

Missoula Cemetery Board Meeting  
Thursday, October 5, 2017  
12:00pm  
Missoula City Cemetery Office

**Minutes**

**Present:** Mary Lou Cordis, Paul Filicetti, Kim Seeberger, Ron Regan, Mary Ellen Stubb, Bob & Michelle Jordan (Garden City Monument Services), Ted Stetler (retired owner of Western Montana Monuments), Clint Burson (Chamber of Commerce), Susan Aaberg (City Attorney)

**Absent:** Pat McHugh

**Public comment.** Mr. Stetler thanked the board and said he wanted to open discussion. He recognized there have been monument problems in the past but said with discussion and time things could get ironed out. After having a lengthy discussion with Mr. Regan, Mr. Stetler said he had a better understanding of things. Mr. Stetler noted his 40 year monument experience and that he continues working part-time for Mr. Jordan. He understands things have changed over time. His concern focuses on the need to buy product in anticipation of the upcoming season, inventory that product, and then turn around and sell that inventory to the public at time of need. He felt the monument companies were under attack on being able to sell and make their livelihood. They thought they were trying to be compliant while evolving with cemetery rules and servicing their customers. Foundation sizes in question were 25-inches and they were able to do a 14-inch base on them for years without breaking rules. He understands equipment has replaced much of the old hand trimming but that limits what they can sell to the public. He is aware that they can ask for a variance and that that option has always been available. As far as what they sell and the rules they are not following, there needs to be better discussion rather than personal fights between individuals.

Mr. Jordan apologized to the board for the hardships they have gone through in the last months and the situation that has arisen. He said there is a personal problem between himself and Mr. Regan that should not have been brought to the board. He hopes to work things out better in the future. The goal is to have a working situation that is feasible for families.

Mrs. Seeberger asked if Mr. Jordan was aware how to place a topic for discussion onto the board agenda. Public comment does not allow the board to have open discussion on a topic. This is something that has been discussed with Mr. Evans and Mr. Moore as well. Mr. Regan noted that asking to be placed on the agenda has always been available. Mr. Jordan stated he never felt he needed to be on the agenda but now it seems they have to regularly attend to try to protect themselves. Mrs. Seeberger said it was not fair to anyone to limit discussion as there are many items to get through on the agenda within an hour timeframe. If an item is on the agenda then two-way conversation can happen. Ms. Aaberg confirmed that state law allows public comment with no discussion and no engagement in conversation. The public needs notification when discussions are expected which is the reason for placing topics on the agenda and publishing. Mrs. Stubb clarified that the agenda is finalized the last week of each month by Wednesday of that week.

**Approval of board minutes:** September 2017 unanimously approved as submitted. Mr. Regan received an updated cost for chip sealing from the Street Dept. of between \$16,000 and \$16,500.

**Financials.** Revenue and expenditures reviewed with discussion.

**New or Continuing Items.**

**FY18 BUDGET.** Adopted general fund budget document received. Adopted special fund documents delayed by Finance Department.

**ORDINANCE / FEES.** Fees were effective on September 18<sup>th</sup> but the ordinance will not be effective for 30 days from Council approval which is October 18<sup>th</sup>. Draft forms and policies reviewed. Mrs. Stubb suggested forms be placed onto the cemetery website so either private party or business has access to them. Each form includes the policies related to the form. Mr. Regan pointed out that all forms and processes are subject to change. This is a work in progress and what does not work can be changed with discussion and input.

- **Pre-verification.** Adjust language to read *Pre-verification is valid for 20 business days unless an extension is granted by the cemetery.* Change type to read *Double centered on two graves.* Add hyperlink to variance form. Adjust form to include *private party or business* reference. Discussion points: Mrs. Jordan expressed concern over pushing grieving families to make a decision before they are ready. Ms. Aaberg said pre-verifications need in written form to protect all parties. Families need made aware that if a decision cannot be made within 20 business days, then the pre-verification needs resubmitted when they are ready to proceed. Communication with the cemetery can possibly extend this timeframe. Mr. Regan noted that the interment registry and all maps are available on the cemetery website so monument companies could review the sites themselves before completing a pre-verification form.
- **Monument information.** Adjust policy/procedure language to match pre-verification form. List all foundation types on fee schedule under Foundation Size Ordered. Discussion points: Some families may choose to order monuments over the internet. Cemetery forms and processes apply to both private party and business. Mr. Regan noted that cemetery ordinance allows granite foundations but the cemetery foundation setting fees will be charged whether the cemetery provides a cement foundation or a business upsells a granite foundation to a family. The cemetery will have open communication with both the family contact and the business at each step in the monument process.
- **Monument permit.** Adjust type to match pre-verification form. Add language to read *Deliveries after this cut-off need to be coordinated with the cemetery and may be set by Memorial Day.* Discussion points: Mrs. Seeberger stressed the emotional importance for families to have their monuments placed by Memorial Day. Mr. Regan explained the cemetery needs a cut-off to prevent a load of monuments delivered the week before Memorial Day. The cemetery will do all it can to make sure all the monuments are set by Memorial Day. Cemetery ordinance now requires monument height restrictions which prevent problems with irrigating over the top of monuments. Monument height will be measured from foundation to top of monument. Any monument outside this standard requires a variance request. The cemetery plans to take photos of all sides of the monument at time of delivery and will note any visual marks, cracks, or chips in the monument. Monuments with vases need to have the hole drilled and lugs installed prior to delivery. The cemetery will install the vases when the monument is set.
- **Variance.** This form is based on what other Montana municipal cemeteries use. Bushes and tree requests need placed into the cemetery master plan, not as a variance. The cemetery director will review most variances without delay to the family.
- **Liability waiver for cleaning, leveling, and other site repair.** Ms. Aaberg submitted liability language to place on the form. Change the word *die* to *monument*.
- **Accessing/Removing Partial Cremations from Niche Wall.** Ms. Aaberg submitted additional authorization language and explained the situation that prompted this policy. Discussion followed on cremations placed in drilled compartments inside of monuments. The cemetery only allows cremations to be placed into a niche wall or a grave. Ms. Aaberg recognized evolving technology and stated the cemetery is not opposed to changing but this discussion item is not on the agenda.
- **Scattering of cremations.** Mr. Stetler asked about a cremation garden. Mr. Regan stated not at this time but it could come up in the master plan. Ms. Aaberg said she would provide some wording changes to this policy.
- **Vases.** Add winter flower times to this policy.

- **Wet sets.** Mr. Regan explained that the cemetery got away from pouring a hearth or slant into concrete a long time ago but this policy has never been in writing until now. The cemetery cannot move upright monuments that are set in concrete. Mr. Stetler stated monuments used to come with rough bottoms so they had to be set in concrete to level them. Mr. Regan agreed that in those instances the cemetery resets the monument very lightly into concrete. Bevel monuments are not allowed because mowers run the risk of chipping them.
- **Monument survey.** Mrs. Seeberger noted that Council requests us to have data via a public survey.

**NEW COLUMBARIUM PLAZA.** Board members chose wall names from a list of names from the original 1884 survey. **Mr. Filicetti made a motion to name the new columbarium walls Astor, Crocus, and Dahlia. Mrs. Cordis seconded. Ayes, three. Absent, one.**

**Adjournment** at 1:37pm. Next meeting will be November 2, 2017. NOTE: Agenda items not discussed due to time will be carried over to the November meeting. Those items are Stories and Stones, Chip Sealing Streets, Civil War Stone Cleaning, Silver Park Iron Storage, Master Plan, and Board Vacancy.