

Kern County Cemetery District **Minutes for**

February 15, 2024

Regular Board Meeting
Shafter Memorial Park Office
18662 Santa Fe Way, Shafter, CA

Call to Order: Call to Order at 12:00 pm by Chairman Braun, Chairman Braun led the flag salute and invocation.

Roll Call: In attendance was Barry Braun, Chairman of the Board; Belton Banks, Vice-Chair; Jerry Ezell, Secretary of the Board.

Employees: Eliza Caudillo, District Manager; Alicia Reveles, District Secretary; Superintendent Carender.

Visitors: None

Public Comment: None.

Consent Calendar: Includes the approval of the agenda for the current meeting and minutes of the regular Board meeting for January 2024. The payroll warrants for 24-01 through 24-02 were approved. Vouchers, checks, and financial reports for January 2024 were approved. This was done by approval of the consent calendar by motion of Trustee Ezell and seconded by Trustee Banks; 3 ayes, unanimous.

Management Update

- We had 15 services in Shafter and 19 services in Wasco for the month of January 2024. This gives us 177 for the fiscal year to date.
- Statement of Economic Interest – Form 700. Alicia prepared the forms, which are available for review, amendments, and signatures.
- Windstorm Damage – Last week’s seasonal storm caused the large pine in Section NS to fall over. One headstone was damaged and will need to be replaced by the District. Aluminum sheets from the pole barn were blown off and must be replaced. The Shafter rent house sustained damage to the roof shingles. The rent house currently has 2 sets of roofing shingles.
- Kern Machinery provided the Greenworks Electric Commercial Edger and backpack blower for the demo. The equipment performed as expected, but the cemetery’s needs would be too heavy for the battery life on these units.
- Future of the Shafter Rent House – The Shafter rent house sustained damage to the roof. This house currently has two sets of shingles. The District has paid for repairs to the building in the past. Eldalene Peters passed away on February 11, 2024. The agreement was to allow Eldalene to live in the house until she either passed away or was moved to another location for health reasons. Since her passing, the Board will have to decide on the future of the home/location. This will be brought up as an agenda item in the near future. The Board requested the manger investigate and report on the size and condition of the home.

- Investment update: Sandra Wheeler, the Investment Advisor, notified Manager Caudillo that the JP Morgan CD for \$100K will mature on 2/16/2024, and the Pacific West CD for \$150K has been called. The Investment Committee met and reviewed the options provided by Sandra Wheeler and is reporting that the \$100K investment was reinvested into a US Treasury Bond at 5.5% to mature on 2/22/2028, and the \$150K investment was reinvested into a US Treasury Bond at 5.25% to mature one 2/15/2029.

Mid-year Budget Review

Manager Caudillo provided an analysis for the Trustees to review the District status for the first half of the 2023-24 fiscal year. The review included Attachment A, which compares our actual versus budgeted income and expenditures for the first 6-months of the fiscal year for 2023-24. The review also included Attachment B, which compares the first 6 months of the fiscal year of 2022 and 2023. We have experienced a slight decline in services compared to Mid-year 2022, at 157, vs. Mid-year 2023, at 143. The District's current cremation rate is 25% versus 15% for the previous year. The District has adequate staffing for the foreseeable future, and the automation of the Wasco Irrigations system reinforces that status. The groundskeeper's job is very physical, and finding the right fit has proven difficult.

The analysis shows that we are currently operating in the black, and property taxes continue to contribute to the District's income. This review allows the Board to see the margin of operations and make any changes they may deem necessary.

At mid-year, we had a profit with overhead of \$319,369. This is compared to last year when we had a profit with an overhead of \$106,909.

The motion was made to receive and file this information and make it available to any who may wish to review its contents by Trustee Ezell and seconded by Trustee Banks; 3 ayes, unanimous.

Shipping Container

At a past Board Meeting, there was discussion about the cost of a possible loft in the large Shafter Shop. Manager Caudillo and Superintendent Carender have found a more cost-effective alternative. The more economical option would be a used Shipping Container. Manager Caudillo requested two quotes from American Refuse and Midstate Containers. American Refuse quoted \$3000.00, Painting would be \$500.00, and a Lockbox installation would be \$125.00. Trustee Braun requested staff also check on eBay for a used container.

The motion was made by Trustee Banks and seconded by Trustee Ezell to authorize the purchase of a Shipping Container with paint, lock, and onsite delivery not to exceed \$4,000.00; 3 ayes, unanimous.

Security Quote

Due to recent unruly and disrespectful activity and theft at the cemeteries, Manager Caudillo contacted local law enforcement for additional patrols. Manager Caudillo also presented the option of a security company patrolling both cemeteries. Quotes were obtained at \$36.-\$38. per hour/per guard, with additional fees for mileage and driving time.

After due discussion, the Board of Trustees opted for no action on this agenda item.

Closed Session

Manager Caudillo has completed almost 3 years in her current position. The Board would like to perform a review and evaluation. The Chairman of the Board called for a Closed Session at 2:15 pm. The Board came out of the Closed session at 3:07 pm.

The Chairman of the Board reported that Manager Caudillo has met the expectations of the Board. No action taken.

Wasco: Part-time Employee

Manager Caudillo notified the Board that the part-time secretary, Nayeli Delgado, has reached the 1,000-hour mark for the PERS enrollment requirement. Nayeli will be added to PERS, and her salary will be subject to the 8.75% employee contribution expectancy. After review and discussion, the Board felt the position was adequate at current hours and salary.

No Action taken.

Trustees Comments

Trustee Banks: None.

Trustee Ezell: None.

Trustee Braun: Barry wants staff to meet other cemetery personnel at the San Diego Conference and inquire about cremation ossuaries.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:11 pm by Chairman Braun. The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2024.

Signed,

Eliza Caudillo
District Manager