

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Friday, July 14, 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, July 14, 2023, at 8:00 a.m.

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, July 10, 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 8:02 a.m., those in attendance were as follows:

Trustees present:

Ernesto Rosales, Chair

Judy Vossler, Vice-Chair

Bruce Underwood, Trustee

John Rios, Trustee

Trustees absent:

Marcos Coronel, Trustee

Additional participants:

Josh Bonner, General Manager

Sherry Winder, Finance Analyst/Clerk of the Board

Carlos Campos, General Counsel

Matt McCue, Consultant *(via Zoom)*

Glenn Miller, Southwest Landscape and Maintenance

Jason Jackson, Southwest Landscape and Maintenance

Malachai Ramos, Southwest Landscape and Maintenance

Additional participants for public comment:

None

FLAG SALUTE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

GM Bonner requested that an item be added to Informational Items. The item will be number 4.6 Heat Illness Prevention. Counsel Campos confirmed that it meets the requirements for addition.

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

1. PRESENTATIONS

- 1.1 Presentation by Southwest Landscape & Maintenance
General update on landscape management and emerging turf issues

Glenn Miller, Partner at Southwest Landscape & Maintenance, presented concerns and issues, noting lack of proper preventative maintenance over the years has resulted in an overabundance of blow sand and thatch and stated that to fix these issues we will need to go backwards to go forward. Proposed twice a year aeration and spraying nut grass to stop growth which will cause the area to turn yellow and die. Recommended a maintenance and fertilization schedule along with quick couplers to be put in for smaller areas to be watered. Miller commented that while this is a costly process, a nice aesthetic will be achieved as a result.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

- 2.1 Trustee Minutes
a. Regular Board Meeting – June 2, 2023
- 2.2 Finance and Administration
a. Approval of Expenditures – Checks and ACH transactions as detailed
b. Investment Report
c. Budget to Actual
- 2.3 Audit Engagement Letter
Agreement with David Farnsworth, CPA to perform annual audit for year ending June 30, 2023

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends that the Board approve the Audit Engagement Letter with David Farnsworth, CPA attached as Exhibit A.

- 2.4 Agreement for Cleaning and Janitorial Services
Contract for cleaning services with Deluxe Cleaning and Janitorial Services

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends that the Board approve the contract, attached as Exhibit A, with Deluxe Cleaning and Janitorial Services in the amount of \$23,400 annually, and adjust the annual

budget line “6283 · Cleaning Services” to \$25,000 annually to cover the new agreement and any additional cleaning services that may be required (such as window and carpet cleaning).

- 2.5 Tree Maintenance Contract Extension
Extension of services with Kirkpatrick Landscape for arbor services

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends approving the contract extension with Kirkpatrick Landscaping Services, Inc. for tree maintenance services for a period of one year at a contracted rate of \$54,837.00.

GM Bonner requested to pull Item 2.2 Financials to review.

Motion: Underwood – Move to approve without Item 2.2 Finance and Administration
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

GM Bonner reviewed the budget movements that were made under \$10k at year end and noted overall, without Capital Expenditures, the District ended with a healthy balance, and we achieved a positive balanced budget for the 2022/2023 Fiscal Year.

Motion: Vossler – Approve Item 2.2 Finance and Administration
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

3. ACTION ITEMS

- 3.1 Special District Risk Management Authority Board Election
Consideration of participation in the SDRMA Board Election

GM Bonner reviewed that this item was brought back from June meeting where Trustee Underwood was tasked with researching candidates to provide a recommendation to the Board. Trustee Underwood contacted all candidates and recommended voting for Acquanetta Warren, Robert Swan, and Sandy Seifert-Raffelson. Board thanked Trustee Underwood for undertaking this task.

Motion: Rios – Consider recommendation from Trustee Underwood
Second: Underwood
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None

Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

3.2 Countywide Oversight Board Election Ballot
Consideration of participation in the Riverside County Oversight Board Election

GM Bonner reviewed Countywide Oversight Board Election and noted vote is due today. Trustee Underwood contacted all candidates and recommended Russ Martin.

Motion: Underwood – Nominate Russ Martin
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

3.3 CSDA Board of Directors Election Seat C - Southern Network
Consideration of participation in the CSDA Board vote

GM Bonner reviewed CSDA Board of Directors Election Seat C – Southern Network electronic ballot is due today. Trustee Underwood contacted all candidates and recommended Al Nederhood.

Motion: Rios – Support recommendation for Al Nederhood
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

A recess was called at 8:58 a.m.
The meeting resumed at 9:04 a.m.

4. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

4.1 Seven Year Budget Trend
Review of recent District financial year ends

GM Bonner noted this item was requested by Trustee Coronel at the June meeting and reviewed report as presented. GM Bonner stated he does not believe we need to slow spending as the budget is healthy and we are not in, or approaching, a negative budget scenario. Chair Rosales noted that the goal is for the Cemetery to exist after the last lot is sold, Trustee Rios commented he has not heard anything negative and stated we are on the right track and Vice-Chair Vossler thanked GM Bonner for the report.

4.2 General Rules and Regulations Amendment Consideration of policy variances for major events

GM Bonner reviewed staff report as presented regarding policy of coolers not allowed on District grounds with variances occurring on Dia de los Muertos, Mother's Day and Father's Day due to parking limitations where access to vehicles may not be practical. Currently under review by legal and GM Bonner requested direction for staff. Chair Rosales requested GM Bonner look at other Cemeteries on how they handle these things. GM Bonner and legal counsel will prepare a memo for review and approval.

4.3 Cemetery Emergency Closing Procedures Draft proposal to direct emergency closing of cemetery

GM Bonner presented procedures for Board to review that will be brought back in August for approval. Trustee Underwood questioned if high heat should be included in this policy and referenced heat related deaths throughout the country. GM Bonner stated the challenge is that we would have to use an adopted government heat warning and the Coachella Valley during summertime is in a constant state of heat warning. Trustee Rios questioned how you would specify a heat warning? GM Bonner stated the best approach may be to find ways to mitigate the heat as best we can, as we have been doing. GM Bonner noted this policy has been written with families in mind as we do not want to inconvenience them. The policy is written with GM discretion to override weather warnings as they do not always take place as reported. Trustee Rios voiced his support of this.

4.4 Updates to Investment Policy Investment Management Firm Recommended Updates to Investment Policy

GM Bonner reviewed changes recommended by Chandler Asset Management and will bring a Resolution next month to bring our policy up to date with current laws.

4.5 Options to Finance 2023/2024 Capital Expenditures Cost and options for funding

GM Bonner presented staff report, noting it is within GM spending authority. With a long-term capital spending plan in place, staff can work with our financial investment on maturity dates to make sure investment funds are available. Prior to this year we did not have a long-term capital spending plan in place, and we are most likely going to need to access funds before they mature for upcoming capital spending. GM Bonner asked Consultant McCue to do an analysis of financing options versus early investment withdrawals and Consultant McCue projected \$13k or less in losses, stating that early withdrawal is the most cost-effective option. GM Bonner wanted to notify the Board in advance so they would be aware should they see the losses in future investment reports. Trustee Rios thanked GM Bonner for being so transparent.

4.6 Heat Illness Prevention

GM Bonner noted this item was requested by Chair Rosales and reviewed that a memo is sent annually to employees, and they receive heat illness awareness training annually by Guillermo De La Torre and Jason Wilberts, who are both certified safety specialists. The specialists are on a heat alert warning system that alerts them to heat dangers. During excessive heat periods, the maintenance department has morning meetings to discuss workflow and potential issues, and work hours are adjusted so they work from 5:00 a.m.

to 1:30 p.m. to avoid working during the hottest times of the day. OSHA standards create the policy we follow. Maintenance crews are aided by vehicle access to easily traverse District grounds with minimal exertion, and the District supplies all employees working outside with water and sports drinks. GM Bonner noted that we have had zero cases of heat illness reported amongst District employees. For visitors, the summertime schedule starts earlier, we provide shade structures, hand fans with our logo, and a pop-up tent over the lowering kit. For the last service of the day, we provide a second shade structure. We will also soon be providing the option of an industrial size fan and low noise generator should families request to have some wind circulation. Chair Rosales stated he was impressed with the speed of the response to this request by GM Bonner.

5. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

5.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Chair Rosales attended California Association of Public Cemeteries (CAPC) Board meeting in Ventura where green burials and mausoleums for public cemeteries were discussed. Green burials are challenging due to water quality issues, which bring up concerns with decomposition and chemicals used for embalming, and public perception. Mausoleums are above ground burials and can be costly to build, which creates an affordability issue with a public cemetery. Chair Rosales thanked Trustee Underwood for his time in researching the candidates and thanked the Board for working well together, and thanked GM Bonner, Clerk, Counsel and Consultant for their work.

Vice-Chair Vossler stated over the last four months her family has lost a couple of loved ones which has resulted in her becoming a good customer of the Cemetery. She noted that working with the staff, specifically Donna, Marlene, and Guillermo, has been great and she is grateful for their professionalism and knowledge.

Trustee Underwood attended SDRMA meeting online while researching candidates and attended the Greater Coachella Valley Chamber of Commerce Installation Dinner where DAP health had a section on green burials in their magazine and knows it is being presented at CAPC seminar, so it may be something we should consider. Trustee Underwood noted he would like us to focus on better long-term financial planning.

Trustee Rios questioned what happened to Avenue 52 on the other side of the road? GM Bonner stated he is unsure if it is being maintained and noted that once road work is completed, we can beautify the front areas around our easement.

5.2 General Manager Report

GM Bonner stated the District can be proud of its ongoing efforts to honor Veterans and noted we now have another option with our website which will show if they are a Veteran, their theater of service, and the branch they represented, if it was provided to us. We are working through VFW and Veteran groups to obtain uniform pictures to add to the site as well. GM Bonner commended Guillermo De La Torre who saw his stolen Kawasaki Mule while driving down the street and was able to recover it with assistance from the Sheriff's Department. Unfortunately, a lot of damage was sustained to the vehicle, and it will need to be salvaged. Pond dredging is not needed for approximately 5 years, which will be a savings of \$29k towards capital budget. Marlene Navarro-Lupian accepted the District of Distinction award at a recent conference. GM Bonner provided special recognition to Guillermo De La Torre, Jason Wilberts and Manuel Santana who assisted with CPR until first responders arrived on scene for an individual in need on our grounds whose vitals had stopped. The final outcome of the incident is unknown, but GM Bonner wanted to thank the Board for

providing employee training and resources they need to do their job in the best possible way. Office remodel action item will be coming soon due to being over budget for front desk ADA compliance build.

Adjourned to closed session at 9:56 a.m.

6. CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

6.1 CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS

Property: 10 Acres of Land at the South-East Corner of 82926 52nd Ave., Coachella, CA 92236

Agency Negotiator: General Manager and General Counsel

Negotiating Parties: Congregation Kohanim Immitzvas Hamoadim, Inc.

Under negotiation: Price and Terms

The Board reconvened from closed session at 10:07 a.m. and Counsel Campos reported: received direction and authority on Closed Session item 6.1.

GM Bonner presented a road packet for RFP that will be posted in Desert Sun, noting we are looking forward to bids and wanted to thank Craig at Best Best & Krieger for his work.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 10:09 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION

Friday, August 11, 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.