

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

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, November 4, 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 8:02 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
Oscar Verdugo, General Counsel (*arrived @8:04 a.m.*)
Alayné Sampson, Chandler Asset Management (*via Zoom*)

Additional participants for public comment:

None

FLAG SALUTE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

1. PRESENTATIONS

1.1 Presentation by Chandler Asset Management

Update on District’s Investment Portfolio

Alayné Sampson from Chandler presented an update on the District’s investment portfolio, focusing on recent changes. GM Bonner noted the need to review investments during the next planning session, particularly concerning the Endowment Interest and Capital Improvements funds. He highlighted the absence of a policy governing the long-term management of Endowment Interest funds. Additionally, he pointed out that the General Fund has grown beyond the target balance specified in existing policies and suggested that the Board consider either utilizing the excess funds or adjusting the target balance policies to ensure compliance.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

2.1 Trustee Minutes

- a. Board Meeting – September 13, 2024

2.2 Finance and Administration

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

2.3 Approval of Revised District Salary Schedule

District Salary Schedule revision to reflect Groundskeeper position

2.4 Adjustment to Rojas Communication Contract

Split federal and state lobbying into two agreements and extend agreement period

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

3. ACTION ITEMS

3.1 Procurement of New Security Fence

Install new security fence along southern portion of undeveloped property

Staff Recommendation: Staff are recommending the District procure a 6-foot high chain-link fence to run the span of the newly open property line. The linear distance of the space is approximately 850 feet. The proposed fence perimeter is represented in Exhibit C.

Financial Analysis: A preliminary quote for materials and installation (prevailing wage) is \$45,000. We estimate

another \$5,000 for survey work. As such, the District is asking for a budget of \$60,000 for the capital improvement project "South-West Property Line Security Fence" to be approved as part of the 2024/2025 Capital Budget.

GM Bonner reported that the removal of tamarisk trees along the southern boundary, which was discussed in October, occurred without coordination from the new property owner. As a result, there are now no trees separating the Cemetery from the adjacent property. To address this, GM Bonner requested a \$60,000 capital improvement budget for 850 feet of 6-foot chain link fencing. He emphasized the need for immediate action, as waiting 2–4 years for the new owner to build a wall would leave the Cemetery without a perimeter. For the record, GM Bonner clarified that the trees were removed by the new owner without prior discussion with the Cemetery. Trustee Coronel expressed concern about the timing of the request, noting the urgency of making a budget adjustment without proper planning, but did not oppose the project.

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

3.2 California Special District Association Bylaw Vote

Consideration of amendments proposed to the CSDA bylaws

Staff Recommendation: *Staff are neutral on this subject.*

GM Bonner confirmed that the District is in good standing with CSDA, which is currently reviewing its bylaws and seeking member approval for the proposed changes. Staff has no objections to the changes.

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

3.3 Approval of Investment Services Contract

Recommendation for Financial Investment Services RFP

Staff Recommendation: *Staff is recommending the Board authorize the District to enter into a three (3) year contract for financial investment services with Chandler.*

GM Bonner reviewed that the Investment Services Contract did not include an automatic renewal option, prompting the issuance of an RFP. Five submissions were received, one of which did not meet the requirements. After reviewing the four qualified responses, the committee recommended continuing services with Chandler Asset Management for a 3-year agreement with two optional extensions. Trustee Coronel inquired about provisions for automatic fee adjustments. GM Bonner explained that the fee model is based on basis points, meaning adjustments are automatically made based on investments. Vice Chair Vossler asked whether the entire proposal needed to be provided in print. Trustee Coronel expressed a preference for print, while Vice

Chair Vossler favored a mix of print and electronic formats. General Counsel clarified that all materials must be disseminated in the same format.

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

4. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

4.1 Chamber of Commerce Activity

Review of chamber sponsorships and activity

GM Bonner explained that this item was requested by Trustee Coronel to review general spending with Chambers and their activities. The majority of the District’s spending is with GCVCC, due to the involvement of multiple cities and their State of the City events, as well as their Annual Installation Dinner, where an employee is on the Board. The District also maintains a relationship with PDACC and participates in their State of the City event. GM Bonner noted that the spending aligns with other local special districts. Trustee Coronel expressed that he believes the Chamber could use additional support, noting the community benefits seen from these activities. GM Bonner suggested including this topic in the May planning session.

4.2 CalPERS Salary Schedule Audit

Review of findings and follow up actions

GM Bonner reviewed the CalPERS Salary Schedule Audit, explaining that we were randomly selected for the audit. He emphasized that CalPERS is there to assist us. The main issue identified was with the minutes and how the schedules were presented. GM Bonner mentioned that he and Finance Manager Winder recently attended the CalPERS Educational Forum and obtained valuable information for future adjustments. He noted that revisions to the prior Salary Schedules will be requested. The Board expressed interest in attending the CalPERS conference in 2025, scheduled for October 13-15, 2025, at the JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort.

5. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

5.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Chair Rosales recognized the remarkable growth of DDLM over the years, noting the strong team and infrastructure that have contributed to its success. He pointed out that the event’s organization has played a key role in increasing public confidence and highlighted the meaningful connection between staff, particularly the Cemetery Services Team, and the families. Trustee Rios echoed these sentiments, adding that the shuttle service and staff assistance were highly appreciated by the public. GM Bonner also noted that there were over 80 ADA parking stalls available this year. Chair Rosales acknowledged Marcos Palma for his contribution to the continued growth of the event.

Vice Chair Vossler shared that she had a wonderful time at the bread and water table at DDLM, complimenting staff for keeping things orderly and efficiently shuttling visitors. She also extended thanks to the Zabalzas, noting that she would love to have them back. Vice Chair Vossler suggested using a clicker counter to obtain a more accurate attendee count for future events. GM Bonner mentioned that he was considering commissioning a car strip counter for future years. Additionally, she recommended that the Board consider hiring a full-time events coordinator and proposed discussing the matter in May.

Trustee Coronel shared that Marcos Palma recognized him at DDLM and invited him on stage to give remarks. He noted the event was well-organized, and although he does not use the parking pass, it took him only 10 minutes to get in from East to West. He observed CHP officers present, though they did not appear to be actively engaged. Trustee Coronel also mentioned hearing positive feedback about the event. He attended the SDARC meeting where Trustee Underwood spoke and the California Association of Public Cemeteries (CAPC) Annual Conference with Chair Rosales, where he had the opportunity to highlight the Cemetery and engage with others during the trustee forum. He described the conference as productive and complimented the CAPC board on their event. Trustee Coronel raised concerns about timeliness regarding LAFCO, which he expressed to a LAFCO commissioner. GM Bonner noted that this concern was also mentioned at the SDARC meeting. Trustees Coronel and Underwood have been discussing strategies to pay off pension liabilities and explore options for bonds and other financing in the future. Regarding the 457 plan, Trustee Coronel suggested considering trustee benefits as part of compensation during the May Planning Session. For DDLM, he proposed exploring partnerships with local cities to shadow their events and collaborate in the future. He also mentioned that he would like to discuss naming the streets, which GM Bonner noted could be added to the May Planning Session.

Trustee Underwood shared a copy of a Desert Sun article on the Day of the Dead and showed the CSDA magazine featuring the District on the cover, noting that it was very well done. He attended the CalLAFCO conference in Yosemite and mentioned that next year's event will be held in San Diego. During the seminar, he connected with a company specializing in grant funding and passed the information on to GM Bonner. He also presented to SDARC yesterday on LAFCO and met with representatives from the Water District and Health District for LAFCO, following their requests. He noted that events like DDLM are helping to better integrate the District into the community and foster collaboration between districts. Trustee Coronel suggested that the District should be included in the County's Emergency Response Team. Trustee Underwood also spoke with an individual who was unable to locate their loved one, and when he mentioned the *Find A Loved One* feature on the website, the person was unaware of it. Trustee Underwood suggested finding a way to publicize this feature more effectively. GM Bonner noted that this could be reviewed during the May Planning Session, as he has been considering a docent program.

Trustee Rios commented that DDLM was fantastic and enjoyable. As he walked through the event, he received positive feedback from many attendees. He felt the event was a worthwhile investment and noted that parking was not an issue. He also heard no complaints and remarked that the grounds looked spectacular.

5.2 General Manager Report

GM Bonner reviewed the GM Report and noted that lot availability has turned red. Unless Section 27 (where the DDLM stage is located) is developed, we are now looking at a year to a year and a half out for lot selection, and we need to determine how to proceed. Open Enrollment for staff has concluded. The Veterans Day event will take place on Monday morning, with Glenn Miller serving as the emcee. Since cities host their own events, the crowd for this event is typically smaller than Memorial Day. Due to the timing of the Board Meeting, there wasn't enough time to present a special DDLM recap; this will be provided later. GM Bonner helped clean up the grounds on

Sunday, November 3rd, and spoke with attendees who were pleased with the enforcement of rules regarding glass, alcohol, and food. The video series shown at DDLM will have requested edits submitted and then shared on social media and the website. GM Bonner commented that it may be necessary to partner with the school district for additional parking at DDLM in the future.

Adjourned to closed session at 9:30 a.m.

6. CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

6.1 CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION

Significant Exposure to Litigation, Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2)(e)(1)
Two (2) Potential Case

The Board reconvened from closed session at 9:39 a.m. and Counsel Verdugo reported: no reportable action.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION

Friday, January 10, 2025

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.