



MINUTES

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

OF THE **MADERA CEMETERY DISTRICT**

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 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, SEPTEMBER 23, 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
TRACY ISAAK - OFFICE TECHNICIAN
STEPHEN CLOETERS - H.R. GENERALIST
DAVID RIGHTHOUSE - PUBLIC

CALL TO ORDER:

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

ROLL CALL OF BOARD:

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

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:

General Manager Arthur Gardner led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY AGENDA ITEM:

None

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Trustee Belva Bare asked questions about a few checks in the check register.

Trustee Candy Talley made a motion to approve the consent calendar, Trustee David Nemeth seconded, and all voted in favor.

The next Regular Meeting of the Board will be October 28, 2025.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None

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 reported that the solar installation at Arbor Vitae is complete and will start operating after the city signs off on the project. Traffic spikes should be installed at Calvary Cemetery in October. There was a brief discussion about signage for the spikes.

REPORT/DISCUSSION OF ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING:

A. Oakhill squirrel problem

District Manager Arthur Gardner said a Squirellinator had been purchased for Oakhill but it was subsequently discovered that Oakhill already had one. The device is now at Calvary Cemetery.

B. Chowchilla Cemetery District board meeting

Mr. Gardner reported that he'd attended a board meeting of the Chowchilla Cemetery District to discuss with them the Country Club agreement. Only two members of their board were in attendance during the business portion of the meeting, so no decision was made. Their board would consider the agreement at their next meeting.

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

The Board reviewed a new list of contracts to be part of the next round of cancelation notices. Trustee Candy Talley suggested that any contracts with very low balances be left off the list and that those small amounts could be collected at the time of burial.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON ENGAGING WITH AUDITOR TO PERFORM AUDIT FOR YEAR ENDING 6/30/2025:

District Manager Arthur Gardner had spoken with the Adair & Evans auditor, Garry Riezebos, about his pricing and Garry felt confident that his price was where it should be. Gardner had inquired about pricing from two other firms and Adair & Evans' price was in the middle. Gardner suggested staying with Garry for one more

year and then look around next year. The Board agreed to stay with Adair and Evans for the 2024-25 audit.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON PROPOSED RESOLUTION 167-2025,
AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF TWO MORE EV UTILITY CARTS FOR
ARBOR VITAE AND CALVARY CEMETERIES:**

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez and District Manager Arthur Gardner spoke to the Board about the status of two electric vehicles used by the District for transporting caskets. The current vehicles are from the 2000 model year and require eight standard batteries to operate. The batteries need to be replaced every two or three years at a cost of over \$1k. The Board had approved the purchase of two EV's in the August meeting and were asked to approve another two which, after rebates, would cost the District \$0.

Chairperson Lois Betty asked whether there was any concern about the batteries and the risk of fire. Trustee Mike Franklin said that as long as the correct charger is used and the vehicles aren't charged near gasoline, they're safe. Trustee David Nemeth asked if they were American-made. Mr. Ramirez said they are and they're configured to our specifications.

Trustee Candy Talley moved to approve the purchase of two utility carts, Trustee Mike Franklin seconded, and all voted in favor: Chairperson Lois Betty, aye; Vice Chair Belva Bare, aye; Trustee David Nemeth, aye; Trustee Candy Talley, aye; and Trustee Mike Franklin, aye.

**REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON CHANGES TO DESIGNATION OF
SUCCESSOR POLICY:**

Attorney Brian Hughes from the law firm Best Best & Krieger spoke at the PCA conference in Grass Valley in September. District Manager Arthur Gardner shared a novel idea Mr. Hughes had presented regarding reclaiming abandoned plots.

Hughes suggested inserting language into the purchase agreement that requires the purchaser to designate a successor owner to the interment right and that that successor, in turn, designate a successor heir. If an interment right remains unused after the death of the owner or their successor, the purchaser agrees that the interment right should revert back to the District.

If implemented, this policy would only be effective moving forward and would not apply retroactively to existing agreements.

Chairperson Lois Betty and Trustee Belva Bare expressed some concern and suggested that Mr. Gardner check to see if other members of CAPC has done this. Trustee Bare did not like the idea of someone paying for something, only to have it taken away later.

Chairperson Lois Betty asked for this item be placed on the next month's agenda for a follow-up discussion.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON BEAUTIFICATION OF RAYMOND CEMETERY:

Trustee Candy Talley said she found out who owns the land around the Raymond Cemetery and handed out a printout.

Trustee Mike Franklin reviewed with the Board more of his findings about history of the Raymond Cemetery and about the feelings of some of the residents of the town. The property is larger than just the space used for burials. An agreement signed in 1991 allows the Clarence Jesse Bennett Trust to graze livestock on the unfenced portions of the property for \$1 a year. Residents Mr. Franklin spoke with cautioned against doing too much that would make the cemetery not feel like Raymond, but they said fixing headstones and addressing the critter problem would be welcomed.

Franklin intends to approach colleges/universities and County Maintenance to check for access to ground penetrating radar to ascertain the locations of unknown graves.

Chairperson Lois Betty suggested the trustees should gather for lunch in Raymond and take a look around the cemetery.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON NEXT NICHE PROJECT AT ARBOR VITAE CEMETERY AND BEAUTIFICATION OF MAUSOLEUMS C&D:

District Manager Arthur Gardner shared with the Board pictures and quotes received from Rico's Memorial Stone and Gonzalez Engraved Memorials for niches to be installed on the east side of Mausoleums C and D. Both plans feature a bottom row that juts out at an angle and accommodates more urns for a family niche. Rico's plans has simple lines and Gonzalez' plans are more ornate. At the time of the meeting, the pricing quotes were not complete. Gardner is getting one more quote from Sunset Stone.

Gardner's goal is to provide niches that are affordable for families. This item is to be included in the October agenda.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON PRESSURIZED WATER TANK FOR NORTH FORK CEMETERY:

Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez said the current watering system at North Fork Cemetery is gravity-fed. Leaks in the system can go unnoticed because of the low pressure. He gave the Board the price for a pressurized tank to supplement the existing tanks. A pressurized tank would allow watering at any time of day or night, not just when the crew is present.

Trustee Belva Bare motioned to approve the purchase of a pressurized tank for North Fork, Trustee Mike Franklin seconded and all voted in favor.

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

District Manager Arthur Gardner reported he'd spoken with the contractor who installed the solar system at Arbor Vitae. Based on the information given to him, he said it seemed to him that the Calvary system was undersized.

There was some speculation that adding to the current system through Greenday Finance may cause the District to lose its NEM-2 status and send the whole system into the NEM-3 program. Chairperson Lois Betty put forward the idea of installing another, separate system to make up for the underpowered system.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISION ON DECEMBER'S REGULAR BOARD

MEETING:

MCD's bylaws say there is no regular meeting of the Board in December. Trustee Belva Bare said that it's a long time to go from a November meeting to a January meeting, and suggested that the January meeting be moved up to earlier in the month to cut down the time.

Trustee David Nemeth suggested moving up the January meeting by two weeks. Trustee Candy Talley motioned to move the January to January 13, 2026, Trustee David Nemeth seconded, and all voted in favor.

REPORT/DISCUSSION ON CEMETERY SECURITY:

Gatekeeper Ruben Guerra has had a few encounters with members of the public who defied his requests to comply with policies. District Manager Arthur Gardner said he and Operations Manager Ronnie Ramirez would like to purchase a body camera for Ruben to wear to document his interactions. Trustee Belva Bare suggested Gardner talk to legal counsel for advice.

Chairperson Lois Betty asked if everything was ready for Día de los Muertos. The answer was in the affirmative.

REPORT/DISCUSSION/DECISIONS ON INVESTEMENTS FOR

ENDWOMENT CARE & PRE-NEED FUNDS:

None to report.

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

MEETING:

Enhancements of the Raymond Cemetery, Mausoleum niches, and the Chowchilla agreement.

ADJOURNMENT: 4:51 p.m.