

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

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

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, December 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 8:01 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 (Excused, Board action Vossler/Underwood, 4-0)

Additional participants:

Josh Bonner, General Manager

Sherry Winder, Finance Analyst/Clerk of the Board

Carlos Campos, General Counsel

Enda Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant

Additional participants for public comment:

None

FLAG SALUTE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comments were received from Delia Banda via walk-in at Admin Office, and Suzanne Porter & Wayne Moretti of Homeward Bound via email. Both were read aloud by Chair Rosales. GM Bonner commented we have also had concern expressed by a Funeral Home regarding the Liability Waiver.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

GM Bonner presented the LAFCO Sphere of Influence Amendment to the City of Coachella notice that was received after the agenda was sent out, with a response deadline of January 3, 2024. Should the Board wish to discuss this notice, it can be added as Item #2.6.

Motion: Underwood – Add Item 2.6
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

1.1 Trustee Minutes

- a. Regular Board Meeting – November 17, 2023

1.2 Finance and Administration

- a. Approval of Expenditures – Checks and ACH transactions as detailed November 2023
- b. Investment Report
- c. Budget to Actual November EOM

1.3 Amendment to Landscape Agreement Amendment to contract to address previously omitted operational procedures

Staff Report Recommendation: Staff recommends the Board approve the contract amendment as presented.

1.4 Preferred Vendor List Addition of three vendor designations to preferred

Staff Report Recommendation: Staff recommends the Board adopt the preferred vendors as stated.

1.5 Coachella Valley Economic Partnership Investment Invest at the Entrepreneur level

Staff Report Recommendation: Per Board direction, staff recommends authorizing a \$5,000.00 “Entrepreneur” level investment to CVEP. Staff further recommends the Board authorize an additional \$5,000.00 be added to the 2023-2024 budget under line item 6168 “Memberships” to cover the expenditure.

1.6 Request for Proposal Procurement Method Request Utilize RFP process for procurement of District tractor(s)

Staff Report Recommendation: Staff recommends the Board authorize the use of the Request for Proposal method of procurement for the purchase of a new Light Duty (1) and Medium Duty (1) Tractor.

Motion: Vossler – Approve consent calendar
Second: Rios

Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

2. ACTION ITEMS

2.1 Election of Board Officers

Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson/Secretary for the 2024 calendar year

Staff Report Recommendation: Staff recommends the Board nominate and select officers to serve in the capacity of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson/Secretary as required by District bylaws.

GM Bonner reviewed per bylaws it is required to annually elect a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson/Secretary. The current year positions are held by Ernesto Rosales as Chairperson and Judy Vossler as Vice Chairperson/Secretary. GM Bonner thanked them both for their service in 2023.

Motion: Underwood – Nominate Rosales as Chair and Vossler as Vice Chair/Secretary
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

2.2 Amendment to Employee Handbook

Adjustment to Employee Handbook to comply with CA Senate Bill 616

Staff Report Recommendation: Adopt the requisite changes to the District's sick leave policy in order to comply with the change in law. Staff, in consultation with general counsel, recommends the Employee Handbook Section 8.5 "PAID AND UNPAID LEAVES OF ABSENCE" be modified and replaced with Attachment B.

GM Bonner reviewed this item is due to a State mandated sick time change requiring an adjustment to the employee handbook as our current accrual method will not align with state requirements beginning January 1, 2024. The District will be moving to a front-loaded method, with time earned and carryover max allowance remaining the same.

Motion: Rios – Make requested changes to employee handbook
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

2.3 Resolution 126 to Amend Cafeteria Plan

Allowance for additional voluntary supplemental insurance

Staff Report Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of Resolution 126 attached as Exhibit B, and adoption of Amendment 1 to the Cafeteria Plan attached as Exhibit C.

GM Bonner reviewed this item is being brought back from the May planning session in Resolution form per the Board approving an adjustment to the Cafeteria Plan policy which allowed funds to be used towards supplemental insurance policies, currently offered through Colonial Life.

Motion: Rios – Approve Resolution 126
Second: Underwood
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

2.4 Resolution 127 to Amend Investment Policy

Allowing security transactions prior to maturity and long-term security purchase

Staff Report Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Board of Trustees adopt Resolution No. 127, updating the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Investment Policy.

GM Bonner reviewed this item is being brought back from the November meeting in Resolution form per the Board approving an amendment to the Investment Policy which allows for the sale of securities prior to maturity, and for the maximum maturities for the Endowment Fund to be increased to 10 years.

Motion: Underwood – Approve Resolution 127
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

2.5 Customer Relationship Management Database Cleanup

Request for additional resources to audit and clean existing CRM data

Staff Report Recommendation: Staff recommends the Board authorize the hiring of a PTE for the specific purpose of this project. The project timeline for this hire would be 18 months, January 1, 2024, to July 1, 2025. It is possible the project could take fewer hours, or additional hours, depending on the pace of work and volume of errors that require correcting. The project can be reevaluated at the completion date, or scheduled end of the project, whichever comes first.

GM Bonner reviewed when the current CRM was adopted, its effectiveness relied on the accurate input of data, which did not happen due to a host of issues. Due to this, errors have been made, with an extreme case example of a lot being sold when it was already occupied, as the CRM system showed it was available. This project is necessary to reduce the error rate, and to free up staff time currently spent on cross-referencing paper records. Enda Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant, has been working on this project for the past few months and has found a 12% error rate in the files that she has reviewed to date. GM Bonner

recommends hiring a project manager as a temporary employee for 18 months with no benefits, to be a dedicated person cleaning up the CRM, focusing on the newer sections, rather than the Cemetery as a whole. At an average of 5 minutes per record, and with approximately 28,000 records, this project will be long term, potentially two to three years. Chair Rosales stated Cemetery recordkeeping is fundamental. GM Bonner noted a budget adjustment would be needed at approximately \$12,000.00 for the 23/24 fiscal year, with a potential project total anticipated cost of \$30,000.00 over 18 months. Board discussion ensued.

Motion: Rios – Approve recommendation from GM Bonner to create a Project Manager position for 18 months, with a \$12,000.00 budget adjustment for 23/24 fiscal year
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: Coronel
Motion passed.

2.6 LAFCO Sphere of Influence Amendment to the City of Coachella

GM Bonner reviewed a LAFCO notice was received pertaining to a Sphere of Influence adjustment to the City of Coachella, noting this does not have any operational impact on the District. The Board reviewed and determined they will take no action.

3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

3.1 Lost and Found Policy

Review of current policy and proposed additions or changes

GM Bonner noted this item is returned from previous public comment. District does not have a current Lost and Found policy; general procedure is to hold for one year and if not claimed, item is discarded. GM Bonner cautioned the Board that items of value are intentionally left on memorials frequently, stating a formal policy could inadvertently create the potential for unauthorized transfer of ownership. Counsel Campos noted civil code allows for turning lost items over to the Sheriff's Department. Board discussion ensued. Board recommendation is to continue with current procedure, leaving this to staff discretion. Staff will work with legal to determine best disposal method of items turned in and not claimed. No further action needed.

3.2 Headstone Setting Policy

Allowing single headstone to be placed between two interment sites

GM Bonner reviewed requests have been received from the public for a companion headstone to be offset in the middle of two adjacent lots, citing the issue with the current policy wording, which uses "plot" or "niche" in the singular form. GM Bonner recommended that any update to the policy accommodate the potential of the intention changing after the fact, where a family may want to sell back one of the two lots after placing a headstone. Board discussion ensued. Trustees questioned the fee for removal and reset of a headstone, which was reported at \$526 currently. Board would like to have this return as an action item.

4. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

4.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Chair Rosales wished everyone Happy Holidays and thanked staff and legal for their hard work.

Vice Chair Vossler expressed her appreciation for the GM report, minutes, and public announcements sent via email.

Trustee Underwood appreciates the General Manager and staff's work behind the scenes. Cemetery is looking good, and he is looking forward to the 10-year Master Plan which will allow the District to explore a Foundation, if needed.

Trustee Rios stated he is pleased with Cemetery operations and staff.

4.2 General Manager Report

GM Bonner stated he had a concern from the November board meeting that has been passed along to Chair and Legal Counsel; if it needs to be explored, it can be added as a Closed Session item at a future meeting. Informed the Board that an upcoming LAFCO election has been announced and information will be presented once the formal call for nominations is received. GM Bonner informed the Board that a modification to the security schedule was made to shift one guard from the weekend patrol to weekdays to help with services, which have increased in attendance. Kudos to staff for utilizing the resources that the Board has given them with employee training and education. There is a new data point being collected and reported in the GM report for walk-ins each day. Chair Rosales requested additional breakdown in the GM Report for properties available, showing Pre-Need and At Need services each month; GM Bonner will provide that along with the number of new Pre-Need contracts per month. January 1, 2024, there is a zero emissions mandate that will affect our fleet and could impact the District in the future; will consult with legal. Trustee photos are available to be booked on location at Kaminsky studios at the Board's convenience. GM Bonner invited the Board to attend the End of Year celebration to be held at Jackalope on Wednesday, December 13th at 3:00 p.m.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:08 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION

Friday, January 12, 2024

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.