

Missoula Cemetery Board Meeting  
Thursday, October 4, 2018  
12:00pm  
Missoula City Cemetery Office

**Minutes**

1. **Call to Order** 12:00 pm
2. **Roll Call**  
**Board members present:** Paul Filicetti, Mary Lou Cordis, Kim Seeberger, Neil Carson, and Pat McHugh  
**Board members absent:** None  
**Staff:** Ron Regan, Mary Ellen Stubb, Angela Reichert, Susan Aaberg  
**Public:** None
3. **Approval of Minutes** September minutes unanimously approved with attachment of detailed staff report.
4. **Public Comment on items not listed on the agenda:** None
5. **Staff Report- A detailed staff report was given to the board. Discussion followed:** Mrs. Stubb reported on recent monument company issues. Mr. Regan stated he told Mr. Jordan on the phone the pre-verification process is for assessing the grounds for shrubs, monuments, and trees that could get in the way of placing a monument. The cemetery does not pre-verify the monument size or anything. The cemetery had trouble in the past due to shrubs or other monuments encroaching on graves, which is why the pre-verification process was started. Mr. Regan stated that he would speak against having the cemetery verify how names are placed on monuments which is Mr. Jordan's way of placing blame on the cemetery for their company's mistake. Mrs. Seeberger stated that was not the cemetery's responsibility, it is the monument company's responsibility as they take it to the family for approval. Mr. Filicetti stated that Mr. Jordan could bring this to the board through public comment. Mrs. Stubb added that when the cemetery emails the monument company after a pre-verification, they are given the grave number for that person. Mr. Regan stated that the cemetery does not want to become liable for their mistakes. The board all agreed.

Regarding Setting of the Corrected Monument: Mr. Regan had a discussion with Mr. Jordan on the requirements of resetting a stone at the cemetery. Mr. Jordan was told that shims and setting compound were required per cemetery policy. Mr. Regan stated he was absent when the monument was returned, but that cemetery staff was on-hand to observe the setting per policy. Mr. Jordan showed up without setting compound even after his previous discussions with Mr. Regan. Cemetery staff tried to be helpful and let Mr. Jordan use cemetery setting compound. In the future, cemetery staff has been instructed to send the monument back and that the cemetery board would back them up 100%. All board members agreed.

Rejected Monuments: Mr. Regan stated that the two rejected monuments, one of which required a special foundation, were not returned to the cemetery until three weeks later. These rejected monuments were part of six monuments delivered at the same time. The cemetery tries to stay ahead of the game by stocking foundations, but when Garden City Monument Services changes monument sizes without notice to the cemetery, then sooner or later we will not be able to. Mr. Regan reminded Mr. Filicetti how hard the committee worked to extend the pre-verification from 30 to 60 days. As well as changed the permit

through input with these companies. Mr. Filicetti noted this would be a discussion for the future. The board thanked the staff for putting so much work in the detailed staff report and providing up to date information on the issues.

Stories and Stones was discussed. City Attorney Susan Aaberg is assisting the cemetery with filing a trademark for the name Stories and Stones. Mrs. Stubb reported that tour totals this year were 747 attendees and 996 people signed up for tour notification through the city website. Donation and cost information was compared to last year and both continue to be consistent with previous years. The board discussed possible ideas for next year and requested that cemetery get some feedback from the storytellers as well. Mrs. Stubb noted that a January meeting was already discussed with the storyteller coordinator. Mr. Regan stated that Mrs. Pak is in charge of coordinating all the storytellers and cemetery staff is in charge of putting on the event.

**6. Financials-** Revenues and Expenditures were reviewed with discussion. Mrs. Stubb reported that cemetery funds were separate from the city general fund until 2015. According to the Finance Dept. there has been no interest to allocate to departments since 2015.

**7. New Business** None.

**8. Continuing Business**

**a. Master Plan-** The board discussed information about the master plan process from a meeting that Mrs. Seeberger and Mr. Regan had with Dale Bickell, CAO. Mrs. Seeberger stated that paying for a master plan would come out of capital reserve but that she suggested the city look at the possibility of a payment plan to help the cemetery pay for this rather than taking it all out of the Capital Reserve at once. Mr. Bickell said he would look into that as a possible option. The first step according to Mr. Bickell is to form a committee. Mrs. Seeberger stated Mr. Regan should be on it for the cemetery, Mr. Filicetti would be good as an architect, she wanted to be on it, and then people from Development Services, especially those familiar with Missoula growth.

Mr. McHugh asked what the scope of the master plan was and what the cemetery wanted to determine by a master plan. Was it about the amount of cemetery space, land, or strategic planning? Mrs. Seeberger had asked Mr. Bickell if the city wanted to stay in the cemetery business because once land was used up it would mean looking at new land to purchase. Mr. Bickell suggested we look at the next 20-30 years, however, Mrs. Seeberger thinks the cemetery needs to plan more for the next 100 years. Mr. Regan stated an idea to consider is that there is uncertainty with the other two cemeteries. The Catholics are selling land and we don't know what Sunset is doing so how much land the cemetery will need in the future is a hard thing to predict. Another thing to keep in mind is if a large scale disaster happens, such as an earthquake, the public will need a place to bury their dead. There was some discussion on the past cemetery master plan done in the 70s by a company in New York who is still in business. That plan was signed off by board members but was never sent to council to become official.

Mr. Filicetti stated that a market analysis should be done to help with the master plan. Mr. Regan stated that based on the cemetery report given to the board last month, burials have not differed much in the past nine years. A recent article stated that Montana will reach 50% cremation rate by 2030 which directly contradicts comments from Mr. Evans who had stated that cremation is at 80% in Montana. Our numbers show that we have not even hit 50% cremation yet. That

misinformation creates a false sense that the cemetery is not needed. Mr. Regan sent the report to Mr. Bickel so that he could see the actual cremation statistics. Much discussion followed. **MOTION: Mr. Carson moved to form a committee to begin the master plan process and bring their recommendation back to the board. Mr. McHugh seconded. Ayes: 5. Nays: 0.**

**9. Informational Items-** Mrs. Seeberger noted that she and Mrs. Stubb would be attending a grant writing class for cemeteries in Helena on Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> which is sponsored by the History Foundation. She stated it might be a way to subsidize some of the master plan. Mr. McHugh agreed and noted that this had a direct link to Stories and Stones.

**10. Communication-** None.

**11. Adjournment** at 1:03 pm

Respectfully submitted by Angela Reichert

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**DALY-LEACH FUNERAL HOME - (1<sup>st</sup> monument for this funeral home) On 8/29/2018** Daly-Leach delivered their first monument since the cemetery began installing in 2017. MES walked them through the process. Everything went very smoothly. Tom stated the process was simple and direct, he understood the need for pre-verification, and having the forms online worked great.

## **SEPTEMBER MONUMENT ISSUE REPORT**

**BYRNES, PATRICK & ROBERTA 'SUSIE' (Inscription error, company wanted cemetery to do inscription verification, disregard of policy and staff when re-setting)**

This monument was a rush from the beginning. Bob and Michelle hurried this monument through because the Byrnes were personal friends of theirs. This same family was also referenced in the June cemetery staff report where GCMS tried to control and restrict communication rather than reaching out and working together to jointly serve a family.

9/18/2018 - Bob called Ron regarding the monument for Patrick and Roberta 'Susie' Byrnes. GCMS transposed the names on the monument and need to correct it. Cemetery records show Susie buried on the left and Pat is reserved to be buried on the right. The monument inscription is the opposite (Susie on the right and Pat on the left). Bob wanted to know why the cemetery did not verify these names because this layout does not follow 'standard' format.

### **Cemetery responsibility:**

- The cemetery has no standard. Families direct the cemetery which graves to use for which interment.
- The cemetery does not have anything to do with inscriptions or design of a monument with the exception of 'in memory' for memorials.

- Pre-verifications are to determine if there is room for the type of monument being requested. Approval emails include the grave location.
- Cemetery maps and interment registry are available on the cemetery website or questions can be asked by phone to cemetery staff.
- Delivery checklists are to verify the monument size matches the permit and meets cemetery restrictions.

Monument company responsibility:

- The monument company meets with the family to design the monument.
- Family reviews and approves the layout design and information.
- Company accesses cemetery forms and maps online.
- In this situation, the monument company needs to correct the information per the family.
- They are required to follow cemetery policy when removing and replacing a monument from the cemetery grounds.
- The monument removal and return needs logged in person in the cemetery office. (An email does not work because the company may not show up when stated in the email.)

Regarding setting of the corrected monument - GCMS was fully aware of the setting requirements before their return of the monument because Bob discussed those requirements with Ron in advance. However, Michelle still questioned who was to set the monument (GCMS or the cemetery) and Bob came to the cemetery to set the monument without having the required setting material. This demonstrated total disregard for the cemetery policies and staff.

**LAROCQUE (Expired pre-verification, delivered without permit or fees)**

A pre-verification and variance were approved, however, they expired after 60 days with no communication from GCMS. The cemetery sent a courtesy email that the pre-verification could be extended if GCMS was still working with the family, otherwise GCMS would need to start over when ready to proceed. GCMS asked for an extension.

The monument was delivered in a group of six monuments, however, GCMS had never completed a permit nor paid the fees for this monument, so the cemetery was unable to accept the delivery and sent it back to GCMS. GCMS apologized, said they hadn't realized the family had not yet paid them, but that GCMS would send a permit and payment soon.

**ARTESE (Expired pre-verification, permit didn't match, delivered additional pieces not on permit)**

A pre-verification was approved, however, it expired after 60 days with no communication from GCMS and no request for an extension. One month later, GCMS submitted a permit for this expired pre-verification. The cemetery accepted the permit but asked GCMS that in the future, GCMS communicate with us and request an extension when needed.

The permit submitted did not match the original pre-verification. The cemetery corrected the permit per verbal directive with Michelle on the phone. However, the monument was later delivered with a base that was not documented on the permit. The base then exceeded the size of the foundation so the monument was sent back to GCMS for a corrected permit and additional fees.

**FOUST (Delivered without permit or fees)**

The monument was delivered without a permit or payment so it was rejected and sent back to GCMS. The monument exceeded the flush size on the cemetery fee schedule, however, the cemetery poured a larger

foundation without additional cost to GCMS because the cemetery did not catch the size difference. The cemetery did alert GCMS that these would need a variance in the future. The family emailed the cemetery that they were disappointed that the monument was flush as they thought it was large enough to be upright. The cemetery confirmed all our documentation was a flush and then referred the family to GCMS if they felt the monument set was not what they had ordered.

**PASYUK (Variance with no explanation, open-ended extension request)**

A variance form with a drawing was submitted, however, the variance explanation simply read 'see drawing.' The cemetery asked that the variance be re-submitted with written explanation for what exception was being requested as the instructions on the form stated.

One week prior to the expiration of the pre-verification, GCMS asked for an extension and noted this monument was a 6-8 week special order. Six weeks later, MES emailed GCMS alerting them that 'We now have a 43-day old extension with no further communication. The permit and fees were due at time of sale following the cemetery monument policies that your company, the funeral homes, and the cemetery board all agreed upon and approved last December. Please submit the permit and fees to continue this monument process, or if you need to cancel this request please let us know. We are always willing to work with you to serve our families but policy does not allow us to leave items open-ended. We continue to ask for your open communication with us so that we all can serve the needs of our families.' GCMS replied that this was a special order, the family had not paid anything on the monument yet, but that GCMS would contact the family so they could proceed with the cemetery.

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**Larocque Timeline Detail:**

*5/31/2018 - Pre-verification submitted and approved (expiration date was 7/30/2018)*

*6/06/2018 - Variance submitted for 50" x 26" foundation & mockup (form was dated 5/31/2018).*

*Cemetery approved variance (foundation cost increased from \$300 to \$320) and emailed approval to GCMS*

*8/06/2018 - Pre-verification expired with no communication from GCMS. MES sent courtesy email that pre-verification could be extended if still working with family otherwise GCMS would need to start over when ready to proceed. GCMS asks for extension, they are 99% sure of sale but still waiting on proofs*

*8/30/2018 - GCMS calls at 4p to schedule delivery of 3 stones for 9/04 but would call back on 8/31 or 9/04 to confirm*

*8/31/2018 - MES emailed GCMS noting deliveries needed scheduled because of short holiday week. GCMS agreed to deliver at 10am on 9/04.*

*9/04/2018 - GCMS delivered monument at 10am, however, no permit or payment was received so monument was sent back to GCMS. Angela emailed GCMS that permit and payment were missing and per agreed upon policy, were supposed to be paid when monument was sold. GCMS apologizes but hadn't realized Larocque had not paid them yet. They will send permit as soon as payment is received.*

*9/11/2018 - Permit arrives at cemetery (est. delivery date: 'will make arrangements')*

*9/18/2018 - GCMS calls to deliver 6 monuments on 9/20 (includes Larocque monument)*

*9/20/2018 - GCMS delivered monument*

*9/21/2018 - Cemetery notifies family and GCMS that monument is set.*

### **Artese Timeline Detail:**

**5/9/2018** - Pre-verification submitted and approved (form was dated 2/09/2018) (expiration date was 7/08/2018).

**7/09/2018** - MES sent courtesy email that pre-verification expired on 7/08/2018 and asked GCMS to submit a new pre-verification when ready to proceed.

**7/10/2018** - GCMS replied 'thank you'

**8/03/2018** - GCMS emailed cemetery that permit and payment would be delivered on Monday as the family just Ok'd the order and are sending payment.

**8/06/2018** - MES thanked GCMS and noted we would watch for permit and check. However, in this instance, please let us know when you are still working with a family and need a bit more time to complete the sale. Keeping open communication allows us to work with you to help the family.

**8/08/2018** - Permit arrived (form was dated 8/03/2018). Monument information differed from pre-verification. MES contacted GCMS for clarification. GCMS apologized and verified information.

MES corrected permit noting per Michelle's email:

**9/20/2018** - Monument delivery included a base that was not noted on the permit and which then made the sizes on the permit incorrect which resulted in needing a larger foundation and more money owed. Monument was rejected and sent back. GCMS called a short while later and asked if she could pay the difference with her debit card and emailed a new permit. The cemetery accepted that and the monument was re-delivered 15 minutes later.

**9/21/2018** - Cemetery notifies family and GCMS that monument is set.

### **Foust Timeline Detail**

**8/20/2018** - Pre-verification submitted and approved (expiration date was 10/19/2018) (This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> pre-verification for this monument. The first one was submitted 11/06/2017 and expired on 1/08/2018.)

**9/04/2018** - GCMS delivered monument at 10am, however, no permit or payment was received so monument was sent back to GCMS. Angela emailed GCMS that permit and payment were missing and per agreed upon policy, were supposed to be paid when monument was sold. GCMS apologizes but had been waiting on Foust who paid by credit card late last week. The will send permit and payment soon.

**9/11/2018** - Permit arrives at cemetery

**9/18/2018** - GCMS calls to deliver 6 monuments on 9/20 (includes Foust monument)

**9/20/2018** - GCMS delivered monument. Cemetery did not catch on the permit that the size of this flush monument exceeded the size on our fee schedule, therefore, it should have required a variance for a price quote. Angela emailed Michelle to let her know this for in the future. Michelle called Angela and argued that 36" fits a single grave by our drawings and if that's not the case then the cemetery needs to make it clearer on the website. Angela adjusted the fee schedule and website to clarify that flushes larger than 12" x 24" need a variance and price quote.

**9/24/2018** - Cemetery notifies family and GCMS that monument is set. Family emails cemetery to thank us for the picture but is disappointed the stone is flush and not raised as the stone was big enough. Angela responds that all our paperwork from GCMS is for a flush monument. If that was not what she ordered then she should contact GCMS.

**Pasyuk Timeline Detail:**

**6/22/2018** - Pre-verification was submitted and approved (expiration date was 8/21/2018). A variance request and drawing were submitted but the variance had no written explanation what was being requested. MES email GCMS and asked them to re-submit the variance with written instruction as to what exception was being requested. A new variance was submitted and approved for a height variance of 42".

**8/06/2018** - GCMS asked for an extension on the pre-verification stating 'there's a 6-8 week special order on the stone.'

**9/19/2018** - MES emailed GCMS alerting them that 'We now have a 43-day old extension with no further communication. The permit and fees were due at time of sale following the cemetery monument policies that your company, the funeral homes, and the cemetery board all agreed upon and approved last December. Please submit the permit and fees to continue this monument process, or if you need to cancel this request please let us know. We are always willing to work with you to serve our families but policy does not allow us to leave items open-ended. We continue to ask for your open communication with us so that we all can serve the needs of our families.' GCMS replied that this was a special order, the family had not paid anything on the monument yet, but that GCMS would contact the family so they could proceed with the cemetery.

**9/25/2018** - Permit and payment arrive. Sold date was noted as 9/20/2018. Estimated delivery date is noted as 'end of October possibly.' It was noted that this setup will come with vases and an embedded picture.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Ellen Stubb