

Board of Trustees

**Mark Franey
Tanya Gordon
Mark Vasquez
Victor Keaton
Eugene Butticci**

**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

**Ashley Tarpley
General Manger**

**Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, December 18, 2024, 4:00 PM

Call To Order:

1. The Board of Trustees Chairperson, Mark Franey, called the Regular meeting of the Barstow Cemetery District to order at 4:00 PM on Wednesday, November 20, 2024. Board Members present at roll call were, Vice Chair Tanya Gordon, Trustee Mark Vasquez, and Trustee Eugene Butticci. Trustees Victor Keaton was absent.
2. All present stood and recited the pledge of allegiance.
3. Notice of minor revisions to agenda items, items removed or continued: None

Public Comments:

Peter Castillo- Wanted to clarify that the endowment principal was never used only the interest. He would like to know what is being done to get financing and marketing are being done for the Cemetery. The timeline has changed for the completion of the Cemetery, what is the timeline now?

David Maya- Wants the Cemetery to know the community is upset. He feels the agenda is too vague and there is not enough being put on the agenda for discussion when the Cemetery has so many issues. Wants to know what the Board of Trustees is doing.

Betty Brock- Suggested that a question-and-answer page be added to the Cemetery Facebook to get more information out to the public, so the people don't have to guess. Is concerned that the first time the tractor goes through the 4000 section that is under construction it will break the headstones.

Cecilia Cordova- Brought up it was mentioned previously that there may be an open house and was wondering if that is still something that could happen. Feels that the Trustees should be providing the General Manager support and when they have no comments or suggestions it makes people feel no one is helping.

Marlene Downs- Asked "Friends of the Barstow Cemetery" what we can do to help as a community. Everything is nothing but complaining and bashing instead of helping. If the Community has concerns, they should ask what they can do and come to the Cemetery to help.

Debbie Aguayo- There is a lot of feedback about things not being done. People negotiated a service in their contract when they paid for the site with expectations of services and maintenance. Is wondering if there have been attempts to reach out to Native American tribes because we have code talkers and other Native American people in the Cemetery.

Joe Gomez- It has been 5 years since the start of the petition to have the Board investigate the financials. He appreciates the Board but feels like there has been no discussion about giving directions to the General Manager or discussion of the vision. It was going to be 5 years for the project and now it is being said it will be another 5 years.

Consent Calendar:

4. Meeting minutes for the Board of Trustees Regular Meeting on November 20, 2024, were emailed to the Board of Trustees on Thursday, December 12, 2024, for their review.

Discussion: None.

Motion to accept November 20, 2024, Regular Meeting minutes as presented: Trustee Butticci

Second: Trustee Vasquez

All In Favor: Mark Franey: Aye, Tanya Gordon: Aye, Victor Keaton: Absent, Mark Vasquez: Aye, Eugene Butticci: Aye

General Manager Reports:

5. Interments for the month of November were 2 full, 2 cremains.

The 4000 Section Landscaping Project is not completed. The cemetery staff are working on aligning the headstones in the section. They will also be responsible for leveling the stones and putting the vases in the fines. After this is completed, the contractor will come back to do the final compacting of the fines. We will also be adding colored rock and additional plants for color and life.

Since the Cemetery is not a non-profit the San Manuel Indian tribe have advised that they will not be able to help with any funding. In addition, the Cemetery was denied the CBDG grant submitted by the General Manager with the help of Eugene Butticci. The other grants that management has submitted are Veterans Legacy, Route 66 preservation, Mojave water strategic Partnership, Exxon Public Awareness, Nina Pulliman Trust, and reached out to the Navajo Nation because we have a code talker.

The Board of Trustees are Policy and Procedures makers they are not apart of operations. Operations fall to the General Manager and is outside of the class of work for the Board members.

Endowment Care was not a fee for the current maintenance of the property it collected and kept in a Trust with the county. It is only to be used after there are no more sites to sell, no need for an office, and to continue the maintenance on the grounds at that time in the future.

Action and Information Items:

6. Unfinished Business: None

7. New Business:

- a. Approval of the Employment Agreement for General Manager Position for the Barstow Cemetery District.

Discussion: The Board is happy with Ashley Tarpley and feels that the contract should be continued.

Vice Chair Gordon advised that the contract has been looked over and approved by the Cemetery attorney.

Motion to accept the Employment Agreement for General Manager Position: Vice Chair Gordon

Second: Trustee Butticci

All In Favor: Mark Franey: Aye, Tanya Gordon: Aye, Victor Keaton: Absent, Mark Vasquez: Aye, Eugene Butticci: Aye

b. Use of Upright Headstones: Discussion only

Discussion: Mark Franey- Would like to have upright headstones but doesn't feel there is enough information on them, after the construction is completed and the Cemetery has more services it will be easier to determine if they are feasible.

Tanya Gordon- They do not seem to be feasible for the grounds.

Mark Vasquez- Afraid the Backhoe will tear them up but maybe if all the sites were sold and filled in a section that section could be allowed to have them.

Eugene Butticci- Thinks there needs to be more information gathered but there are concerns with any upright structure in the winds Barstow has causing drifting sand around the structures.

Ashley Tarpley- As far as operations the backhoe would not be able to get between the sites as needed with the upright headstones and worries that if they are allowed the Cemetery will be liable for if they are damaged by the backhoe.

Joe Gomez- Asked if it would be possible to at least do upright headstones in the section that is completed because most of the sites are full.

Mark Franey advised that the headstones that are upright in the Cemetery now are from the old Cemetery that was brought in to be added to this one and those are not new Upright headstones but the originals from the old Cemetery.

Debbie Aguayo- Other Cemeteries have upright headstones and are using the same kind of equipment. It would be nice to at least give the community the option for the upright headstones.

David Maya- Wanted to bring to recollection that there was an upright headstone allowed before, if you do for one you have to do for all.

Mark Vasquez- Corrected that it was not a headstone, but a donated statue and it was placed on a non-burial site.

c. Amendments to "Policies and Procedures" and "Rules and Regulations"

Discussion: General Manager Ashley Tarpley requested to add; Barstow Cemetery District is not responsible for the upkeep and cleaning of any markers.

The verbiage for gates changed to include fencing.

Decorations must be kept within the limits of surrounding the marker and may not extend more than 3 inches past the marker or where the marker shall be placed in the future. No decorations may extend into the rows to outline an entire site, with Exception to grave blankets during holidays or services.

Blankets must be removed after flowers begin to wither or perish.

Motion to accept amended "Policies and Procedures" and "Rules and Regulations": Trustee Butticci

Second: Trustee Vasquez

All In Favor: Mark Franey: Aye, Tanya Gordon: Aye, Victor Keaton: Absent, Mark Vasquez: Aye,
Eugene Butticci: Aye

Items for Future Agenda:

1. None

Cemetery Board and Employee Comments:

1. Chair Franey: The cemetery does have a website, Facebook is not a website. There have been comments and pictures on Facebook of tools left on sites. Board members and the General Manager had walked those sites the day before and the tools were not on the headstones and the workers had not been in the area. The best assessment is that someone saw the tools in the dirt and set them on a headstone to be helpful. When comments come back from the "Friends" Facebook page they are incorrect information and upset staff. The staff is looking into grants and the "Task Force" for the "Friends" of the Cemetery has been asked to start a non-profit to help and nothing has come from it. Regarding people saying there are broken or missing headstones the headstones are set in a cement border by the Cemetery. This gets broken from equipment and the weather, if there is a stone missing, it is because the staff has pulled it to work on replacing the border.
2. Vice Chair Gordon: After the beginning of the year will be working with Ashley Tarpley on the format for the agenda to make it clearer and easily read.
3. Trustee Vasquez: Has over 3 generations of family in the Barstow Cemetery. He feels that Ashley and the staff are doing a great job. Barstow is supposed to be a community but is not providing support. The "Friends" offered to put money together for 3 years and no funds have been given. A Board member and his family are donating a Veterans fence to help improve the look of the Cemetery. Seats on the Board have sat open with no one volunteering to take them. The City of Barstow offered to remove the grass from homeowners' yards and replace it with desert landscape. Individuals did this because they could not afford or maintain their own yards, how is the Cemetery any different. Even with the grass there would be problems. Now the Cemetery needs the community's help.
4. Trustee Keaton: Absent
5. Trustee Butticci: There are attempts being made to get funding and find sources. He helped management with a grant where they focused on the Veterans and baby area, and it was denied. Just looking for grants and the time it takes to apply for one is very tedious. He commended the amount that management has already applied for on top of operations. Advised there is a difference in micromanaging and transparency.

Announcements:

1. None

Adjournment:

1. Motion to Adjourn at 5:10pm: Trustee Butticci
Second: Trustee Vasquez
All In Favor: Mark Franey: Aye, Tanya Gordon: Aye, Mark Vasquez: Aye, Victor Keaton: Absent,
Eugene Butticci: Aye

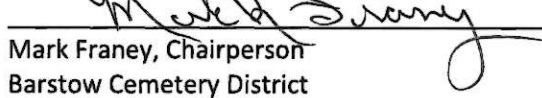
The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will take place on Wednesday, December 18, 2024, in the Community Room of the Cemetery at 4:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by:



Ashley Tarpley, General Manager, Barstow Cemetery District

Accepted after Board Approval by:



Mark Franey, Chairperson
Barstow Cemetery District