

ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT
Board of Trustees
March 20, 2024

MINUTES

The regular monthly meeting of the Orange County Cemetery District Board of Trustees was called to order by Chair Cynthia Ward at 10:09 a.m., in the Board Room of the Orange County Cemetery District, 25751 Trabuco Rd., Lake Forest, CA 92630.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Trustee Kelly Rivers.
Roll Call by Board Secretary, Mary Funk.

PRESENT:	Cynthia Ward, Chair	Fourth District
	Maribel Marroquin-Waldram, Vice Chair	First District
	Kelly Rivers	Second District
	Noel Hatch	Fifth District

ABSENT:	Vladimir A. Anderson	Third District
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STAFF:	Tim Deutsch, General Manager
	Brenda Manriquez, Finance and Accounting Manager
	Mary Funk, Board Secretary
	Julio Amarillas, Cemetery Manager
	Bud Bales, Cemetery Manager

PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

STRATEGIC PLAN DISCUSSION

GM Deutsch stated that the goal of the strategic plan is to map out the priorities for the District for the next five years. The strategic plan will be a tool that the Trustees can use to evaluate the General Manager and that Managers can use to evaluate staff. GM Deutsch reminded the Board that the last strategic plan ended in 2019, but due to the pandemic, the District postponed the development of a new strategic plan until that crisis has passed. The core values from that original strategic plan have been carried forth to now.

Of course, the major goal of this new 5-year strategic plan will include the development and opening of the new public cemetery at Gypsum Canyon. For many years the District and its Trustees have been working on this goal. It wasn't until December 2018, when the County gifted the District the land in Gypsum Canyon, that the District and our Trustees have been able to make any substantial progress.

According to the agreement with the County, the District has been given ten years to get a cemetery developed and operational. That ten-year time frame began when the District took possession of the land in April 2019. Since then, the District has done everything in its power to move the project forward. There have been some issues that are out of the District's control and it has taken more time than expected to get CalVet to the table. GM Deutsch does not believe

Chair

Secretary

that this ten-year limitation will be a factor now, since the County is heavily invested in the project. In the unexpected event that it takes us beyond April 2029 to open the new cemetery, GM Deutsch said he believes the County will be willing to amend the agreement allowing for an extension to complete the development.

This new strategic plan would be effective July 1, 2024 and run through fiscal year 2028-29. GM Deutsch anticipates that construction of the new cemetery will be underway in fiscal year 2027-28 and that the first year of operation of the Gypsum Canyon Memorial Park will take place in fiscal year 2028-29. Trustee Hatch commented that it is helpful that Supervisor Wagner was re-elected. GM Deutsch agreed stating that he has been instrumental in getting the project where it is today. In terms of the strategic plan, GM Deutsch said that it is the development of the new cemetery that will drive everything we do during the time frame encompassed by this new strategic plan.

The Board then reviewed the District's current mission statement, core values, and vision statement. The District's mission statement is a succinct description of why the District exists and what our primary function is. The core values are a list of characteristics that the Trustees and all District staff should strive to exemplify. The vision statement is a description of what the District's hopes to be as a result of carrying out the strategic plan.

During the discussion several changes in wording were made to the mission statement, the core values, and the vision statement. GM Deutsch stated that nothing will be finalized until the board approves the strategic plan in June. If Trustees want to recommend other changes to the mission statement, core values or vision statement at upcoming planning meetings they are welcome to do so.

The Board also discussed key performance indicators including: serving families now and in the future; providing a level of quality service; financial management for planned projects, and current and future operations; retaining quality staff; retaining knowledgeable Trustees; and establishing and/or maintaining a positive profile of the District. Chair Ward said she would like to see long term stewardship also included as an objective that addresses environmentally friendly options for the new cemetery and for the existing cemeteries as they transition to maintenance only cemeteries. Cemetery Manager Bud Bales also expressed the need to examine cost efficiency in landscaping including drought tolerant plantings.

GM Deutsch asked about the upcoming strategic planning meetings. After some discussion, the Trustees agreed that the next meetings should take place on April 10th and on April 29th with the meetings lasting from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS - None

BOARD COMMENTS

A. CAPC Annual Conference, March 14-16, 2024 in San Diego, CA

Vice Chair Marroquin-Waldram reported that she really liked the conference. It was nice to see such good representation from the Orange County Cemetery District with GM Deutsch participating on one of the panels and also leading a breakout session. She also stated that she

enjoyed the speakers, particularly the presentation on work place violence. Trustee Rivers reported that she found it very interesting to find during the Trustee breakout session, that one of the Boards meets regularly with staff members on an individual basis. Chair Ward expressed an interest in having more contact with the District’s staff. GM Deutsch stated that the Trustees could make this one of their objectives in the new strategic plan. Trustee Rivers stated that she does want staff to know that the Trustees care about the District’s employees. Trustee Rivers also reported that it was fascinating to learn about the history behind casket lowering devices. GM Deutsch also announced that Trustee Rivers was re-elected to another term on the CAPC Board of Directors and also commented that she gave a wonderful 30-second speech.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**B. Retirement Luncheon for Anaheim Cemetery Manager, Bill Stelter
March 22, 2024 at 12:00 p.m., Santa Ana, CA**

Chair Ward, Vice Chair Marroquin-Waldram, and Trustee Rivers all stated that they would be attending this lunch.

The next regular meeting will be held on **Wednesday, April 2, 2024**, at 10:00 a.m., at the Orange County Cemetery District, 25751 Trabuco Rd., Lake Forest, CA 92630.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Chair

Secretary