

ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT

Board of Trustees

June 26, 2024

MINUTES

The adjourned 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 Cemetery Manager, Bud Bales
Roll Call by Board Secretary, Mary Funk.

PRESENT:	Cynthia Ward, Chair Kelly Rivers Noel Hatch	Fourth District Second District Fifth District
ABSENT:	Maribel Marroquin-Waldram, Vice Chair Vladimir A. Anderson	First District Third District
STAFF:	Tim Deutsch, General Manager Brenda Manriquez, Finance and Accounting Manager Mary Funk, Board Secretary	

PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approval of the July 2024 Check Registers (Claims) Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16.


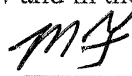
MOTION: of Trustee Rivers, seconded by Trustee Hatch and carried by a vote of 3-0 (Vice Chair Marroquin-Waldram and Trustee Anderson absent for the vote), approved the Consent Calendar.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Strategic Planning Discussion

GM Deutsch presented a document listing 112 action items to be completed throughout the course of the 5-year strategic plan. GM Deutsch said it represents a compilation of all the input we have gathered to date. GM Deutsch said he has also been searching through formats for strategic plans from other agencies and liked the way this document shows the status of each action item.

GM Deutsch reminded everyone of the eight elements this new strategic plan is addressing including: New Cemetery Development; New Cemetery Operational Preparation; Serving Families Now and in the Future; Quality Service Level; Financial Management; Retain (Hire)

 _____ Chair	 _____ Secretary
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Quality Staff; Retain Knowledgeable Trustees; and Positive District Profile. At first glance it may seem like the 112 action steps are daunting. However, when you consider that these action steps are spread out across four years, (No action steps have been created yet for FY 2028-29.) and will be carried out by a variety of staff and trustees, it is much more manageable. GM Deutsch also added that some of the tasks such as creating the yearly budget, are task we are already normally doing.

GM Deutsch also explained that in the current spreadsheet, action items are not grouped by Fiscal Year, which makes it a little more difficult to see the chronology of when tasks should be completed. GM Deutsch plans to revise the document so that each year of the Strategic Plan has its own tab, and the only action items that will appear in each tab, will be the ones that are to accomplished in that fiscal year.

Trustee Hatch said if the Strategic Plan was like a hike, are there any large boulders that the District will have to maneuver around in order to get from Point A to Point B? GM Deutsch said that the biggest boulder is the new cemetery development. If that element does not move forward, almost everything else in the strategic plan is obsolete. Trustee Hatch asked if we are confident that the new public cemetery has enough interest to generate revenue. GM Deutsch said that there is definitely interest with over 125 people already on the waiting list. It also helps that we are establishing the First Responders and Allied Veterans Section.

Finance and Accounting Manager Brenda Manriquez asked if the Strategic Plan will tie in the District’s Mission and Vision Statement. She noted that from a budget standpoint for awards, they want to see that tied in. GM Deutsch said that it will be tied in to the strategic plan.

Trustee Hatch asked if any of the action steps addressed updating Orange County cities with communication on site progress. He recommended establishing relationships with each City Council. GM Deutsch answered, that in the past, the District has not needed County-wide engagement, but rather engagement with the cities immediately surrounding each cemetery’s location. GM Deutsch said that we can certainly send the Idea Hall video and brochure to those cities to see if they would make them available on each city’s website, noting that that would be affordable advertising. GM Deutsch also mentioned that the District’s biggest advertisers and referral sources are the mortuaries and funeral homes.

GM Deutsch stated that once the Strategic Plan is approved by the Board, he intends on giving quarterly updates with status reports on each of the active Action Steps. Of course, if something monumental occurs, the Board will be notified that month in the General Managers Reports.

Trustee Hatch asked how the Strategic Plan will be handled internally with staff. GM Deutsch replied that he holds monthly Cemetery Manager meetings and he is also meeting with the Union Shop Stewards and our District’s Leadworkers. During these meetings they will discuss Action Steps that are in progress and those coming up. GM Deutsch said we may also need to create Ad Hoc Committees or Advisory Committees depending on the Action Steps.

Trustee Hatch asked, once the Anaheim City Council approves the project in July, what are the next steps? GM Deutsch said that we will move into the design elements and developing construction documents that will also require City of Anaheim approvals. Trustee Hatch noted,



Chair



Secretary

that from an expense standpoint, the Design Team will remain an integral part of the project right up to obtaining the Certificate of Occupancy. GM Deutsch noted that this is factored in to the budget. GM Deutsch also stated that, going forward, each spring when staff is assembling the upcoming fiscal year budget, GM Deutsch will also be presenting the Strategic Plan Action Steps that the District wants to achieve in that upcoming fiscal year with recommended updates and changes.

Chair Ward stated that she is a visual learner and felt the dashboard from the last strategic plan worked well and is glad to see the visual status indicators that will make it easy to see at a glance where the District is with all the action steps.

Trustee Hatch commented that in looking at all the action steps, it looks like 2025-26 will be a big year for preparing for the operations of the new cemetery in gearing up for staffing and policy revisions. Trustee Hatch also asked if there was any concern about funding for the Veterans project and if a lack of funding could impact the public cemetery’s development.

Chair Ward stated that even if the Veterans Cemetery does not move forward, it should not prevent the public cemetery from being developed. Trustee Hatch commented that the First Responders Section and the Allied Veterans Section have been a good thing for the District. GM Deutsch agreed stating that it has really elevated our project, adding that it is very hard to say, “no” to Veterans, Police and Firefighters.

Trustee Hatch also asked who among the development team is the most knowledgeable. GM Deutsch replied that Larry Ryan with RJM has been invaluable to the project. RJM is all in and it is a big project for them because it is all inclusive and supports everyone county wide.

Chair Ward asked if we should solicit input from the community regarding the design of the public cemetery. Trustee Rivers was opposed to that idea stating that the duty of the Trustees is to represent the people they serve. Making those kinds of decisions is the job of the Trustees. GM Deutsch also reminded the Board that the public cemetery will be a phased development. None of us will live to see the full development completed. We will have to start small and grow into to property. It is important for us to remain transparent and do what we can afford. That is why we are not doing pre-set crypts. It’s simply not in the budget.

Brenda Manriquez asked if there were any links of the City of Anaheim or on the Board of Supervisors websites pointing the public to our project. GM Deutsch said he has given the links to our new project site to everyone, but we can’t control whether those links actually get added to their sites. Brenda Manriquez stated that we are being transparent, but it doesn’t make much difference if people don’t know we are here. GM Deutsch stated that the District is listed as the applicant for this development. If there is any kind of significant opposition, you would think they would be searching us out. The handful of people who have come forward pales in comparison to the number of residents in the County that this project will benefit. If people do come forward with concerns, the District and the development team is always happy to listen to those concerns and adjust accordingly if possible.

GM Deutsch stated that traffic is a good example. Residents are concerned about traffic, but in reality, our operations will have no significant impact on traffic. We have already considered



Chair



Secretary

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our operating hours and will set them so that we are not adding to traffic during peak hours. There was some discussion about what to do if a service arrives late and whether or not customers could be penalized. It was suggested that we should set the last burial time so that time to be late is factored in.

There was a brief discussion on succession planning, not just for the General Manager, but for all staffing in general.

Trustee Rivers stated that the Strategic Plan looks great. GM Deutsch asked everyone to review the Action Steps. Please let him know if they see anything that should be expanded on or eliminated and to please explain why. He was also looking for feedback on who should be performing each Action Step. If he could get that input by Wednesday, July 3rd, that would be helpful. Trustees can email it to GM Deutsch or drop it by the office.

Trustee Hatch asked if we have a project website now. GM Deutsch said it went live on June 17th and he would send Trustee Hatch the link.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

GM Deutsch reminded the Board that at the July 9th Meeting there will be closed session for discussion of the General Manager’s annual evaluation.

BOARD COMMENTS

GM Deutsch stated that he had heard from Vladimir Anderson’s wife, Janet. Vlad has been moved out of the ICU, but is still in the hospital in a regular room. The doctors are still trying to determine what his health condition is.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. ISDOC Quarterly Luncheon, July 25, 2024, 11:30 am to 1:00 p.m., Foutain Valley (Via Zoom)

B. CSDA Annual Conference, September 9-12, 2024, Indian Wells
Trustee Rivers will be attending this conference.

The next regular meeting will be held on **Tuesday, July 9, 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 12:10 p.m.

DocuSigned by:
Cynthia Ward
Chair

Mary Fench
Secretary

DS
CW
Chair

MF
Secretary