

Missoula Cemetery Board Meeting
Thursday, April 7, 2016
12:00pm
Missoula City Cemetery Office

Minutes

Present: Sharee Fraser, Mary Lou Cordis, Marjorie Jacobs, Ron Regan, Mary Ellen Stubb

Absent: Carol Gordon, Pat McHugh, Lani Moore

Approval of board minutes: February 2016 - Unanimously approved with corrections.

Public comment. None.

Financials.

Revenues and fund balances. Reviewed.

Expenditures. Mr. Regan reported the 220 line item took a hit with the purchase of fertilizer, spray, and grass. There were 6,100 swing joints and heads purchased and 300 feet of irrigation line added along the railroad fence line. Hydraulic motors were expensive but still cheaper than buying new equipment from the care fund.

New or Continuing Items.

LAND: Northside Urban Renewal District. Mr. Regan reviewed the results of the workshop he attended. Another public workshop is coming this month and he strongly encouraged the board members to attend. Proposed building projects have already started even though the plans are not finalized.

BUDGET: City administration called a budget meeting March 1 with all budget documents due by April 1. Mr. Regan reviewed the 4% utility increases specified by finance and noted this was the first time departments were required to make those budgetary changes rather than finance. He noted the garbage line was short by \$155 due to increased monthly rates that were not covered by finance the past two years. We changed the base to the current rate then added the 4% utility increase. New cemetery budget requests were: \$2,500 over-time for Stories and Stones, \$5,000 one-time training allowance, and \$30,000 from the niche wall fund for three columbariums. The reason to request three walls is that the walls have gone up \$14,000 since our last order so it is cost efficient to purchase what we can at the current prices.

Mrs. Jacobs asked about plans for memorial walls. Mr. Regan said there were various options for memorial walls that could be purchased through the cemetery budget later. Mrs. Jacobs stressed that she believed the cemetery is missing income from memorial walls. She stated that people will pay for something that looks like a memorial wall so future walls must be worth-while for the public. Mr. Regan suggested the board draw up their memorial wall ideas or take pictures of samples.

STORIES and STONES: Mr. Regan said the tour date for 2016 has been changed to September 18. Jennie Pak met with cemetery staff then sent an email to storytellers asking them about the proposed change. A majority of storytellers responded saying they were great with warmer weather. Mrs. Jacobs did not like changing the date and stated the board spent a long time getting the tour set where it was. Mrs. Fraser questioned if the tour date was going to change every year. Mr. Regan said no, if this works, the tour can remain on the third Sunday in September instead of the last Sunday in October.

Mr. Regan said another change this year is the board will no longer have to put out their own money for a brunch because the storytellers will do potluck. Mrs. Fraser was not in favor of this and stated the problem with that was the brunch was the board's way of thanking the storytellers for volunteering. Mr. Regan said we did not

ask for this but Jennie Pak suggested it and she felt the brunch means just as much to the storytellers as to the board. Mrs. Fraser again stated the potluck was how the board thanked the storytellers for their contribution to the tour but a potluck takes that meaning away. Mr. Regan suggested the role of the board be to meet and greet storytellers and the public while volunteers hand out guidebooks like last year. He reminded the board members that last year Mrs. Fraser was the only board member available to attend Stories and Stones due mostly to weather and illness. A lot of discussion followed on changing the established date.

Mrs. Jacobs cautioned that too many changes in one year even with the best intentions may very well not have the best results. Mrs. Cordis suggested the board try this for one year to see what happens. Mrs. Jacobs noted the board was not being asked their opinion on this but instead, the changes were an announcement made to the board and a done deal.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD: Mrs. Stubb reported the cemetery submitted Stories and Stones on an application for the Dorothy Ogg historical preservation and education award. This is a recognition award and perfect timing to draw attention to the historical importance of the cemetery. The preservation committee has not voted on nominees yet due to the mercantile demolition issue, however, voting on all nominations is expected within the next few weeks.

Informational Items.

SPREADING OF ASHES. Mr. Regan reported someone dumped ashes on the grave of Georgia Mae Adkins which killed the grass. Photos were taken and placed into the burial file should anyone question why new sod is on this grave. Mrs. Jacobs asked if the ordinance calls out that spreading ashes is prohibited. Mrs. Stubb answered that the ordinance states ashes must be placed in a required Polyvault and buried. Scattering terminology is not specifically called out in the ordinance but may be needed in a future revision. Last week the cemetery office received a phone call regarding another family threatening to do the same thing.

MONUMENT SETTING ISSUES. Mr. Regan reported the cemetery is again having issues with a local monument company. This company did great for three years but currently has some uncorrected monument rejections that are two years old. This week the company claimed to fix one monument but did not and another stone remains encroached onto a second grave. Cemetery staff corrected one monument themselves. Mr. Regan wanted to give the board a heads up that he plans on visiting with the company on the rejected stones. The company has been allowed some variances but has taken those variance requests too far. He said other cemeteries have much stricter requirements than this and all we ask for is a mow strip allowance. The other monument company in town has not had any problems with ordinance requirements and always completes the installation in one day and signs off in the office when installation is completed.

Adjournment at 1:05 p.m. Next meeting will be May 5, 2016.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen Stubb