

Board of Trustees
Mark Franey
Tanya Gordon
Mark Vasquez
Paul Loveless
Victor Keaton

Barstow Cemetery District
Mtn. View Memorial Park
37067 Irwin Rd.
P.O. Box 1033 Barstow, CA 92312
www.mountainviewmemorial.specialdistrict.org
(760) 256-2797

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

MINUTES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, July 12, 2023, 1:00 p.m.

PARTICIPATION IS INVITED: THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ADDRESS THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON ALL ITEMS ON THE AGENDA. Anyone interested in commenting on an Agenda item during any Board meeting must submit a "Speaker Card", which is available from the Board Secretary. The "PUBLIC COMMENT" section below is the appropriate time for the public to address the Board.

INVOCATION: Elisa Ford gave the invocation.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Mark Franey called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chair Franey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Given and a quorum was established with the following present: Chair Mark Franey, Vice Chair Tanya Gordon, Trustee Paul Loveless and Trustee Vic Keaton. Trustee Mark Vasquez was absent. General Manager Johnson arrived late.

PRESENTATIONS:

- 1. Presentation by Antonio Gallo of Cooperative Funeral Fund, Inc.**
Recommended Action: Presentation only.

Presentation given after Public Comments.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: This is the time and place for the public to address the Cemetery District on matters within its jurisdiction that are not currently on the Agenda. State law prohibits the Board of Trustees from addressing any issue not previously included on the Agenda. The Cemetery District may receive comment and set the matter for a subsequent meeting. Speakers are asked to **limit their comments to three minutes; yielding time to another speaker is never allowed.**

SPEAKERS

Cecelia Cordova

- Noted that the latest phase of the Landscape Conversion Project (Block A) was completed, but the benches and some flower vases that were there before construction had not been reinstalled.
- Said that she would like to know which legal firm represented the District.

Peter Castillo

- Stated that according to the 2022 Audit, Managements' Discussion and Analysis, the Endowment Fund lost \$107,000 due to investment losses on the principle.
- Said the report also stated that the District's financial status was dependent on at-need and pre-need revenue.
- Felt that the District needed to generate income outside of sales.

Tom Runyon, Highlands Funeral Home

- Stated that the three employees that were left were very effective and needed raises.

Michael Tuerpe, LAFCO

- Stated that LAFCO reviewed the District in December 2020, noting the following:
 - The 2020 review showed some of the same issues as LAFCO's 2010 review.
 - Historically, Barstow Cemetery District received a very low share of tax revenue.
 - LAFCO's update ended in 2021.
 - LAFCO had a captive audience.
- Said that LAFCO would be attending future meetings and would be meeting individually with the General Manager and Trustees.

Joe Gomez

- Said that Trinidad Esquivel contacted him with concerns about the lack of Cemetery staff.
- Suggested changing the time of the monthly Board meetings to after 3:00 p.m. to accommodate standard cemetery business.

STAFF REPORTS:

2. General Manager Updates and Reports

Recommended Action: Updates and reports only.

General Manager Johnson

- Stated that she reached out to Barstow Community College and San Bernardino County looking for a Workforce Development program that could help the District find and partially fund new employees.
- Reported that the mapping team finished the maps for two more blocks for CemSites, but still had several more to complete.
- Stated that a local tree service quoted a price of \$2,000 per day to remove existing tree stumps and roots.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA: This is the time for members of the Board of Trustees to call for rearranging the order of the agenda; adding items to or removing items from the agenda; or removing items from the Consent Calendar for discussion and/or separate action.

Motion: Vice Chair Gordon 2nd: Trustee Keaton Vote: 4-0-0-1 (Trustee Vasquez absent)
To approve the Agenda as presented.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEM:

3. Approval of the June 14, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes

Recommended Action: Approve as presented.

4. Approval of the June 27, 2023, Special Meeting Minutes

Recommended Action: Approve as presented.

Motion: Vice Chair Gordon 2nd: Trustee Loveless Vote: 4-0-0-1 (Trustee Vasquez absent)
To approve the Consent Calendar as presented.

BUSINESS / ACTION ITEMS / UPDATES:

5. Landscape Conversion Project Committee Report / Discussion

Recommended Action: Report and discussion only.

Chair Franey

- Reported that Block A had been completed and the contractor had been paid.
- Stated that the next phase would be Block D.

Joe Gomez

- Said that he met with the owner of Alexis Trucking about hauling decomposed granite for the Landscape Conversion Project.
- Stated that the owner would like to trade services for cemetery plots, but if that was not possible, the company would be willing to discount the cost of its trucking services.
-

Betty Brock

- Asked if someone could buy the cemetery plots for them.

David Maya

- Stated that Brubaker-Mann (the company that donated the decomposed granite) was being sold, adding that the District needed the granite hauled and should act fast.

Trustee Keaton

- Stated that someone should talk to Brubaker-Mann's current owner about adding a contingency clause about donating the decomposed granite to the cemetery when selling the business.

6. Friends of Barstow Cemetery Committee Report / Discussion

Recommended Action: Report and discussion only.

Cecelia Cordova

- Stated that the Friends of Barstow Cemetery visited 29 Palms Public Cemetery District and she wanted to share her findings as follows:
 - Cemetery was donated to the District by a Veteran in 1934.
 - Similar to Mt. View Memorial Park because it was a Special District in the San Bernardino desert and had rock landscape.
 - Staff included a General Manager and two maintenance positions.
 - An administrative assistant was being considered.
 - Clean garage with an office space and employee lockers.
 - Maintenance crew wears dry cleaned uniforms for services.
 - Tree maintenance and landscaping services were outsourced.
 - Used QuickBooks and CemSites.
 - Gravesites could be found on their website.
 - Used local radio and newspaper, Facebook, Instagram, and an enclosed bulletin board.
 - Trustees gave presentations in the community.
 - Veteran spaces had a "V" stamped into concrete with a pipe for a flag.

Chair Franey

- Stated that the Chair, Vice Chair and General Manager had all visited 29 Palms Public Cemetery District.
- Agreed with the listed similarities, but noted that among the differences, their burial rate was one-third of the Barstow Cemetery District.

7. Approval of Barstow Cemetery District Organizational Chart, Job Descriptions, Salary Schedule, and Employee Performance Review Form

Recommended Action: Approve the Barstow Cemetery District Organizational Chart, job descriptions for the General Manager, Administrative Assistant, Lead Groundskeeper and Groundskeeper, Salary Schedule (deferring implementation of Salary Schedule to the District's budget preparation and subcommittee recommendation), and Employee Performance Review form for the General Manager to use for yearly performance reviews of employees that report to him/her, and dissolve the Personnel Committee established on November 10, 2021.

Motion: Chair Franey 2nd: Trustee Loveless Vote: 4-0-0-1 (Trustee Vasquez absent)
To approve the Barstow Cemetery District Organizational Chart, job descriptions for the General Manager, Administrative Assistant, Lead Groundskeeper and Groundskeeper, Salary Schedule (deferring implementation of Salary Schedule to the District's budget preparation and subcommittee recommendation), and Employee Performance Review form for the General Manager to use for yearly performance reviews of employees that report to him/her, and dissolve the Personnel Committee established on November 10, 2021.

8. Approve Attendance, Travel and Lodging for Trustees and General Manager to the California Special Districts Association Annual Conference on August 28 - 31, 2023

Recommended Action: Approve attendance, travel and lodging for Trustees and General Manager to the California Special Districts Association Annual Conference on August 28 - 31, 2023.

Motion: Vice Chair Gordon 2nd: Trustee Loveless Vote: 4-0-0-1 (Trustee Vasquez absent)
To table item.

DEFERRED ITEMS: (Items previously tabled or pulled from the Consent Calendar will be considered by the Board of Directors at this time)

None.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORTS: (Requests for future Board Items / Comments / Suggestions / Requests)

Chair Franey

- Stated he noticed a pair of pants and an empty beer bottle that remained in front of the Cemetery for days, noting that he removed the items.
- Noted that there was a gravesite with alcohol bottles.

Vice Chair Gordon

- None.

Trustee Vasquez

- Absent.

Trustee Loveless

- None.

Trustee Keaton

- Felt that the Board needed to concentrate on generating more income.

Chair Franey

- Responded to Trustee Keaton's comment, stating that raising prices had been discussed.
- Said that the Board would be working on this issue.

CLOSED SESSION: (Employee Evaluation/Discipline/Dismissal/Real Property Negotiations/Conference with Legal Counsel/ Etc./ per Gov. Code 54954.5)

- 1. Conference With Legal Counsel – Significant Exposure to Litigation Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(2) (7 Potential Cases)**
- 2. Public Employee Performance Evaluation Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957
Title: General Manager**

Adjourned to Closed Session at 2:38 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 5:21 p.m.

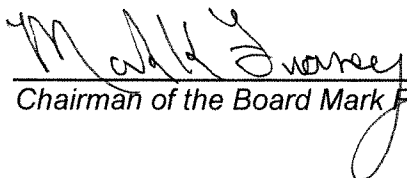
Report of Closed Session:

The Board of Trustees met in Closed Session to consider two items, one regarding exposure to litigation and one regarding an employee performance evaluation. Direction was provided to staff. No other reportable action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: Trustee Keaton 2nd: Trustee Loveless Vote: 4-0-0-1 (Trustee Vasquez absent)
To adjourn the meeting at 5:22 p.m.

Approved:



Chairman of the Board Mark Franey

Clerk of the Board Loveless