

ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT

Board of Trustees

August 5, 2025

MINUTES

The regular monthly meeting of the Orange County Cemetery District Board of Trustees was called to order by Vice Chair Hatch at 10:03 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 Rivers.

Roll Call by Board Secretary, Mary Funk.

PRESENT:	Noel Hatch, Vice Chair	Fifth District
	Kelly Rivers	Second District
	Raymond Schnell	Third District

ATTENDED

REMOTELY:	Maribel Marroquin-Waldram, Chair	First District (Joined at 10:08 a.m.)
	Cynthia Ward	Fourth District (Joined at 10:07 a.m.)

STAFF:

- Tim Deutsch, General Manager
- Brenda Manriquez, Finance and Accounting Manager
- Mary Funk, Board Secretary
- Bud Bales, Cemetery Manager

ALSO

PRESENT:



- Steve Quintanilla, General Counsel
- James Fisler, OC LAFCO Commissioner
- Paul Mesmer, ISDOC 1st Vice President

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. James Fisler, Director of Mesa Water District and OC LAFCO Commissioner attended the meeting as an annual visit, just to help our District stay connected, to offer support and to serve as a resource. He also informed the Board about the Special District's Dialogue electronic bulletin that goes out with informative content on a variety of topics pertinent to Special Districts. Trustee Schnell asked if OC LAFCO would be playing any role in the new Gypsum Canyon cemetery development. GM Deutsch said that since we are not doing any annexations for water purposes, LAFCO would really not be involved. Commissioner Fisler congratulated Trustee Schnell on his appointment to the Board.

Trustee Ward and Chair Marroquin-Waldram both joined the meeting remotely at this time.

Mr. Paul Mesmer, 1st Vice President of ISDOC also attended the meeting to explain more about ISDOC. He said there are currently 26 Special Districts and 40 Associate Members in the organization. Executive meetings are held via Zoom the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 a.m. and the Trustees are welcomed and encouraged to attend if they are interested. The association also hosts quarterly meetings which include a variety of speakers. GM Deutsch stated that he

	
Chair	Secretary

would be happy to give a presentation on the new Gypsum Canyon Cemetery development, once it gets a little further along. Mr. Mesmer also stated that there are currently two openings on the Board for 3rd Vice President and Secretary. If you are interested in serving on the Board, just let them know.

The Board thanked both Mr. Fisler and Mr. Mesmer for speaking during public comment. They both left the meeting at this time.

Vice Chair Hatch, Trustee Rivers and Trustee Schnell all agreed that Trustee Ward and Chair Marroquin-Waldrum could participate in the meeting remotely due to childcare and illness related reasons.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Board Meeting, July 1, 2025
- B. Approval of the July 2025 Check Register (Claims) Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17.
- C. Authorization of the September 2025 Check Registers (Claims) Nos. 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50 and 51.
- D. Acceptance of Quarterly Investment Report for period ending June 30, 2025.

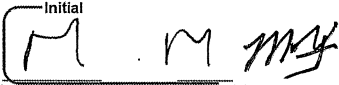
MOTION: of Trustee Rivers, seconded by Trustee Schnell and carried by a roll call vote of 5-0, approved the Consent Calendar.

MANAGER REPORTS

A. Interments and Interment Space Sales Reports – June 2025

The following interment and interment space sales for June 2025 were reviewed.

			<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>2023-2024</u>
ANAHEIM	Interments	9 (8 Urn)	78 (54 Urn)	80 (63 Urn)
	Lot Sales	3	36	32
EL TORO	Interments	72 (39 Urn)	869 (332 Urn)	925 (325 Urn)
	Lot Sales	30	512	847
SANTA ANA	Interments	33 (5 Urn)	295 (108 Urn)	213 (99 Urn)
	Lot Sales	20	170	84
TOTAL	Interments	114 (52 Urn)	1,242 (494 Urn)	1,218 (487 Urn)
	Lot Sales	53	718	963



 Chair Secretary

GM Deutsch reported that Anaheim Cemetery had three interment space sales and ended the year with 36 interment space sales. Staff conducted 9 interment services in June of which there were 4 niche placements, 4 in-ground cremation burials, and one full casket interment. For the fiscal year Anaheim completed 78 interments which is just short of the 80 interment services completed in the previous year.

El Toro Memorial Park had 30 space sales in June and ended the year with 512 interment space sales. This is far below the 847 space sales from the previous year, but not unexpected with the prohibition on pre-need casket sales. Of those 30 space sales from June, 12 were for full casket spaces. This is one of the first times Santa Ana Cemetery has outpaced El Toro in full casket interment space sales. Santa Ana had 17 casket sales in June. For year-end, Santa Ana Cemetery far exceeded the previous year with 170 interment space sales this year, compared to 84 in the previous year. Santa Ana Cemetery has approximately 377 available casket spaces remaining.

El Toro Memorial Park has approximately 408 casket spaces remaining. That number is still hovering around 400 because Cemetery Manager Bud Bales and Tim Deutsch have been walking the grounds identifying any possible spaces that could be added.

El Toro staff performed 72 interments in June including 33 casket burials, 19 niche inurnments, 18 in-ground cremation burials, and two rose garden placements.

Santa Ana staff performed 33 interment services in June including 28 casket burials, 1 niche inurnment, and 4 in-ground cremation burials. For the year, Santa Ana staff performed 295 interment services compared to 213 in the previous year.

GM Deutsch said that the final road closure at Santa Ana Cemetery is almost completed with only the lot pinning and mapping still to be completed. GM Deutsch estimates this last road closure will yield about 140 full casket spaces.

Overall, the District sold 718 interment spaces for the year, compared to 963 in the previous year. For the year, staff completed 1,242 interments compared to 1,218 in the previous year. Trustee Schnell asked if the reduction in sales is strictly an inventory issue. GM Deutsch said that yes, since the number of available spaces is so low, we stopped selling full casket spaces for advanced planning which greatly reduced the number of sales at El Toro Memorial Park.

Brenda Manriquez pointed out that even though Santa Ana sold more casket spaces than El Toro, the income sheet still shows El Toro’s revenues exceeding those of Santa Ana. This is because the price points at Santa Ana are significantly lower than the price points at El Toro Memorial Park.

GM Deutsch also explained that El Toro does have a list of families who are hoping to purchase a casket space even though a death has not occurred. When families who already own property wish to sell their spaces, staff is connecting those sellers with families from the list who are hoping to buy. This also helps us ensure that such transfers are recorded correctly.

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Chair Secretary

GM Deutsch also noted that there is a waiting list for people who want to purchase full body burial space at the new public cemetery at Gypsum Canyon. There are over 300 people currently on the waiting list.

B. Financial Reports – June 2025

Brenda Manriquez stated that these are year end numbers and not final. She is still working on accruals, but as of right now the District is doing quite well with revenues and she expects we will be about \$400,000 over budget. The great interest rates, taxable sales, and property tax revenues helped to offset the decline in interment space sales.

For expenses, Salaries and Benefits are a little over but not too bad. Services and Supplies are trending about the same. Brenda Manriquez reported that the total overage will be about \$228,000 which can certainly be offset with the Economic Uncertainty Fund. She will report back to the Board in September as to the exact amount used for Economic Uncertainty.

In the 4200 Account for Buildings and Improvements, Brenda Manriquez stated that the consultants are under budget, but that is mostly because the lawsuit delayed some of their work which will now be done in this new fiscal year. As a result, we may have to ask for additional funds in the new budget to accommodate for this.

GM Deutsch stated that he was scheduled to have a meeting later that afternoon with the County to discuss the use of County funds for upcoming shared cost work. GM Deutsch is looking to clarify when and how County funds can be used. He also wants to make it clear for the purposes of transparency, that there should be no co-mingling of District and County funding. It is better for everyone if we maintain separate accounts.

Brenda Manriquez also wanted to provide the Board more information on how much principal vs. interest is being paid on the construction loan. She stated that in the 2024-25 fiscal year, the District paid \$1.2 million, of which about \$400,000 went toward the principal balance and \$800,000 was for interest. Vice Chair Hatch asked how long it would take for that to flip. Brenda Manriquez stated that at the ten-year mark we should be close to paying 50% principal and 50% interest. This loan will get reset at ten years, so if interest rates drop lower, would could potentially refinance.

Brenda Manriquez said the Balance Sheet has \$4,095,000 as Assigned for Land Development. This will likely go down as it will get eaten into with accruals and other year-end closeouts.

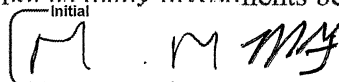
She also reported, that the audit work is done. They should be issuing their report by December and Brenda expects to bring it to the Board at the January 2026 Board Meeting.

C. Interest Rates – June 2025

GM Deutsch reported that interest rates are pretty flat, with almost no changes over the last quarter. Most funds are in the 4% range.

D. Investment Portfolio Changes - July 2025

GM Deutsch stated that there were no surprises in the investment portfolio for July. There are not as many investments being called early, which is good.

The image shows two sets of handwritten initials. The first set consists of a large, stylized 'M' with a small 'Initial' label above it. The second set consists of a smaller 'M' followed by 'MA' in a cursive script.

Chair

Secretary

GM Deutsch said the report also shows those investments coming due in the next six months and the current posted interest rates for the various trusts.

E. Capital Projects Update

GM Deutsch said that on July 11th, he received confirmation from CalVet that the application for Federal funding was submitted and they are very confident it would receive a high ranking as far as new cemetery development is concerned. Vice Chair Hatch asked what “high ranking” means. GM Deutsch said that the project has a lot of congressional bi-partisan support which makes it more likely that the project will receive the maximum amount of grant funding possible.

GM Deutsch said that he also hosted a site tour for Assemblymember Tri Ta and other community members on July 29th. GM Deutsch said he is also thinking about reaching out to surrounding cities to see if any have any discretionary funds to contribute to the project, which would benefit not only Veterans but all Orange County residents.

GM Deutsch is also trying to determine if there are any community groups who are able to provide funding for the Allied Veterans section that had originally been spearheaded by Supervisor Do.

Trustee Schnell stated that now not be the right time, but if the Irvine plans for a Veterans Cemetery are not moving forward, perhaps they would consider using those funds to help support Gypsum Canyon. He also stated that we should explore the major philanthropic agencies and seek donations from them as well. GM Deutsch stated that he agreed and wants to explore this as well.

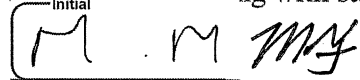
GM Deutsch reported that the well repair work at Anaheim Cemetery was completed on July 7th. We will have to accrue some of those expenses to this fiscal year’s budget.

Trustee Ward asked when the District would be holding a groundbreaking ceremony at the new cemetery. She was really hoping it would occur before she leaves her position as a Trustee. GM Deutsch said he would try to get an updated project schedule from RJM, but we will likely just be getting approvals for construction phases in the spring of 2026. GM Deutsch said that Trustee Ward would certainly be invited to participate in the groundbreaking ceremony, even if she was not a Trustee at that time.

F. Strategic Plan Update Report

GM Deutsch briefly went over the action items in the Strategic Plan. Many of the items in red were delayed by the lawsuit, which was beyond our control. GM Deutsch wants to have a policy review completed by the Board sometime this fall. For the Safety Officer/Project Coordinator position, GM Deutsch stated that he is encouraged by the progress Martin Galvez has been making and is confident that Martin will be able to function well in this role after his physical procedures are complete. GM Deutsch is also starting to have discussions with various groups about their interest in participating in a community flag raising program.

Now that union negotiations are being concluded, he would like to resume the quarterly meetings Trustees were having with staff. GM Deutsch suggested the week of August 18th. Trustee



Chair

Secretary

Schnell said he would be available on August 21st. GM Deutsch said he would confirm dates with staff and the Trustees. He also stated that all of the managers have been assigned tasks from the Strategic Plan that will be a part of their annual evaluations. Vice Chair Hatch noted that the action items in the Strategic Plan are a marvelous tool for us. He asked if there was anything that would modify or substantially change the goals of the Strategic Plan. GM Deutsch did say that the lawsuit did delay some items, but did not change anything strategically. All of the goals remain the same and the timing is still good.

G. Senate Bill 707 – Oppose Unless Amended

GM Deutsch explained that the Orange County Cemetery District has joined CSDA in opposing Assembly Bill 707 unless amendments are made. This bill amends the Brown Act, specifically changing teleconferencing requirements, increasing public access and expanding language access. As written, SB 707 would subject the District to the same requirements as cities and counties with large populations which have significantly larger budgets and more reliable revenue streams. Basically, the District lacks the budget and staffing levels to comply with these requirements. We would like to amend the bill so it stipulates number of employees and budget size, which is a more reasonable way of determining which agencies will need to comply.

Vice Chair Hatch asked if any amendments had been made. GM Deutsch said that CSDA is taking the lead on this, but he would keep the Board updated as GM Deutsch learns more.

GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

Counsel Quintanilla reported that the District is finalizing the execution of an amendment to extend the ground space lease agreement with T-mobile. He also indicated that AT & T is asking if a second cell tower can be built. Currently the one cell tower is owned by T-Mobile, but is also being used by AT&T and overseen by Crown Castle. AT& T would like to have their own tower. They would need to remove a Cypress tree to the left of the existing tower. The ground space for AT&T will go up which will generate higher rent for the District. We would also ask for compensation for the disruption to the cemetery when the work is being done. To date, we are unaware of any complaints or concerns by visitors with the existing tower, so we do not expect any problems for families using the grounds after the tower is in place. GM Deutsch will keep the Board informed if this second cell tower is able to move forward.

The Board adjourned to Closed Session at 11:10 a.m.

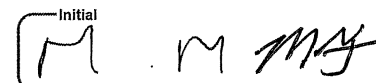
CLOSED SESSION

A. Conference with Labor Negotiators pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6(a):

District designated representative: General Counsel Steven B. Quintanilla.
Employee Organization: Groundskeeping Unit (Service Employees International Union Local 721 CTW-CLC).

B. Conference with Labor Negotiators pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.6 (a):

District Designated Representative: General Manager, Tim Deutsch


Chair Secretary

Non-Represented Employees: (Finance and Accounting Manager, Accounting Technician, Assistant General Manager, Cemetery Managers, District Secretary, Cemetery Assistants, Irrigation Specialist, and District Equipment Mechanic.)

C. Public Employee Performance Evaluation Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957. Employee’s Title: General Manager

The Board reconvened from Closed Session at 11:30 a.m. Counsel Quintanilla stated that no reportable action took place. Chair Marroquin-Waldrum left the meeting after Closed Session.

NEW BUSINESS

A. General Manager’s Report, 2025-28 Groundskeeping Unit Memorandum of Understanding

Counsel Quintanilla reviewed the major components of the MOU that is being updated as a result of the concluding labor negotiations. He stated that Acting pay is increasing from 7.5% to 10%. A new category called Special Skills pay is being added that is similar to acting pay, but comes in to play when an employee is asked to complete projects outside their normal job description. The employee will receive a 25% increase in their hourly rate when completing such assignments. Beginning in July 2025, there will be a 5% COLA included in each classification range, which will occur for each of the three years of the MOU. Each year the Classification ranges will remove the lowest step and add a new step with 2.5% increases between each step. Employees will be paid for four hours of holiday pay on Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve. The deferred comp match will increase from \$1,200 annually to \$2,400 annually.

Trustee Schnell thanked Counsel Quintanilla and GM Deutsch for doing a great job in negotiations. This agreement protects the mission of the District to provide affordable interment services while also recognizing the hard work of the staff who keep the District running efficiently.

MOTION: of Trustee Schnell, seconded by Trustee Rivers and carried by a roll call vote of 4-0 (Chair Marroquin-Waldrum absent for the vote), approved the Memorandum of Understanding with Service Employees International Union Local 721 CTW-CLC, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028.

B. Non-Represented Employees Compensation and Benefits (Finance and Accounting Manager, Assistant General Manager, Cemetery Managers, Accounting Technician, Cemetery Assistants, Irrigation Specialist and Equipment Mechanic.)

GM Deutsch explained that typically the Board approves the same package of compensation and benefits to the non-represented employees as it provides for the represented employees.

MOTION: of Trustee Rivers, seconded by Trustee Schnell and carried by a roll call vote of 4-0 (Chair Marroquin-Waldrum absent for the vote), approved for Non-Represented employees the same compensation adjustments offered to the represented employees, with merit adjustments effective July 1, 2025.

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Chair Secretary

O.C.C.D. – Minutes

August 5, 2025

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Counsel Quintanilla stated that he would send a memo out to all staff before the September Board meeting regarding safety protocols in light of the immigration raids that have been occurring and how to respond if such raids occur when families are trying to attend interment services.

Trustee Ward asked if the District will be hosting a live Dia de los Muertos program in 2025. GM Deutsch said that because the holiday falls on a Sunday this year, he does not want to compete with church services and activities so we will only be providing Dia de los Muertos “To Go” give-aways. The Trustees felt that Saturday morning, November 1st from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. would be a better option for this rather than on Halloween.

BOARD COMMENTS

Trustee Ward announced that August 6th is the anniversary of the Voters Rights Act. She will be taking flowers to Senator Thomas Kuchel’s grave at Anaheim Cemetery, as he was instrumental in the establishment of this Act.

Trustee Ward also announced that she will be providing a presentation on the history of Anaheim Cemetery at Museo for their annual benefit. The event will take place on Sunday, October 19th from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Trustee Rivers also announced that the annual Civil War Days event will be taking place in Huntington Beach on August 30-31st.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. CSDA Annual Conference, Monterey, CA – August 25-28,2025

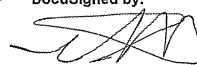
GM Deutsch will be attending this conference in August. No Trustees are scheduled to attend.

B. CAPC Education and Area Meeting, Ventura, CA – October 10-11, 2025

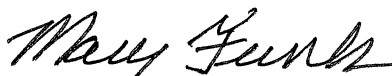
Trustee Rivers, Board Secretary Mary Funk, and Cemetery Manager Bud Bales will be attending this conference.

The next regular meeting will be held on **Tuesday, September 2, 2025**, 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 11:48 a.m.

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CHAIR



BOARD SECRETARY

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