

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Friday, February 9, 2024
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, February 9, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, February 5, 2024, 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 8:00 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

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

None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

1.1 Trustee Minutes

- a. Regular Board Meeting – January 12, 2024

1.2 Finance and Administration

- a. Approval of Expenditures – Checks and ACH transactions as detailed January 2024
- b. Investment Report
- c. Budget to Actual January EOM

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

2. ACTION ITEMS

2.1 Southwest Security Rate Adjustment Request

Request from vendor to increase billable rates

GM Bonner reviewed that this item was brought back from January meeting at Board request, noting the reasons for the rate request are reasonable, but some of the wage increases could have been foreseeable. Annual financial impact for requested rate increase would be \$8,685. Board discussion ensued.

Motion: Coronel – Authorize General Manager to amend the contract with 2.5% increase
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

2.2 Vendor Requirements

Insurance and liability waiver requirements for vendors operating on District property

Staff Report Recommendation: Staff recommends modifying the document as needed to limit liability for funeral homes to outcomes directly related to their personnel and equipment only. Legal Counsel has considered the vendors’ concerns and produced an alternative version of the liability waiver attached as Exhibit C.

GM Bonner reviewed that this item was brought back from a prior meeting due to Funeral Homes concerns regarding their responsibility. Legal prepared revised agreement with Funeral Homes only responsible for their actions and with proportionate responsibility. Board discussion ensued. GM Bonner assured the Board that this procedure will be applied consistently and fairly. If approved, the revised policy would be re-presented to vendors for their review and agreement.

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

2.3 Public Ceremony for Military Veterans

Request to use Veterans Memorial for Private Ceremony

GM Bonner reviewed the request received from Disabled American Veterans Indio Chapter 78 to host a ceremony at the Veterans Memorial to celebrate the life and service of a Veteran whose ashes will be spread at sea. As we have no policy in place for a family or group to host a ceremony on their own, the item was being presented to the Board for consideration. Board discussion ensued. Board directed staff to prepare a draft policy for future use.

Motion: Coronel – Approve this request and waive fees for utilizing District equipment and staff as presented
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

2.4 SDRMA Board Seat

Notification of Open Special District Risk Management Authority Board Seat

GM Bonner reviewed the notification from SDRMA regarding an open board seat and provided the Board the opportunity to nominate should they wish. Board discussion ensued. No action taken.

3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

3.1 Headstone Setting Fee

Application of Resetting Fee to second interments

GM Bonner stated this item was recently discovered and is not covered by any existing fee structure. If a headstone is placed after initial interment, it must be reset during the second interment and is currently being done without incurring a headstone resetting fee. Board discussion ensued. Board questioned what the cost would be, to which GM Bonner responded that this will be included in the 2024 Fee Study. The Board agreed the issue would be addressed at that time.

3.2 Interment Service Schedule

Start and stop time communication and practices

GM Bonner stated this item was being reviewed with the Board at the request of Trustee Rios. Trustee Rios had expressed concern regarding how the conclusion of services was being conducted based on public feedback he had received. He was notified that families were asked to leave prior to the one hour offered by the District per service and were “rushed out” by District staff. Chair Rosales suggested what may have occurred is the family was given a one-hour window to hold their gravesite service but arrived late for their scheduled start time. When this happens, their time available on site is reduced. GM Bonner noted that early and late arrivals are allowed within reason to accommodate the community; staff allow the families to arrive up to 15 minutes early, or 15 minutes late. However, late arrival does impact their service time allowed as staff must stay on schedule to properly care for the next service arriving. GM Bonner also clarified that families are never asked to leave the Cemetery grounds, as a public cemetery all are welcome to be on grounds while the cemetery is open to public access. They will be asked to leave the work zone and may be asked to move their vehicles should the next service require the area. Trustee Rios commented that he brought this to the attention of the Board, so they were aware and for families to know their concerns are listened to. Board discussion ensued. The Board agreed the current policy is reasonable and required no further consideration at a future meeting.

3.3 Contract Establishment Fee

Fee charged to initiate a contract to purchase agreement

GM Bonner stated this item was being reviewed with the Board at the request of Trustee Rios. Trustee Rios has received complaints from the public regarding the \$50.00 Establishment Fee on new contracts. Bonner reviewed the fee history, that it was a fee recently enacted by the Board to help cover administrative fees associated with the creation of contracts. Board discussion ensued. The Board agreed there was no wish to reconsider the application of the fee at a future meeting.

4. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

4.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Chair Rosales stated he is happy with the process of Board and staff, noting the landscape looks good and the District is in a good place. Chair Rosales wants to thank the staff as a whole for where we are at and thanked the Trustees for the work they have put in to get here.

Vice Chair Vossler noted she will be out of town the first half of May and requested the board consider moving the May 10th Board Meeting and Annual Planning Session by one week to May 17th so that she can

be in attendance. Board discussion ensued. Chair Rosales gave staff direction to cancel the current meeting on May 10th and to schedule a special meeting for May 17th.

Trustee Coronel attended two online webinars: Navigating Workplace Investigations and Local Agency Contracting with Independent Contractors, and the 75th Anniversary of Indio Rotary at the museum. Commented there has been a lot of movement in pocket 7 with LAFCO between the City of La Quinta and City of Coachella; of which he has received concerned comments and replied that the Board has opted to stay neutral. He did not attend a conference on Labor Laws as he previously mentioned he had planned to. Received a compliment regarding the office staff, with how they handled and coordinated a burial, and the way the family was treated. Trustee Coronel commented that our District was the featured Cemetery at the CAPC conference, which he will be attending, and he may join in and do part of the presentation himself. Noted he would like to have a discussion on the MSR process.

Trustee Underwood attended two CSDA webinars: Prevailing Wage Update 2024 and Building Relationships with your Lawmaker's District Office, and a Palm Desert Area Chamber of Commerce breakfast. Trustee Underwood shared a pamphlet that City of Indian Wells prepared for their budget and suggested we think about something similar for our District. Trustee Underwood commented he appreciates the continual improvements in the District and gravel in parking lot.

Trustee Rios had no comments.

4.2 General Manager Report

GM Bonner reviewed the General Manager Report, noting that MaintainX has been deployed and will soon be showing more detailed reports for the maintenance department. The final phase of safety improvements is underway with the installation of an automated gate for employee parking. A new program has been launched to help inform families when memorial items are out of compliance, encouraging families to visit the office to learn more. Completed gravel project for the Executive Office parking area and are finalizing the hiring of the temporary, part-time, CRM Project Manager. Master Plan site visit has been rescheduled due to needing data in a format we do not have based on association of data input, which has slowed our ability to get the figures they need to prepare forecasting. Audit process is underway and is moving along. Roads are going back out to bid, and CV Engineers would like to schedule a special meeting to authorize bids in mid-March; GM Bonner will work with Chair Rosales to schedule the special meeting.

A recess was called at 9:20 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 9:26 a.m.

Adjourned to closed session at 9:26 a.m.

5. CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

5.1 Conference with Legal Counsel Re: Anticipated Litigation, Significant Exposure to Litigation

Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9 (d)

Number of Potential Cases: One (1)

The Board reconvened from closed session at 9:37 a.m. and Counsel Campos reported: Received direction, no reportable action.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION

Friday, March 8, 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: _____ BOT Mtg.