were running low on niche space. District Manager Arthur Gardner said that there is no immediate need

but that the District needs to keep an eye on inventory and make plans for the near future. People who want a companion niche can purchase two niches side by side. As future niches are designed, a higher percentage of them need to be for companions.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION OF DAVID NEMETH'S NOMINATION TO RUN FOR ELECTION THE CAPC BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

The CAPC Nominating Committee had nominated Trustee David Nemeth to run for election to the CAPC Board of Directors. After a short discussion, Trustee Belva Bare made a motion to approve of Nemeth's nomination, Trustee Candy Talley seconded and all voted in favor.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner advised the Board the revenues for 2025-26 will likely be higher than projected in the budget. This revision was based on final numbers coming in from the County financial reports for the end of the fiscal year.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON RESOLUTION 160-2025; MARKER INSCRIPTION REQUIREMENTS:**

Trustee Candy Talley made a motion to approve *Resolution 160-2025; Marker Inscription Requirements*, which defines the minimum information that must be inscribed on a headstone or on an urn placed in a glass niche, Trustee Mike Franklin seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously: Candy Talley, aye; David Nemeth, aye; Mike Franklin, aye; Belva Bare, aye; and Lois Betty, aye.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON RESOLUTION 161-2025; VOLUNTEER POLICY:**

Trustee Belva Bare made a motion to approve *Resolution 161-2025; Volunteer Policy*, which states that the only volunteers allowed to perform work on District property are those who work outside the supervision of District employees. Trustee Candy Talley seconded, the Board was polled and the motion carried unanimously: Candy Talley, aye; David Nemeth, aye; Mike Franklin, aye; Belva Bare, aye; and Lois Betty, aye.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON RESOLUTION 162-2025; WORK BOOTS POLICY:**

Trustee Candy Talley moved to approve *Resolution 162-2025; Work Boots Policy*, which sets forth the type of footwear that members of the grounds crew are required to wear. Trustee Mike Franklin seconded the motion and the Board was polled: Candy Talley, aye; David Nemeth, aye; Mike Franklin, aye; Belva Bare, aye; and Lois Betty, aye.

## **REPORT/DISCUSSION ON DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN COUNTY & MCD**

### **REPORTING OF REVENUE:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner presented some historical numbers to the Board comparing the County's revenue numbers to the District's reported revenue, going back to July of 2021. The discrepancies have always been. He believes they are simply a timing issue but will keep looking further into the matter.

## **REPORT/DISCUSSION ON LAFCO AND ADDING COUNTRY CLUB AREA INTO MCD'S SPHERE OF INFLUENCE:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner presented a proposed agreement to be signed by the trustees of the Madera and Chowchilla cemetery districts that would formalize in writing the verbal agreement between the two regarding MCD waiving the nonresident fee for residents of the Country Club area. After some discussion, it was decided that the proposed agreement should be sent to Atty. Bob Hunt for his legal input.

## **REPORT/DISCUSSION ON PG&E BILLS & CALVARY SOLAR SITUATION:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner reported that he'd looked at the past four years of electricity usage at Calvary Cemetery and that it didn't appear that the District is saving any money. He suspects that when the solar company, Greenday, looked back at Calvary's usage to calculate the size of installation needed, they looked back at a time when one of Calvary's two well pumps was down and less power was being used. He believes that, as a result, they designed a system that was undersized and doesn't generate enough power for normal usage. Gardner will continue to look into this.

## **REPORT/DISCUSSION ON STATUS OF PRENEED FUND OUTSTANDING CONTRACTS:**

District Manager Arthur Gardner said that Human Resources Generalist Stephen Cloeters is currently going through the preneed records to determine the balance of the District's outstanding contracts. This will help determine how much of the fund is principal and how much is interest.

## **REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON INSTALLING TRAFFIC SPIKES AT CALVARY AND ARBOR VITAE CEMETERIES:**

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez reported that he'd received a quote of \$22,000 to install traffic spikes at the main exits to Calvary and Arbor Vitae cemeteries. Trustee Mike Franklin asked whether this price included putting up the required warning signs. Mr. Ramirez said he did not know but would look into it.

Chairperson Lois Betty asked that this item be included in the agenda for the next meeting.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CEMETERY SECURITY:**

Chairperson Lois Betty said security had already been discussed as part of other agenda items.

NOTE: Trustee Belva Bare left the meeting at 5:48

Trustee Candy Talley left the meeting at 5:51

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISIONS ON INVESTEMENTS FOR ENDWOMENT CARE & PRE-NEED FUNDS:**

Trustee David Nemeth reviewed actions taken with \$349k of Endowment Care principal, \$47k of Endowment Care interest, and \$61k of Preneed funds.

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

County and MCD financial discrepancies, LAFCO/Country Club issue, solar true-ups and traffic spikes.

**ADJOURNMENT:** 5:57 p.m.