



Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 11, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

Location: Woodlake Public Cemetery District Office, 165 N. Cypress Street in Woodlake

Board Members Present: George Clausen; Belen Gomez; Bill Crawford

Others Present: Trilby Barton, District Manager

Call to Order: Board Chair, George Clausen called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda: It was moved to approve the agenda by Ms. Gomez and seconded by Mr. Crawford. Agenda was approved.

Public Comment: None. No members of the public were present.

Minutes: Mr. Crawford moved to approve the minutes from the December 12, 2022 Board Meeting, and Ms. Gomez seconded. The minutes were approved.

Administration:

- **Financial Report:** Ms. Barton reported that our application for a credit card was not approved again. She believes it is due to the lawsuit from the City of Woodlake regarding the loan the Cemetery defaulted on. She reported that we are up to date on payments, and future payments will be made on time.

Ms. Barton reported that she deposited \$28,057.25 into the Treasury for December income. There were four full body burials in the December, and some of the revenue was for upcoming burials, including one disinterment/reinterment. Two people have now been buried in the North Section, and it is officially now open.

For December expenses, \$11,138.47 was paid out for the month, including payroll and the December payment for the City of Woodlake loan. January expenses to date total \$10,130.28. Expenses for the two months included backhoe repairs, excavator services for burials (weather conditions prevented the ground to be able to hold the weight of the backhoe), a pallet of grass seed, and another order of vaults. Ms. Barton needs to order another pallet of grass seed and some Weed & Feed to fertilize the grass and kill the weeds.

Other financial notes: Property Tax income has not come in yet. Ms. Barton said one family is interested in buying about 20 plots in the new North Section, which may consist

of another disinterment from the South Section and reinterment in the North Section. The Board inquired how Ms. Barton was handling the plots for disinterments. She explained she has a form that they sign relinquishing ownership of the disinterred plot and trading for the new plot. This allows the Cemetery to be able to sell the graves again. She showed the paperwork for the already-scheduled disinterment, including the receipt outlining the costs. The family receives a copy and the Cemetery keeps a copy.

- **Review of Fiscal Year Budget To-Date:** Since we are officially through half of the fiscal year, Ms. Barton showed the board a report on where we are to-date on the budget. Total expenses for the first half totaled \$95,286.38. We have a remaining balance of \$170,438.62 budgeted for projected spending. Ms. Barton is being fiscally responsible on when those expenses go out based on monthly revenue and when the property tax income comes in. Ms. Barton reported the small John Deere lawn mower no longer works and she won't be putting any more money into it. She will look into the purchase of a new one in the next fiscal year. So far, expenses and revenue are on track for the year. She noted the office still needs a computer, but she is using hers for now, and when some of the other larger expenses are taken care of, the Cemetery can buy one.
- **Other Administrative Report:** Ms. Barton noted they are waiting for the South Section to dry out more so they can fix the ground, areas where graves have sunk, and fix headstones. The ground is so saturated that even the hard pan layers have softened. There are two more burials scheduled for the month, and she is hoping some sunshine days will dry out, but still may take a while. Due to the wet weather, the disinterment/reinterment has been rescheduled. The backhoe is needed to lift the vault from the ground, and they ran a simulation with the excavator, but it's not heavy enough to lift that much weight. Ms. Barton is working with Visalia Cemetery and Salser & Dillard to reschedule when the weather is better. Mr. Clausen agreed the hardpan does need to dry up.

Ms. Barton explained she almost had to cancel the burial on December 28, 2022, and made the dreaded phone call to the family. She kept working with others in the community to find a solution, and was able to bring in the excavator to make it happen just in time. It ended up being a blessing because the excavator has been a resource to for other burials, when in the past, burials would be postponed until the ground was drier.

The Board questioned Ms. Barton about the Grand Jury report scheduled for January 30. She said the board is welcome to attend if they like, but she confirmed their attendance is not required. She is working on the presentation, which include an update on where the new management started, what's been accomplished, and future plans/projects. Mr. Clausen requested to see the presentation before the meeting. Ms. Barton said she would have it ready for review around the 25th or 26th of January.

Ms. Barton updated the Board on the status of the financial audits. She spoke with Dennis Hylton and confirmed he received the letter from her giving permission for him to

share information with the new auditor. The new auditor is also currently working on the Financial Transaction Report, which is due by January 31, 2023.

- **Office Improvements Update:** Ms. Barton reported she is still going through the piles of paperworks and unopened mail, but the piles are getting smaller. She confirmed with the auditor that we need to keep seven years worth of financial records. However, for equipment, we need to keep records on the equipment for seven years after it is sold.

Ms. Barton has purchased new filing cabinets, and will put older files in banker boxes. She plans on painting the office in March.

Ms. Barton also noted that the office needs a new front door, and the shop needs a new door and new east wall. The wall is rotten from the flow of water into the shop, the shop door has literally fallen apart, and to prevent the water from rotting the wall again in the future, an awning needs to be built to redirect the flow of water. She spoke with a couple of contractors, but only one returned a bid. Palafox Prestige Construction bid an estimate of \$15,500, including materials and labor. Ms. Barton noted the cost is more than was anticipated for building improvements when the budget was put together in July, but is needed to secure and maintain the building. Other projects may need to be put on hold until next year, as our priorities have to shift a bit. Mr. Clausen agreed. Ms. Gomez moved to approve the construction project on the building, and Mr. Crawford seconded. Motion was approved to move forward with the construction improvements to the office building and shop.

Grounds Report:

- **Grounds Improvements Reports:** As noted previously, a section of the cemetery was messed up by the backhoe during the rainstorm. Those areas and areas where fill dirt is needed will be re-seeded. She also noted that the irrigation improvements project may have to wait until next fiscal year due to the building improvements, but we will see how it goes, and maybe just do Phase I this year. She noted the Cemetery did not lose any more trees in the recent rain, but did lose some larger branches.
- **North Section Opening Timeline:** The new North Section is open, and Ms. Barton still needs to order the marker buttons. Visalia Granite quoted her a cost of \$60 a piece, and she needs to determine how many are needed. Right now, they are using survey stakes. They also found some old buttons behind the office building and she will inventory those and determine if they can be utilized.

Closed Session: None.

Board Comments & Additional Comments:

- Ms. Barton asked the Board to think about what their goals are as Board members for this new 2023 year, and how they can help the Cemetery reach its improvement goals. She asked they think about it and bring their ideas to next month's meeting.
- No other comments were made by Board members.

Next Meeting – Ms. Barton presented a schedule of the 2023 Board Meetings to the Board members. She requested the February meeting be moved to Tuesday, February 14 instead of Monday, February 13 due to a schedule conflict. The Board members agreed that was acceptable.

Mr. Crawford moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gomez seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Signed:  _____
Belen Gomez, Board Secretary