

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 8, 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, September 8, 2023, at 8:00 a.m.

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, September 4, 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

Marcos Coronel, Trustee

Bruce Underwood, Trustee

John Rios, Trustee

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

None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

GM Bonner requested an addition of Item 2.7, Request for Support of ACA13 be added to the agenda, noting that communication was received from California Association of Public Cemeteries and California Special District Association regarding this item.

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

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1.1 Trustee Minutes
 - a. Regular Board Meeting – August 11, 2023
- 1.2 Finance and Administration
 - a. Investment Report
- 1.3 Dump Truck Purchase
 - Approval to purchase new dump truck
- 1.4 Decommission
 - Backhoe 2003
 - New Holland LB75

GM Bonner noted that 1.2 Finance and Administration is incomplete due to a recent issue with QuickBooks, noting that the remainder of the financial reports will be presented at the next meeting. Trustee Coronel requested that the Call to Order for Trustee Absences on the Minutes notate Excused and Not Excused, for consistency purposes.

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

2. ACTION ITEMS

- 2.1 General Rules and Regulations Amendment
 - Temporary suspension of established policies for major events

GM Bonner reviewed the staff report regarding policy variances for special events, such as Dia de los Muertos where extended closing times, coolers and full grave decorations have been allowed. GM Bonner proposed bringing variances to the Board for review to grant an exception prior to each special event. Per Board direction, GM Bonner will provide a variance list at the next meeting. No action taken.

2.2 Cemetery Emergency Closing Procedures

Emergency closing policy for inclement weather and dangers to the public

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends the Board adopt the policy, “Inclement Weather and Emergency Closing Policy”.

GM Bonner reviewed the staff report and how it would be applied. Board discussion ensued. GM Bonner stated we have a high level of self-sufficiency with our on-site equipment and ability to do cleanup. This policy is for action when a storm or other hazardous event is occurring, noting it was recently necessary to close the Cemetery early due to Hurricane Hilary. Trustee Coronel requested more formal communication with the Board and an after-action report as to why the closure happened. GM Bonner noted that details would be in his GM report.

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

2.3 Consumer Agreement to Purchase Property and Financing Terms

Terms and agreement changes to pre-need purchase contract

Staff Report Recommendations: Staff recommends the Board adopt the Agreement changes proposed and direct staff to work with legal counsel to produce a contract that meets the terms as described.

Staff recommends retroactively canceling any and all late fees currently pending on customer accounts.

GM Bonner reviewed the changes to the contract and provided background on them. Board discussion ensued. GM Bonner clarified that fees are not being altered, just the way they are collected.

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

2.4 Resolution Adopting Tickets And Passes Distribution Policy

Conforming with regulations set forth by the Fair Political Practices Commission

Staff Report Recommendations: It is recommended that the Board adopt Resolution No. 125 adopting the District Tickets and Passes Distribution Policy that conforms with Regulation 18944.1 and other Fair Political Practices Commission (“FPPC”) Regulations.

GM Bonner reviewed the staff report and Counsel Campos noted this is a common policy for tickets received from outside agencies that are then reported by the District on Form 802, rather than by individuals on Form 700 annually.

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

2.5 Master Plan Proposal
10-Year Master Plan Consulting Proposal

GM Bonner reviewed that Board gave staff direction to issue the RFP for a Master Plan proposal, which was issued and circulated for general review as well as direct solicited to six firms. One response was received. GM Bonner noted if we want to maintain our current plan, we may not have a need for a Master Plan at this time. However, if we want to tear down and build new buildings, we would likely need a Master Plan. Board discussion ensued. Board recommendation is to move this item to next month and have a vendor presentation made. No action taken.

2.6 LAFCO Review Questionnaire
Review of questionnaire and strategic discussion

GM Bonner reviewed the staff report, noting the LAFCO review request was received on August 11, 2023, with a due date of September 22, 2023. GM Bonner noted that the District of Distinction and Transparency Certificate processes provided most of the information needed to draft a response for the questionnaire. Board discussion ensued. Board expressed the desire for a Special Session to be scheduled. The Board attempted to schedule the special meeting in session themselves but encountered multiple scheduling conflicts and instead opted to direct staff to ask LAFCO for an extension and then schedule the meeting. No action taken.

2.7 Request for Support of ACA 13

Staff Report Recommendations: Support ACA 13 with Exhibit B as drafted.

GM Bonner reviewed the staff report as presented. Board discussion ensued.

Motion: Rosales – Move to support
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None

Absent: None
Motion passed.

3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- 3.1 Employee Education Tuition Reimbursement Program
Future agenda item, consideration of employee education reimbursement program

GM Bonner reviewed that this item was requested by the Board at the May planning session to prepare a program for review with legal counsel. Trustee Coronel requested we model our program after the County's program, which ties to UCR's fee schedule, as he was concerned about the generous amount of the proposal. GM Bonner noted amendments would be appropriate to bring next month when it is an action item and reminded Board this item is informational only.

- 3.2 Vendor Requirements
Future agenda item, consideration of vendor insurance and liability release requirements

GM Bonner reviewed that the Board gave direction for staff to investigate liability waivers for vendors conducting business on District property. A waiver is attached for review for action at the next Board meeting.

- 3.3 Dia de los Muertos Event
Planning and procurement report for upcoming DDLM event

GM Bonner provided an update to the Board noting permit plans have all been submitted and we are on schedule. Trustee Coronel suggested reaching out to Azteca dancers in addition to Folklorico dancers.

- 3.4 Pre-Need Financial Reports
Pre-Need fund reports and budgeting for Board evaluation

GM Bonner noted this is an informational item regarding pre-sale of goods and services as deferred revenue. Funds have not been broken out on the financial reporting, for ease of viewing to show what has been committed to future expenses. Consultant McCue noted all information is accounted for and disclosed in the audit; this is just a recommendation of a visual change for how the Board would prefer to see the information. Board discussion ensued. GM Bonner will work with staff to provide more reporting views for the Board of all Pre-Need revenue and Pre-Need interest earned.

4. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

- 4.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Chair Rosales noted he stays engaged and wants to commend the staff. Respectful and constructive feedback between all is good and thanked everyone.

Vice Chair Vossler attended the All Valley Mayor & Tribal Chair Luncheon.

Trustee Coronel noted he would like the absence excuse policy to be brought back for discussion. Trustee Coronel stated he has been receiving complaints regarding the landscaping and asked for talking points due to the grass being overgrown and headstone trimming overflowing. Chair Rosales stated the landscaping is improving and that recent rainstorms may be the cause of excessive growth, Vice Chair Vossler noted Southwest Landscape mentioned in their presentation that it was going to get worse before it got better, and GM Bonner referred Trustee Coronel to the GM Report for additional talking points regarding the landscaping. Trustee Coronel questioned whether both restrooms are open to the public during the weekends, to which GM Bonner responded that they are. Trustee Coronel will be sending GM Bonner some course suggestions that he feels could be beneficial for staff and will be submitting American Society of Public Administration and Government Finance Officers Association invoices as part of his trustee expenses. Trustee Coronel attended an emergency storm coordination call for Hurricane Hilary and is planning on attending a County meeting for emergency management on the 19th. He is planning on writing an article to CSDA magazine and questioned what the policy was on representing the District, noting he was going to write it either way. GM Bonner stated that per the policy previously provided, he can personally submit the article, just not on behalf of the District. Trustee Coronel commented that Trustee stipends have not been raised in recent years. Requested a copy of the strategic plan as he missed the meeting and would also like a binder and electronic file of all policies and procedures and would like to have a discussion of Trustee roles and responsibilities as a future agenda item. Noted he had previously recommended software to make agendas and minutes searchable on our website, to which GM Bonner stated it would need to be added to the May agenda due to the budget impact. Would like to have quarterly budget adjustment discussions for the Board. Questioned whether CalPERS PEPRA 1% increase for employees has been implemented, to which Finance Analyst Winder stated it was effective as of July 1st.

Trustee Underwood attended the California Special Districts Association Annual Conference, where he attended GM Bonner's class, and sessions on A.I. and investments. He is glad to see a change in pre-need reporting being discussed. Attended All Valley Mayor and Tribal Chair Luncheon, noting we need to stay involved with other entities. Stated we have a long way to go financially, with needing to prepare the land and recommended investing in tools to look at financial modeling.

Trustee Rios is pleased with the District. He's received comments on District looking better, noting we are doing a good job.

GM Bonner reviewed the GM Report, noting that the fall/winter turf process has begun and browning in grass will be seen. Would like to consider a one-week period to restrict memorial items being placed to help cut down on foot traffic to avoid damage during germination; public notice would be required. The road paving bid came in at \$1.49 million with only one bid received. Would like a special session to discuss now that we have a fixed cost as he believes we may be able to access some Federal or State funding. Columbarium cleaning was completed, and signage will be placed soon regarding tape on niches, adding that columbarium vase options will be added to the next agenda. GM Bonner issued a kind reminder to please be respectful during meetings due to side conversations making it difficult to hear and the necessity during government meetings to preserve proper decorum.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION

Friday, October 13, 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.