

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Friday, June 2, 2023

8:00 a.m.

A meeting of the governing Board of the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District (CVPCD) was held at the CVPCD Executive Office, located at 82847 Avenue 52, Coachella, CA 92236 on Friday, June 2, 2023, at 8:00 a.m.

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, May 29, 2023, at the following locations:

1. CVPCD Executive Office – 82847 Avenue 52, Coachella, CA 92236
2. The CVPCD website – <http://coachellacemetery.org>

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL

Chair Ernesto Rosales called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m., those in attendance were as follows:

Trustees present:

Ernesto Rosales, Chair

Judy Vossler, Vice-Chair

Marcos Coronel, Trustee *(left at 9:50 a.m.)*

Bruce Underwood, Trustee *(arrived at 8:42 a.m.)*

John Rios, Trustee

Trustees absent:

None

Additional participants:

Josh Bonner, General Manager

Sherry Winder, Finance Analyst/Clerk of the Board

Carlos Campos, General Counsel

Matt McCue, Consultant *(via Zoom)*

Additional participants for public comment:

None

FLAG SALUTE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

A public comment was received via voicemail, which was transcribed and provided to all present.

Transcription of Public Comment received via voicemail on 05/23/2023:

“How you doing my name is Mr. Davos. Would like to make a complaint about your security issue. It’s gotten worse since the last couple of years. So bad to the point yesterday, I pulled up for maybe not even a minute, literally from when I jumped out of the truck to pick up my loved ones cross and ran back, because I was running late for work, so it took me less than a minute before your security started harassing me. The

woman security. Not the first time with her, she's extra, way extra. Started taking pictures of my truck and I say "hey, hey, I'm, I'm, I'm" you parked illegally, I said ok listen, I'm not blocking anyone, my truck is still on, it's not even a minute and then she goes on and ahead and tells me I'm always going there super fast, accusing me of going super fast. I haven't been there in months. I just happened to go there for my wife to pick up the cross, she's always there, or is there way more than me, in her vehicle, not in my vehicle. So she starts accusing, you know I'm just, we're just, I mean, people like her make us not want to bury our dead there. It's unfortunate but true. We were there months ago with a little speaker, mind you can't even, it's a little speaker, no one around and she goes over there and says you can't have music, like she's extra, she's like a Mexican Karen and it honestly, it's annoying. It's annoying and I never complain but I've had it. I've had it with her. Taking pictures of my vehicle, what is wrong with her? Making me, well she didn't make me late for work, I was running late but literally it wasn't even a minute and it was like as she was waiting for me to get there. It's like what is her problem? Again, it's an issue. I don't like it. You can return my call please that would be great (760) 272."

(Message ended at this point without receiving the full number.)

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1.1 Trustee Minutes
 - a. Regular Board Meeting & Annual Planning Session – May 5, 2023
- 1.2 Finance and Administration
 - a. Approval of Expenditures – Checks and ACH transactions as detailed
 - b. Investment Report
 - c. Budget to Actual
- 1.3 Replacement of Side-by-Side Unit
 - Utilization of insurance reimbursement funds to replace lost unit

Staff Report Recommendations: Approve a capital expenditure in the amount of \$11,000 to replace the stolen unit with a new 2023 Kawasaki MULE SX 4X4 FI.

Motion: Vossler – Move for approval of consent calendar
Second: Coronel
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Underwood
Motion passed.

2. ACTION ITEMS

- 2.1 Resolution Adopting 2023-2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule

The proposed resolution would set a regular meeting schedule for July 2023 through June 2024

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends that the Board adopt Resolution No. 123, A Resolution of the Board of Trustees of the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Setting the Regular Board of Trustees Annual Meeting Schedule for July 2023 through June 2024.

Motion: Rios – Move for approval
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Rios
Abstain: Coronel
No: None
Absent: Underwood
Motion passed.

2.2 Parking Area for Customer Carts
Creation of area for shaded parking of passenger carts

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends approving the creation of parking for the passenger carts.

Trustee Rios questioned who would be installing and GM Bonner stated the Maintenance Team will install.

Motion: Vossler – Move for approval
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Underwood
Motion passed.

2.3 County Zoning for Undeveloped Cemetery Property
Review of current zoning for APN#780010010

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends changing the current capital budget designation of “Parcel 780-010-010 Development” to “Master Plan Development” and keeping the balance available at \$50,000, the current level. As bids for development planning are received, and plans adopted and executed, this project budget can be expanded as needed.

GM Bonner reviewed staff report and confirmed area is not zoned for Cemetery use, as it is currently zoned for light agriculture. Rezoning process requires a site plan, which we will not have until the Master Plan project is started. Trustee Coronel questioned when funds were anticipated to be used, and GM Bonner responded that the RFP process determines that. The RFP process will start this year and will be brought to the Board for review upon receipt.

Motion: Coronel – Accept staff recommendation per staff report
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Underwood
Motion passed.

2.4 Special District Risk Management Authority Board Election
Consideration of participation in SDRMA Board vote

GM Bonner reviewed staff report, noting the board has the option to vote or abstain. The board requested to wait for Trustee Underwood to be present and asked to move forward with the agenda until he arrives.

Reconsidered after Item 2.5. Trustee Underwood noted he would like to contact the candidates individually before making a recommendation.

Motion: Coronel – Designate Trustee Underwood as the liaison to return with a recommendation
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

2.5 Matthew McCue Consulting Contract
Renewal of contract for administrative services

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends retaining Mr. McCue for 2023-2024.

Mr. McCue performs several functions for the District, including Monthly Investment Reconciliations, Review of Account Functions, and Investment Transfers that our auditor has deemed necessary for an independent third part (not the GM or Finance Analyst) to do. Additional activities, such as grant writing, HR consulting, Budget Preparations, Financial Guidance, etc. are at the direction of the Board based on desired levels of support and necessary activity levels.

Consultant McCue expressed appreciation for the last two years, noting the Cemetery has come a long way. The Board thanked Consultant McCue for his time during the transition and stated that the contract will be minimized due to staff filling the role. GM Bonner reminded the Board that Consultant McCue currently handles independent items requested by the auditor that must be handled separate from staff.

Motion: Coronel – Motion for three (3) month transition period and issue RFP for ongoing services
Second: Rios

A recess was called at 8:38 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 8:40 a.m.

Trustee Underwood arrived at 8:42 a.m.

Vice-Chair Vossler noted she is not in favor of going to RFP at this time as she is concerned about losing historical data with Consultant McCue, and asked GM Bonner for his recommendation. GM Bonner noted that despite the essential services Consultant McCue provides, training still needs to be acquired by Financial Analyst Winder on the governmental accounting side and suggested reducing the contract to \$60,000 this year and going to RFP the following year for the essential services required by the auditor. GM Bonner noted the suggested RFP for essential accounting functions is anticipated to be approximately \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year. Board discussion ensued and a new amended motion was agreed to and introduced.

Motion: Vossler – Approve budget of \$60,000 with staff instructed to RFP for essential accounting functions in February with transition no later than end of contract
Second: Underwood
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

2.6 Headstone Placement Rights
Policy clearly defining the rights of a property owner to determine headstone placement

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends language into the current policy that clearly states the owner of the lot has controlling interest in the memorial placement. Further, staff recommends modifying or removing any language that is ambiguous to that outcome. An amended policy proposal is attached as Exhibit C.

GM Bonner reviewed staff report; noting there are next of kin and memorial site control concerns that are not documented that will be brought to the Board soon. Vice-Chair Vossler questioned if the owner of the lot doesn't want to pay for the headstone, what happens? GM Bonner stated the owner can grant permission to another. Board discussion ensued.

Motion: Coronel – Approve staff recommendation
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

2.7 2023-2024 Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Operating and Capital Budget
Consideration of operating and capital budget for upcoming fiscal year

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends that the Board review, discuss, and adopt the 2023-2024 budget as presented.

Staff recommends the board approve moving a total of \$1,650,080 from the general fund into the capital fund to cover future capital expense projections for 2024 through 2033. This will reflect available and allocated balances more accurately within our financial portfolio and allow our investment managers to better plan the timing of future investment maturity.

GM Bonner presented the annual budget adoption for the 2023/2024 budget that was presented at the May planning session and staff recommendations for transferring investment funds. GM Bonner noted that merit and COLA increase figures were not included with the staff figures in the budget, so a spreadsheet showing percentage increases were provided to the Board to determine if they wanted to approve those figures to be added to the 2023/2024 budget. GM Bonner clarified that the 5% merit increase is at the General Manager's discretion, however he needs the budget to do so. GM Bonner would like the Board to consider a 2%-3% COLA increase for staff. Trustee Coronel questioned if we had year-over-year budget increases for the past five years? GM Bonner stated that we do not currently have this information, as prior to the 2022/2023 budget, most expenses were put into Administrative Expense and not allocated to the accounts we now utilize. Trustee Coronel commented that the budget has continued to improve each year. Board discussion ensued.

Trustee Coronel stated he will be voting no on this item, as he does not feel he has sufficient information to approve the budget at this time.

Motion: Vossler – Approval of budget according to staff recommendation
Second: Underwood
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: Coronel
Absent: None
Motion passed.

Motion: Underwood – Approve 5% merit-based increase to staff be added to budget
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: Coronel
Absent: None
Motion passed.

Trustee Coronel stated he voted no as he felt the Board should not be involved with voting on this matter. Vice-Chair Vossler noted that this was brought to the Board as a budget issue, and GM Bonner clarified this is for budget purposes only, which the Board has control over.

Counsel Campos verified a COLA increase is within the Board's discretion to determine. GM Bonner reminded the Board that they are under no obligation to do so, and Consultant McCue clarified that a COLA increase is a permanent update to the pay metrics. The GM shared information on inflation.

Motion: Vossler – Approve 3% COLA increase to metrics
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: Coronel
Absent: None
Motion passed.

Trustee Coronel left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

3.1 Public Cemetery Charges CAPC price list survey comparison

GM Bonner reviewed presented analysis that was requested at the May planning session and noted that overall CVPCD is lower than most public cemetery districts, and lower than neighboring cemeteries even after our price increase. Trustee Rios stated he has received many positive comments about our Cemetery. Chair Rosales noted that CVPCD is currently the only Cemetery locally that allows for multiple interments into a single lot, giving families more value for their purchase.

3.2 Public Review Assessment Comparison of District online reviews

GM Bonner reviewed staff report, noting that the comparisons were done at a District level. CVPCD is responsive on Google and Yelp within 72 hours. The Board thanked GM Bonner for managing this.

3.3 Workers' Compensation and Property/Liability Insurance Comparison SDRMA rate analysis versus a comparable carrier

GM Bonner reviewed comparison between our current provider, Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA) and Golden State Risk Management Authority (GSRMA), noting that the difference in cost was significant but that a portion of the cost differences are based on credits for longevity with our current provider.

4. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS:

4.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Chair Rosales stated that phasing the pricing increase out over two years wasn't taken lightly and was done with the public in mind. Chair Rosales and Trustee Coronel attended the Memorial Day event, and he felt it was fantastic; the flyover was well received and the CVHS choir participation was appreciated. He spoke and encouraged all in attendance to participate in the future and bring their families. Chair Rosales will be

attending the first state meeting for CAPC in Ventura, and GM Bonner commented that Chair Rosales was asked to write a feature article for their magazine next month.

Vice-Chair Vossler had no comments.

Trustee Underwood thanked GM Bonner for putting a map of the District boundaries up in the Board room. He attended CSDA Legislative Days and noted that GM Bonner set up multiple meetings with legislative reps while they were there. Trustee Underwood attended Palm Desert State of the City. He commented that the Memorial Day celebration was very well done, and he was happy to see involvement with VFW, cities, and the community. He noted it is good to focus on the future but it's also good to focus on today and that was reflected with some of the votes at this meeting. Trustee Underwood stated we have a good staff and workforce, and GM Bonner is always trying to do better.

Trustee Rios stated that we have a tremendous staff which people have come to expect of us, and it shows as they continue to provide great reviews. Trustee Rios commented that we are here to serve the public.

4.2 General Manager Report

GM Bonner highlighted pieces of the report, noting the vacant lot across from the Cemetery addressed their dust control issue. Staff was tasked with progressively developing the Memorial Day ceremony and they did that this year with the program, the flyover and providing donuts and water; which were appreciated by the public in attendance. He thanked the media for their coverage before, during, and after the Memorial Day ceremony. GM Bonner mentioned there was an issue with the memorial flags for placement on Veteran's graves this year, as the VFW did not provide them as anticipated. CVPCD had 500 flags on hand and GM Bonner suggested purchasing an additional 500 flags to keep 1,000 in stock so that CVPCD can provide them in the future. GM Bonner stated the Columbarium roofing project was completed; however, he shared pictures of the electrical issues that need to be addressed, as well as a recommendation from the contractor regarding the design of the wood beams for updating them to protect them from the elements. GM Bonner announced that Special District Leadership Foundation awarded CVPCD with the District of Distinction award and he credited the Board for the work they have done. GM Bonner noted that there are only 41 special districts that carry the District of Distinction, and of those, only 3 are cemeteries.

A recess was called at 10:19 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 10:29 a.m.

Adjourned to closed session at 10:29 a.m.

5. CLOSED SESSION ITEMS:

5.1 CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

Significant Exposure to Litigation, Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2)/(e)(1)
One (1) Potential Case

The Board reconvened from closed session at 10:38 a.m. and Counsel Campos reported: Received direction, no action taken.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION

Friday, July 14, 2023

8:00 a.m.

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Executive Office

82847 Avenue 52

Coachella, CA 92236

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherry Winder

Clerk of the Board

Approved: _____ BOD Mtg.