

Missoula Cemetery Board Meeting  
Thursday, December 1, 2011  
1:30pm  
Ruth Bennett Memorial Chapel  
Missoula Cemetery

**Minutes**

**Present:** Doug Waters, Sharee Fraser, Carol Gordon, Marjorie Jacobs, Mary Lou Cordis, Ron Regan, Mary Ellen Stubb, Pat McHugh

**Absent:** None

1. Approval of board minutes. September, 2011 - unanimously approved as submitted.
2. Items involving guests. None.
3. Public comment. None.
4. Financials:
  - a. Revenues: FY11 reviewed. Mr. Waters reported revenue remains consistent on a three year average. On average cremation and casket burials remain around 50%. Revenue deposits to General Fund will be reviewed in March 2012 by council, administration, and Mr. Waters.
  - b. Expenditures: FY11 reviewed. Mr. Waters reported printing overdrawn partly due to Stories and Stones printing. Training dollars being used for receptionist computer classes and maintenance techs pesticide training. Operating budget is at 57% which is on track for fiscal year.
5. Motions needed. (*Full board attendance is needed*)
6. New or Continuing Items for Discussion:
  - a. Stories and Stones update. Mr. Waters questioned the OT cost figures and said he would review those figures before next meeting. Mrs. Stubb reported attendance was similar to last year with donations totaling \$1,509.56. Board members and Mr. Waters noted they thought attendance was greater as parking overflowed outside the grounds onto the city street.
    - i. Mrs. Fraser asked to review the brunch for next year as less storytellers are attending it which is resulting in more leftover food.
    - ii. Mrs. Jacobs asked if city administration had addressed the tour in any of the fee increase discussions. Mr. Waters stated charging for the tour has never been brought up in discussions with Mr. Bender. He noted the mayor's office does hear the positive feedback from the event. The only question Mr. Bender asked was why the cemetery uses higher cost street department employees rather than park employees. Mr. Waters informed him the street employees provide needed equipment, trucks, and CDL licensing to operate the truck and trailers which parks employees cannot do. Mr. Waters said he would review Mr. Bender's concern and may determine a different route to take for next year.
    - iii. Mrs. Stubb informed the board of an overage in MCAT grant money allocated for city use that has resulted in Stories and Stones being transferred story by story to web form and placed onto the website. This will allow the public the ability to stream the live histories at any time.

- iv. Mrs. Jacobs inquired as to the list of “no show” storytellers. Mrs. Stubb stated only one storyteller was absent. The other stories were noted as guidebook only. The information board will be reviewed to help eliminate confusion next year.
- b. Cost Fee Study update. Mr. Waters continues to meet with city administration. His instructions are to first work on fees then ordinances.
  - i. Mr. Waters distributed a schedule for upcoming board meetings (as detailed in #8). He asked every board member to attend these future meetings as input and motions are critical. Some members immediately noted meeting dates they would be unable to attend. Mrs. Fraser stated verbal votes or proxies could be held for those months.
  - ii. Mr. Waters distributed copies of the final cost study to each board member. He pointed out market review and market cost results in Appendix 2 and 3 as areas city administration wants reviewed and updated to local market levels. Mr. Waters said these sections give justification to what we do or not do here at the cemetery.
  - iii. Mr. Waters distributed a spreadsheet showing area cemetery fees, current fees for Missoula Cemetery, and proposed fees for Missoula Cemetery. He noted he has met numerous times with city administration on this proposal and he recommends the board stay with this proposal. City administration understands the cemetery can not be self supporting but wants to bring those fees to local market value.

Mrs. Gordon noted that area fees seemed to be inconsistent. Mr. Waters agreed and said in the end it would be council who decided the final fee adjustments. Much discussion followed as to whether the cemetery board's input would make a difference with council. Mr. Waters assured them it would. He stated that city administration was looking at the fact that cemetery services have remained level for the past eight years. Therefore, the proposed fee increases would result in an additional \$46-\$60K in increased cemetery revenue. Mrs. Jacobs asked if the cemetery budget would be adjusted with the additional revenue but Mr. Waters noted that increased revenues would not change the cemetery's budget nor alter the fact that equipment would continue to be funded with care fund money.

Mr. Waters and city administration had long discussions on other ways to raise money which included sales of monuments and temporary markers. The monument business would result in too many issues (staff, time, money, equipment, etc.) along with placing the cemetery in direct competition with local business. City administration decided the cemetery should continue offering its current services but must bring those fees to market level.

Board members voiced their concern to keep fees below local cemeteries due to the tax support of Missoula Cemetery. Mr. Waters said a few of the proposed prices may be slightly under but he tried to meet local cemetery prices.

Mr. McHugh questioned the board's role in this decision making process. Currently all cemetery revenue is deposited into city general fund so council's decision will be made according to the impact on their overall budget. Mr. Waters reminded the board that according to the current ordinance all cemetery revenue is deposited into general revenue until FY15. Various revenue and budget discussions will come up in the future but none have been brought up at this time. Mr. McHugh asked specifically “who” wanted these increases. Mr. Waters stated both Mr. Bender and Mr. Ramharther supported the cost study results and Mr. Wohlford's recommendation to increase revenues to local market value. Much discussion followed as to the board's position on the proposed recommendations. Mr. Waters suggested

board members discuss their concerns with council members prior to the final vote on these recommended changes. Mr. Regan clarified that the board could agree or disagree with parts of the proposal and present that to administration if they so chose. Mrs. Fraser asked whether the board could present disapproval for the entire proposal and have it documented that changes were being required by administration not by the cemetery board. Mr. McHugh suggested the fee proposal be tied to the revenue section of the ordinance rather than handled separately. He understood the decision to increase fees was being made by administration and council with the cemetery director charged with the task of modifying the fees accordingly, however, he believed there were ways to word the board's approval of this proposal while securing continued financial support from the city. Mr. Waters stated administration repeatedly stressed to him that the cost study results were the driving force behind these changes and those results removed the decision making factor from the board, staff, and administration. The study shows the lack of revenue compared to the cost of services and recommends bringing items to market level. Everyone is aware cemetery revenue will continue to remain lower than actual operating costs.

The board was requested to review the cost study report and the proposed fee increases. Board members are requested to vote on a proposed fee increase at January's meeting. Mr. McHugh noted the board could possibly approve the proposed fee increases on the condition that a portion of that revenue goes back into the cemetery care fund. Mr. Regan agreed that ideas such as this were needed and the board would need to stand together and be prepared to negotiate fees and the ordinance all at once.

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

- a. Utility Cart. Mr. Waters reminded the board that equipment replacement funds come from the cemetery care fund not from general revenue or capital improvement monies. Mr. Regan has requested to purchase a multi-use utility cart estimated at a cost of \$30-\$40K. Mr. Waters asked the board to give verbal approval for Mr. Regan to gather all the specifications for the utility cart and present that information to the board in January for purchase approval. Mr. Waters felt this purchase also justified the concept to council that money needs put back into the care fund to cover these expenses. Mrs. Fraser questioned whether the board could access the care fund as she believed spending that money was blocked per the cemetery ordinance. Mr. Waters stated equipment must have council approval. Mrs. Fraser asked if council could vote to approve an expenditure that went against a written ordinance. Mr. Waters said if the board approves the purchase then the council can amend the ordinance to allow for the purchase.

Mr. Regan described the need for the utility cart. He stated it would improve staff ability to spray with proper calibration but the initial purchase would require an engineer to design the proper spraying distance to allow for grave headspaces and shrubs. The proposed cart continues the theme of equipment with multi-functionality for year round use. The cart would have the option of a hoist attachment to allow tree trimming to raise branches above the sprinklers, it would act as a top dresser for spreading fertilizer rather than borrowing the parks department equipment, and it could be used during Stories and Stones by fitting it with side benches to transport the public. Mr. Regan stated he was asking verbal permission to conduct the research and cost estimate for this cart but did not want to waste people's time if the board did not agree with the purchase. This cart would replace a current 12-year old cart.

- b. Mower. Mr. Regan also proposed replacement of one of the cemetery's first Hustler mowers. The current mower is burning oil and has hydraulic problems. He pushed replacement of this vehicle out three times during the CIP process but the mower is now on its last leg and needs replaced. Unfortunately that means it must now be purchased with

cemetery care fund money. Mr. Regan would like approval to reserve the cost of a new machine in case this mower goes down. This would allow for a fast turn around and keep the cemetery from having down time due to a loss of machinery. Mr. McHugh asked if the proposed machine was the same as the current machines. Mr. Regan noted many companies now produce these multi-functional mowers so he would be reviewing various name brands to determine which would be best used in the cemetery at the best price. Mrs. Gordon praised Mr. Regan for being so good about not coming to the board unless a purchase was truly necessary. Mr. Waters said if the board gives initial approval, he would meet with Mr. Bender and Mr. Ramharter to alert them this would be coming and the estimated amount of \$80K would need reserved and pre-approved for spending from the care fund. There were no objections. Mrs. Fraser advised Mr. Regan to proceed with cost estimates

c. Legacy Mark cemetery software. Mr. Waters presented the board with history of the mapping project begun by city engineer Mr. Foster who is now retired. Mr. Foster began writing a program to combine mapping of the cemetery grounds with a software records program. The cemetery needs to look at other options for software and mapping. Mrs. Stubb informed the board she had been searching for cemetery software for the past year but until now had found each program lacking. She recently reviewed an impressive demo disk from Legacy Mark. This program combines vital records, mapping, photos, historical document uploads, and production of cemetery legal documents in a very detailed user friendly fashion. Mrs. Stubb noted this company has been in business since 1987. Mrs. Stubb said Mr. Regan will want to review the mapping potential with this company for maintenance possibilities. Mrs. Stubb asked Mrs. Moore, the newest cemetery staff member, to review the demo for flow, user friendliness, and information gathering. Mrs. Moore was impressed with its user friendliness and ease of input. Mrs. Stubb noted it is vital to find a program where information can be retrieved as easily as input. From initial reviews, Legacy Mark appears to meet the full spectrum of needs. Mr. Waters has not reviewed the demo yet but approved Mrs. Stubb to ask for board approval to gather more information and costs for this project. The board gave verbal approval to continue this research.

8. Adjournment. At 3:07pm. Mr. Waters' schedule (as distributed) for upcoming meetings:

- a. January 5, 2012 - Motions needed: Proposed fees and Purchase of Utility Cart.  
Discussions: Draft of updated ordinances.
- b. February 2, 2012 - Motion needed: Proposed ordinances. Mr. Waters presents all to council.
- c. March 1, 2012 - Motions needed: Any council changes. Discussion: Future of cemetery revenue, board terms, and cemetery budget.
- d. April 5, 2012 - Motions needed: none at this time. Discussion: Council and administration thoughts on cemetery revenue and cemetery budget.
- e. May 3, 2012 - Motions needed: none at this time. Discussion: cemetery budget and upcoming Memorial Day holiday.

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