



JULY – AUGUST 2021

Orange County Cemetery District

TRUSTEES

Maribel Marroquin, Chair
William E. Nelson, Vice Chair
Noel Hatch
Kelly Rivers
Cynthia Ward

25751 Trabuco Road
Lake Forest, CA 92630
(949) 951-9102 – Phone
(949) 951-0236 - Fax
www.occemeterydistrict.com

Tim Deutsch, General Manager

How the Statewide June 15th Reopening Impacts Our Cemeteries

On June 15, 2021, the State of California implemented the safe re-opening of the State, while continuing vaccinations and protecting the health and well-being of the residents of California. The Orange County Cemetery District began this safe re-opening process at our three cemeteries by removing the requirements pertaining to gathering limits, social distancing and use of face coverings for those vaccinated while on the grounds for an interment service or to visit a grave.

OFFICE CLOSURES

At this point, the offices are still closed to the general public, with a few exceptions, such as service vendors or deliveries. We are hopeful that in the near future we can begin to allow family members to meet with staff in person, indoors, when making funeral arrangements. The use of face coverings will still be recommended for the protection of those who have not been vaccinated. We respectfully request that only two healthy family members attend any indoor appointments. It is our goal to reopen the offices completely as soon as it is safely possible to do so.

GRAVESIDE SERVICES

As far as graveside services are concerned, there is now no limit on the number of family members and friends who can attend interment services. Staff have resumed the placement of our typical graveside set-up, which consists of a canopy, 12 chairs, and a table. This set-up is available for all interment service types and coordinated during the funeral service arrangement meeting.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

The District is hopeful that community events, which have also been postponed over the last 15 months, will resume as well. The next two events on the District's calendar are Dia de Los Muertos and Veterans Day in November. In the past, Anaheim Cemetery has hosted an evening celebration for Dia de los Muertos that typically draws about 500 attendees. If the pandemic continues to decline, we look forward to hosting these events for the community to enjoy. More details will be provided in future newsletters and posted on the District website and bulletin boards at the cemeteries as plans for these events can be confirmed.

The Board of Trustees, District Management and staff at the three cemeteries want to express our sincere appreciation to the families we serve for their patience, understanding and adherence to the COVID-19 protocols that were implemented since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020. It was a difficult period for us all, but particularly so for those families who lost a loved-one and could not say good-bye in person or feel the loving embrace of family and friends at memorial services.

For those 200+ families served by the District who had a loved one pass due to COVID-19, we want to tell you how very sorry we are for your loss and everything you have gone through. We would also like to remind you that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has a reimbursement program for funeral costs associated with COVID-19 related deaths, including the arranging and burial process. For more details, please visit the link below.

<https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>

Board of Trustees Approve 2021-22 Fiscal Year Budget

Each year around this time, government entities with a fiscal year from July 1st to June 30th, are presenting and approving the next fiscal year budget. The Orange County Cemetery District, as a "Special District" is required to follow the same process as local cities, water districts, sanitation districts, library districts and the County of Orange. The budget is required by law to be adopted prior to August 30th per the California Health & Safety Code Section 9070(a). At the June 1, 2021 Board Meeting, the Trustees adopted the District's new budget.

The budget serves many purposes. It is the Orange County Cemetery District's annual financing and spending plan, providing a means for allocating resources to meet the needs and desires of the citizens of Orange County. The annual budget serves as a communication device, a policy document, a management tool, and an accountability tool, granting spending authority to District staff.

REVENUES

For Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22, the budget's projected revenues of \$6,636,941 should exceed expected operating expenditures of \$4,938,196. Revenues for the District are derived from interment space sales, interment services and other miscellaneous income such as investment interest and cell tower leases. These projected revenues are \$4,128,787. The District also expects to receive approximately \$2,508,154 in property tax revenue.

EXPENSES

The General Fund Expenditure Budget includes salaries, benefits, services, supplies, equipment and a provision for economic uncertainty. It includes 27 authorized full-time employees and 1 part-time employee. Some of the expense highlights include the purchase of new equipment for maintenance and beautification of the grounds and increased security. The District has also allocated \$770,000 in the Capital Improvements Budget for repairs and modifications to the three existing cemeteries.

RESERVES

A part of this budget preparation, discussion and approval process is the review of the District's reserves and fees for the upcoming fiscal year. The District anticipates that there will be an excess amount of revenue of approximately \$928,745, which will be placed into the New Cemetery Development Reserve Fund. Due to prudent spending and saving, the District will have about \$13,100,000 committed in the New Cemetery Development Reserve Fund, which will help fund the development of a fourth cemetery.

BUILDING A NEW CEMETERY

The District is continuing its planning and development of a fourth public cemetery to be located in Anaheim Hills near the intersection of Gypsum Canyon Road and Santa Ana Canyon Road. This vacant property is being planned for a public cemetery and for a State Veterans Cemetery. The District is working with the City of Anaheim, County of Orange and

Veterans organizations to make this dream a realization for Orange County residents and for Veterans.

The District's fourth public cemetery must be operable by 2025-26, when it is projected that all of the remaining full casket spaces will be completely sold at El Toro Memorial Park. El Toro is now the only Orange County public cemetery still able to offer affordable casket spaces for sale. District management staff and the Board of Trustees are working hard to get this project approved for development so that affordable full casket spaces will be available for Orange County residents for the next 80-100 years.

NEW PRICES

EFFECTIVE JULY 2, 2021

Due to cost-of-living adjustments, the Board approved increases to interment space prices as well as for many of the service fees. Interment space prices were increased based on the Consumer Price Index for the LA/OC Area, which was 2.2% for the month ending April 2021. In addition, the Eligible Non-Resident Fee and the Non-Tax Paying Resident Fee were changed from flat fees of \$400 for a casket space and \$200 for a cremation space to a fee based on 15% of the interment space price. These new increases become effective July 2nd. The new fees are posted on the District's website.

Should you have any questions about the District's budget or fees, please do not hesitate to call the District office at (949) 951-9102.

District Approves a New Endowment Fund Analysis Update

What will Orange County look like 100 years from now? That's hard to predict, but one thing is certain - we want to make sure our public cemeteries are just as beautiful in the future as they are today.

To ensure the perpetual care of public cemeteries, which are governed by law under the Health & Safety Code, the District is required to maintain an Endowment Fund. Since 1974, every time an interment space is sold, a one-time fee called the Endowment Care Fee is charged. Currently, the Endowment Care Fee for a casket space is \$525 and cremation and infant spaces are \$425. The District now has \$9.65 million in the Endowment Principal Fund and \$8.5 million in the Endowment Income Fund. The District has not needed to use any monies from these funds for perpetual care as of this date.

IS OUR ENDOWMENT FUND SUFFICIENT?

As our cemeteries fill and revenues decrease from space sales and conducting interments, the District will reach a point where we must rely on these monies to pay for maintenance expenses. That's why the Board of Trustees periodically authorizes studies to be conducted to make sure our Endowment Fund is on track to meet those needs. At the June 1st Board Meeting, the Trustees authorized HB Actuarial Services to undertake such a study.

The goal of this projection examination is: (1) to assess the long-term financial solvency of the fund, (2) to determine whether the District will have adequate resources to pay for all cemetery maintenance costs for the next 100 years, and (3) to request

recommendations that will improve the financial standing of the District. This will be the second Endowment Fund Analysis update since the original study was first completed in 2010. This new update will also consider how the Endowment Fund will be impacted by the development of a new fourth public cemetery.

By following the recommendations of past studies, the District has increased the overall combined Endowment Care Fund balance by over \$9 million, which represents a 47% increase. We will be sharing the results of the Endowment Fund Analysis in a future newsletter when the study is complete sometime in the Fall of 2021.



Planning a Memorial Gathering at Your Gravesite? Please Get a Permit.

If you are planning to hold a memorial gathering at the gravesite of a loved one who has been interred in any of the three Orange County Cemetery District parks, please call that cemetery office **first** to obtain the necessary permit.

The fee to obtain the permit is \$75, and is now being required for several reasons.

- 1) Memorial gatherings need to be scheduled to ensure that any burials taking place nearby will not be adversely impacted by your gathering.
- 2) You and any guests in attendance must know and abide by

the rules and regulations for park visitation. The person filing for the permit will be responsible for ensuring that all guests behave in accordance with cemetery visitation rules. We want you to be able to remember and honor your loved one. However, no gathering should disrupt the peaceful setting of the cemetery grounds. The permit you receive will include a copy of the visitation rules.

- 3) Under normal cemetery rules, the use of personal canopies, pop-up tents, and tables are not allowed. However, if you obtain a permit, this restriction can be waived. Please keep a copy of the permit with you

during your gathering and be prepared to show the permit to our security staff or groundskeepers upon their request.

Please keep in mind that your gathering and any canopies, chairs, or tables you set up, will need to be moved if it obstructs or impedes any other person from visiting neighboring gravesites. Failure to follow the cemetery visitation rules or impeding others from visiting nearby gravesites may result in the immediate cancelation of your gathering.

We appreciate your cooperation and adherence to this new policy.

ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT

July/August Board Meetings

The Board of Trustees for the Orange County Cemetery District holds regular meetings the first Tuesday of every month at 10:00 a.m. at the District Office located at 25751 Trabuco Road, Lake Forest, CA 92630. **Until further notice these meetings are being video conferenced, but the public may also attend electronically. Please call the District office for the meeting link.**

Agendas are available at least 72 hours prior to each meeting and are also posted on our website at www.occemeterydistrict.com. In July and August, meetings will be held as follows:

- **Tuesday, July 6th at 10:00 a.m.**
- **Tuesday, August 3rd at 10:00 a.m.**

If you have any questions or need additional information please contact the District Secretary, Mary Funk at (949) 951-9102 ext. 110.

Flower Removal and Holiday Schedule

Every Wednesday, groundskeepers remove and discard flowers and decorations throughout all three cemeteries. Families are encouraged to remove their flowers and/or decorations on Tuesday night. You can then place the flowers back on the space on Wednesday afternoon. Please remember that the District policy only allows for two items to be placed on gravesites. This includes the in-ground flower vase and one other item. If gravesites exceed the number of allowed items, staff may remove and discard the excess items. Please do not leave items of great monetary or sentimental value on gravesites as the District cannot prevent theft.

Throughout the year, various holidays are recognized with extended periods between flower clean-ups. During these times, we do ask that you empty the vase and place fresh water in the container every four to five days to eliminate mosquito breeding sources, which can cause serious health issues. Your cooperation in this regard is greatly appreciated.

Flowers for Fathers' Day and Independence Day may be placed on Thursday, June 10th and must be removed by Tuesday, July 13th. Beginning on July 14th, full park clean-ups will occur every Wednesday throughout July and August.

A complete listing of the District's extended holiday flower schedule for 2021 is available on our website at <https://www.occemeterydistrict.com/>. Click on the tab for Flowers, Markers and Rules for more information.

CEMETERY VISITATION HOURS

Anaheim Cemetery and Santa Ana Cemetery are open year-round for visitation, seven days a week, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

El Toro Memorial Park is open seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

When Daylight Saving Time ends on November 7, 2021, the park will close for visitation at 5:00 p.m.

Offices are open M-F from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
All offices are closed on the weekends and on holidays.

In Observance of Independence Day All Cemetery Offices will be closed on Monday, July 5th.

Cemetery grounds will be open for visitation with normal operating hours.

Our Mission Statement & Values

The Orange County Cemetery District manages and maintains Orange County's public cemeteries in a manner that preserves their beauty, dignity, historical and cultural values, and offers affordable interment service for County residents.

The Trustees and staff of the Orange County Cemetery District are committed to the following values:

- Integrity ■ Respect ■ Accountability
- Responsiveness ■ Empathy ■ Transparency
- Appreciation for Diverse Needs

