

Missoula Cemetery Board Meeting
Thursday, June 4, 2009
1:30pm
Ruth Bennett Memorial Chapel

Minutes (No Quorum - informational meeting only) NOTE: To better inform missing board members, the following information for agenda item #5d has not been summarized but reflect the actual notes taken at the meeting. Mrs. Fraser and Mr. Waters wanted this information out to Board members ASAP and in such a manner that all missing members might 'get a feel' for the conversation that was held.

Present: Sharee Fraser, Marjorie Jacobs, Mary Ellen Stubb, Douglas Waters, Ron Regan, Bob Jordan

Absent: Mary Lou Cordis, Pat McHugh, Carol Gordon

1. Approval of board minutes: May minutes - defer to August meeting.
2. Items involving guests. (See #5D below) Public comment.
3. Financials:
 - a. Revenues: May 2009 - reviewed report. Revenues slightly improved.
 - b. Expenditures: May 2009 - reviewed report. Expenditures on track. Mr. Waters discussed the mandated fuel reduction amounts. All departments must reduce fuel consumption to FY07 levels. The cemetery has continuously reduced fuel over the past 6 years by implementing use of utility carts rather than vehicles. Therefore, the impact means a reduction of 375 gallons only. Mr. Waters stated this should not be difficult to meet as the first reduction will be in no longer allowing city vehicles to be taken home at night.
4. Motions needed. (*Full board attendance is needed*)
5. New or Continuing Items for Discussion:
 - a. FY10 budget - defer to August meeting.
 - b. ADA sidewalk - Completed. The cemetery placed a military flag display along both sides of the walk over the Memorial holiday. Contractor bill is still pending. Mr. Waters stated the remaining ADA money will be used for Braille signs for buildings. He will be relocating the handicap parking signs to the appropriate areas as well.
 - c. Plaque ceremony - The appreciation plaque notes each donor involved in the rock donation and has been installed alongside the rock sign. Mrs. Fraser and Mr. Waters determined the best time for a dedication would be during the Stories and Stones tour in October. The Cemetery Board of Trustees will plan a dedication ceremony.
 - d. Garden City Monument
 - i. Monument Permit Review - Reviewed past monument agreement letters from 2005 and 2007. Mr. Waters gave a history of the letters: the cemetery made an allowance for a smaller border due to a large on-hand inventory of stone being held by monument companies. Since then, the border limits have been stretched and are causing some problems in the cemetery. Mr. Waters recommended the cemetery return to the original limitations of 6" and 5" borders. The cemetery described the following issues to the Board:
 1. Staff time in staking foundations that do not get placed and then need re-staked weeks or months later

2. Stones being installed without the cemetery processing the permits or verifying / staking the location
3. Stones being installed after regular working hours- developing trust issues
4. Quality of work - specifically stones not being level, no dirt filled in around foundation, wood barriers not removed, and epoxy used to secure stone instead of putty
5. Original permits walking out door with monument staff rather than staff signing off on them when completed

Goal - permits will be properly submitted to the cemetery, processed, staked, installed on time, verified, and approved or corrected if not in compliance. Mr. Waters stated it would help if Mr. Jordan could review the gravesite prior to designing the stone. This would solve a great deal of trouble beforehand with everyone on board with type of stone and restrictions for that gravesite. **Discussion:**

Mr. Regan: Emphasized that the smaller the border is, the faster the grass grows over it, resulting in additional weed eating.

Mr. Waters: Informed the Board of a new company installing stones through Garden City/Sunset Cemetery per Rick Evans. Mr. Waters has requested their staff come to the cemetery, meet our staff, and review requirements prior to any installations.

Mrs. Fraser: Are people going to have options of monument companies?

Mrs. Jacobs: Will Mr. Evans start installing before August when the Board votes on this issue?

Mrs. Fraser: She can conduct a phone vote.

Mr. Waters: Stated Mrs. Fraser should do that. Mr. Waters will do a brief letter for the Board detailing examples of the monument restrictions. As the cemetery moves forward with any ordinance changes, we can move forward updating the monument restrictions.

Mr. Jordan: Gave examples of older stones which have smaller borders.

Mr. Regan: Those have always been grandfathered in. The problem is that you can't get a liner in a grave if the stone foundation is larger than the 2' depth. Sometimes the entire foundation has to be moved in order to fit a casket into the grave. Shortly after he was hired, Mr. Regan allowed the monument width to expand to the full 5' of the grave to aid the monument companies. A liner is 8' and a grave is 10' - there is no room for error.

Mr. Jordan: What if a family wants a stone duplicated but it doesn't meet our ordinance?

Mr. Regan: If in a family plot, then it would be reviewed individually and could be symmetrically approved.

Mrs. Jacobs: Can Mr. Jordan comply with working during regular hours instead of weekends? This will be required from both companies and should alleviate recalls as the cemetery staff would be able to answer questions on the spot.

Mr. Jordan: During busy times (April/May) this requirement may be difficult to meet.

Mrs. Jacobs: Wants this rule established up front for all stone setting companies.

Mr. Jordan: His policy is to bring items out in stages as prepared - foundation then stones, etc.

Mr. Waters: This is one of the issues. Mr. Jordan should wait until the stone is totally ready for installation rather than setting the foundation for an undetermined length of time before setting stone. Stones should be placed within a reasonable time.

Mr. Jordan: Many families special order stones and those take a minimum of 90 days to arrive. So, he places the foundation which allows him the option to install the monument if it arrives during the winter.

Mr. Waters: It would make Mr. Regan's job easier if the work was done at one time.

Mr. Regan: This issue happens all throughout the year not just during the winter.

Mr. Jordan: When the order comes in he can try to get the foundation permit done before starting on the stone.

Mrs. Fraser: This is winter in Montana and people should understand.

Mr. Regan: Understands that people want their stone immediately and don't want to wait. When times are slower, the quality or work is much better but when they are busy there is no quality. An example is kicking dirt back in around the foundation instead of sodding as required. A good example is the Hayes stone in the A Block. In this

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instance, the old stone was removed and the new stone should be a double. Mr. Regan would like to have a 'heads up' that it needs dirt and sod but permits are not signed off sometimes for months after install. Mr. Regan does not verify or know of these issues until he verifies the signed off permits. When monument staff fluffs dirt around instead of tamping down, the dirt settles and the stone sinks. If the cemetery signs off on a permit it means the cemetery approves the work and it meets code. We accept responsibility. We need to tighten up the ship. We will help any way we can to get the job done correctly. When pulling concrete out, please notify Ron for disposal rather than leaving concrete chunks on the road for days.

Mr. Waters: These rules are protecting the City of Missoula and Garden City Monument Services from public complaints.

Mr. Regan: An example of how the cemetery works with monument companies is the Labbe stone. This meant either the stone would be off center or an old tree would have to be cut down. Mr. Regan made an exception to save the tree and accepts responsibility for that decision. The original stone was left in place and the new one was added next to it. When the allowance was made for 4" border, it was to help with oversized stones, not to be used on all stones. Undersized stones need the required 6" border. ALL foundations must be 2' in depth to fill headspace. The cemetery needs to land on a good clean set of rules that won't waste everyone's time when a burial is happening and a stone is too hard to remove. If he was doing his job in detail, he would remove stones when rejected rather than just notifying Mr. Jordan. Communication is key.

Mr. Waters: Many stones very nicely done. It is just a few that don't meet requirements.

Mrs. Fraser: A phone vote will be held after the minutes are given to all Board members. In August, we will invite Mr. Evans along with Mr. Jordan for final voting and rules. Once the minutes are typed they will be given to the Board early next week.

Mr. Jordan: What about benches? They are 14" wide plus 6" border on each side = 26" which is over the foundation requirement. The base fits standard but the top extends past the 2' headspace requirement.

Mr. Regan: As long as bottom fits, they are okay at 14" but do not go larger. He is concerned because when the cemetery gives 1" then someone takes 2" and problems come. The benches are not a hindrance because they go up and mowers can get around them fine.

Mrs. Fraser: We need to set down rules in the ordinance for benches.

Mr. Waters: That may be micro-managing. He doesn't want to delay decisions on this matter until September as the Board's plate is full with possible ordinance changes, City Council, Care Fund, etc. If a special meeting needs called then he would like that.

Mrs. Fraser: Alert her as to his wishes. In minutes make it clear that Mrs. Fraser will be calling for phone votes.

Mr. Regan: How does Mr. Jordan feel about all this?

Mr. Jordan: Would like to work the permit processing issues out before the next meeting. He should be able to conduct work within working hours but would like some special allowances to be considered. The 6" border will be a struggle.

Mr. Regan: You ruined that one for yourself.

Mr. Waters: Economically we don't want to hurt you but repeatedly you hurt yourself through noncompliance.

Mr. Jordan: Will be thinking on how to handle the border requirement issue.

Mrs. Jacobs: Please note that your competition will be facing the same dilemma.

Mr. Waters: Stressed that he needed Board direction so he could alert Mr. Evans to the rules prior to Mr. Evans installing monuments.

Mr. Regan: Asked that since the Board is aware of the issues, he would like the opportunity to work with Mr. Jordan without making policies which would micromanage him. The main issue was that the board know of the monument issues. Communication is now open and the Board can act accordingly. Mr. Regan would like the rest of the summer to work with Mr. Jordan on this and revisit these issues for a final decision in August.

Communication is the real issue and has been achieved today. If Mr. Regan and Mr. Jordan can't correct the issues, then rules need set.

Mrs. Jacobs: Cemetery can't rule on 'stones set properly' as that is a matter of interpretation.

Mr. Jordan: Coming out prior to selling for each family is not done as the family knows what they have and instructs him. He does direct families here for burial options, freedom of choice, and beauty.

Mr. Regan: The monument company should call to see what is on the gravesite. Pictures can be sent so Mr. Jordan can be informed before creating and selling.

Mr. Jordan: Usually asking the family questions about their own site will answer most situations.

Mrs. Jacobs: Can Mr. Jordan say monuments will be planned prior to stones. Can he call ahead and verify what the grave allows? Try to see if this will work.

The Board thanked Mr. Jordan and will see him again at the August meeting.

- ii. Sign Donation Letter Discussion - Mr. Jordan submitted a letter to the cemetery requesting acknowledgment and advertisement on the cemetery website and on the cover of the Stories and Stones guidebook. Mrs. Stubb explained both requests are impossible as City policy prohibits promoting a for-profit business. Mr. Waters will provide Mr. Jordan with a letter of donation for tax purposes.
- iii. Solar Lights in Vases - Mr. Jordan presented the idea of solar lights that mount onto the top of the granite vases. Much discussion followed on the cemetery's role in monitoring these items. Mr. Jordan will return for further discussion and to provide a sample. Mr. Waters will review other cemeteries that have allowed the solar lights to find out what issues they may have encountered. Mr. Waters stated the cemetery has worked hard to manage and enforce the ordinance and he would hate to have this allowance get out of control. Mrs. Jacobs stated the Board would need to review allowances. Mr. Jordan will return for further discussion and to provide the Board with a solar light sample.

e. City Council members invitation to future board meeting - defer to August meeting.

6. Informational Items *(These items require NO immediate board action but are strictly informational item)*

7. Adjournment. Next meeting: August 6, 2009

**To conserve costs, please bring your agenda and any pertinent documents with you to meetings.