

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District
Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
Friday, October 4, 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, October 4, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, September 30, 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 8:01 a.m., those in attendance were as follows:

Trustees present:

Ernesto Rosales, Chair
Judy Vossler, Vice-Chair
Marcos Coronel, Trustee *(arrived @8:08 a.m.)*
Bruce Underwood, Trustee
John Rios, Trustee

Additional participants:

Josh Bonner, General Manager
Sherry Winder, Finance Analyst/Clerk of the Board
Carlos Campos, General Counsel

Additional participants for public comment:

Jason Jackson, Indio (Southwest Landscape)

FLAG SALUTE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jason Jackson from Indio addressed the Board regarding Items 2.1 & 2.3.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

1.1 Trustee Minutes

- a. Board Meeting – September 13, 2024

1.2 Board of Trustee Compensation for Meetings and other Special Occurrences

Ordinance 09-2024 second reading

Staff Report Recommendation: *Staff recommends that the Board of Trustees conduct a second reading, by title only, of Ordinance 09-2024 entitled “AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY PUBLIC CEMETERY DISTRICT INCREASING BOARD MEMBER COMPENSATION”.*

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

2. ACTION ITEMS

2.1 Southwest Landscape Request for Rate Adjustment

Request to increase the contracted rate for landscape care and maintenance

Staff Report Recommendation: *Staff is recommending the Board accept the rate increase proposal.*

The last time the District went to open bid was in 2022, at that time the average rate quoted for service by the other submissions was \$29,368. As that was two years ago, and the market has seen significant inflation since, there is no reasonable expectation on the part of staff that the District would get a lower rate than the current contractor is quoting on the open market. In addition, the District would now be working with its third landscape contractor (potentially) in less than three years.

The current contractor has a firm grasp on the requirements of the job and has promised additional improvements to service if the increase is granted. Staff’s preference is to grant the increase, extend the agreement for a period of one year, and monitor the quality of service delivered over the next 8-10 months. If the contract is not working out, the District will return to RFP mid-2025.

GM Bonner stated this was submitted under Public Comment at a previous meeting and reviewed request for contract increase, noting this would go into effect with extension of service through 10/31/2025 if agreed. Otherwise, the Landscape contract would need to go to RFP. Board discussion ensued.

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

2.2 Approval for Shoring Kit Capital Budget

Procurement of an extended shoring kit for services

Staff Report Recommendation: *Staff is recommending the Board designate capital budget in the amount of \$6,000 to purchase on 60-inch shoring unit.*

GM Bonner reviewed the request noting that prior to 2021/2022 burials were above ground. After that, the District started lowering caskets during service, which required shoring kits to stabilize the earth from cave-ins. He reviewed the process of families being asked at time of purchase if they will be doing a 2nd interment, and if they decline, a single vault is used instead of a double vault, but it can only be buried at 30 inches due to the current shoring equipment the District utilizes. Purchasing shoring equipment with a depth of 60 inches will allow the District to place single vaults at a double depth so if the family changes their mind later, they will be able to inter a second single vault, rather than requiring a disinterment/reinterment cost. Board discussion ensued.

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

2.3 Approval of Security Contract

Review of Security RFP and Contract Recommendation

Staff Report Recommendation: *Staff will have a recommendation ready at the October 4th meeting.*

GM Bonner reviewed the Security RFP that was issued, seven proposals were received. Per committee scoring, staff recommendation was to accept the bid from Southwest Security. GM Bonner noted the acceptance of the contract will require a budget increase to accommodate the new \$158,147.34 contract.

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

2.4 Creation of Groundsman Position

Position for care and maintenance of existing headstones

Staff Report Recommendation: *Create the Groundsman position at Range 28, authorize the General Manager to create a job description for the position and hire at Step 1. Authorize required addition to 2024-2025 Budget. Dissolve the Operations Ad-Hoc committee, work has been completed.*

GM Bonner reviewed this was a result of the Operations Committee and reviewed that the committee discussed headstones with tree issues will be offset in their rows to protect future disruptions and that recessed headstones needed remediations. The committee also discussed ongoing care of headstones, noting that we have approximately 15,000 headstones on grounds. This position would review, inventory & care for headstones. Salary scheduled would be Range 28, Step 1, which would be \$62,524.38 for the remainder of the fiscal year, and almost \$92,000 for future years with benefits included. GM Bonner noted that this position would also assist with ingress/egress parking for services, and janitorial, which would eliminate excess costs

from each of those contracts. Board discussion ensued during which the title was requested to be updated to Groundskeeper.

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

2.5 California Association of Public Cemeteries Awards

CAPC Nomination for awards

Staff Report Recommendation: *Staff is neutral on this topic.*

GM Bonner reviewed for CAPC Nominations they require Board approval and inquired if the Board would like to nominate anyone? Trustee Coronel nominated Vice-Chair Vossler for Trustee of the Year. GM Bonner reminded the Trustees that it was agreed previously that all nominations would be written by the nominator, as staff often did not know the reasons that a Trustee was nominating. GM Bonner noted the Manager of the Year is more of a Lifetime Achievement award, and he did not feel he is qualified to receive that based on the criteria related to him. Trustee Coronel amended his motion to also nominate GM Bonner as Manager of the Year.

- Amended Motion: Coronel – Nominate Vice Chair Vossler for Trustee of the Year and GM Bonner for Manager of the Year
 - Second: Rosales
 - Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
 - Abstain: None
 - No: None
 - Absent: None
- Motion passed.

Item 2.6 was added as an Emergency Action Item from discussion on Information Item 3.2 with Counsel's approval.

2.6 DDLM Funding

Consideration of additional funding for DDLM

Based on current and projected expenses, the Board feels an increase in budget is needed to ensure all expense items are covered.

- Motion: Coronel – Increase DDLM budget by \$30,000
 - Second: Vossler
 - Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
 - Abstain: None
 - No: None
 - Absent: None
- Motion passed.

3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

3.1 Removal of Tamarisk Trees

Proposal to remove tamarisk trees along southwest property line

GM Bonner reviewed the land behind our property has been purchased and the new owners have expressed interest in removing the tamarisk trees along the southwest property line and had inquired if the District would be willing to partner with them on the project. GM Bonner noted that when the District previously requested a quote on the cost to remove the trees, they were told \$500,000. Board discussion ensued. The Board requested GM Bonner gather information to bring back to the Board.

3.2 Dia de los Muertos Update

Event planning status update

GM Bonner updated the Board on the status of DDLM preparation, noting county requirements have changed this year, some examples include the requirement that an additional inspection be performed for the stage, and the traffic plan must be signed off on by an engineer. Collectively, all the requirements will result in higher total project costs to the District. GM Bonner showed a Google Earth view of the District back lot that is used for DDLM parking and explained that in the center of the area is mostly drift sand and it is too soft to drive or park on. He explained that we can purchase asphalt for \$700 per truck load and it was estimated that we would need a minimum of ten trucks for an additional cost of \$7,000. Board requested this funding be sourced from the Asphalt Improvements capital budget line.

Counsel Campos agreed that an Emergency Action Item could be added to address the excess funding needed for DDLM due to additional inspections and signatures, as the items came to light after the agenda was created and it is urgent due to the timing of the event occurring before the next scheduled Board meeting.

- Motion: Coronel – Add Action Item 2.6 to agenda for DDLM expenses
 - Second: Underwood
 - Roll Call Vote: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
 - Abstain: None
 - No: None
 - Absent: None
- Motion passed.

4. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

4.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Chair Rosales attended California Special Districts Association (CSDA) conference, and briefly attended the City of Indio State of the City event. He will be a panelist at an Eisenhower/FirstBank event and will be attending the California Association of Public Cemeteries this week.

Vice Chair Vossler attended the City of Indio State of the City event, noting it was a nice event with many in attendance.

Trustee Coronel tested out the new process and emailed Clerk Winder with his attended events for September

and October, which he had previously reported out attendance. Noted the CSDA magazine looks good and has the district on the front cover with Trustee Underwood on Movers & Shakers and GM Bonner. He would like a Resolution to Palm Springs Cemetery for their accomplishment and would like one for Parks District as well. October 16th will be a full eight years on this Board. He is very proud of the Board, they have accomplished a lot.

Trustee Underwood attended LAFCO meeting and noted they are compiling a list of General Managers, Board Members, and Clerks of all Special Districts. Would like to have Trustee information for all events, like City of Indio State of the City event. GM Bonner noted it was a last moment noted, as they City created their own event, stating staff will do better in the future.

Trustee Rios completed Special Districts Leadership Academy Module 3, Day 1 & 2, as well as ethics and Sexual Harassment training.

4.2 General Manager Report

GM Bonner reviewed the GM report as presented.

GM Bonner pulled closed session Item 5.1 from the agenda due to time constraints.

~~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~~

6. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION

Friday, November 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.