

Missoula Cemetery Board Meeting
Thursday, February 5, 2009
1:30pm
Ruth Bennett Memorial Chapel

Minutes

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

Absent: Pat McHugh

1. Approval of board minutes: October - approved unanimously. Minutes were correct as written. January - corrections and clarifications were made by Board. Approved unanimously.
2. Items involving guests / Public comment: None.
3. Financials:
 - a. Revenues: January 2009 - Mrs. Stubb referenced the Niche Fund fiscal year adjustment where the cash and expenditure crossed fiscal years. Interest is expected to be allocated to funds in the near future per the Finance Dept.
 - b. Expenditures: January 2009 - reviewed. Mrs. Jacobs inquired into individual line items and their relevance such as 390- Cleaning Clothing. Mr. Waters and Mr. Regan explained the maintenance crew was given uniforms as they are regularly called upon to perform as pallbearers at burials. It is beneficial for them to look professional in the public's eye.
4. Motions needed. (*Full board attendance is needed*)
 - a. Shrub Removal Process - Mr. Waters requested a motion allowing the cemetery to re-enforce the shrub removal process. **Motion: Mrs. Gordon moved the cemetery continue with the shrub removal process as noted in the Municipal Code Ordinance #3292. However, a photo of each shrub must be taken prior to its removal. The photo is to be placed into the decedent's file for future reference if necessary. Mrs. Cordis seconded. Approved unanimously.**
 - b. Flower Box Continuation - Mr. Waters explained that the requested FY09 budget savings for the cemetery included the discontinuation of the 5-month maintenance position. This position was new in FY09 and partial salary was used during the summer. The last half of that FY09 salary is designated to be returned to the City Administration as part of the cemetery's budget savings. The main duty of this position focused on flower boxes and cemetery flowers. Mr. Regan emphasized that without this staff member the quality of care for flowers will be reduced as flower box care will be incorporated into regular maintenance tasks. There was much discussion as to the funding of this maintenance position and the revenue generated from the annual sale of flower boxes. Mr. Regan suggested flower boxes be continued this year as the cemetery is dependent on the revenue, cautioned that the care the flowers received last year will be minimized this year, and advised the Board to review this decision again next year. Discussion ensued as to whether sponsors should be notified of the staff shortage. Mr. Waters stated that until the cemetery's budget savings plan is clarified and finalized, he cannot be sure this position is totally gone. The Board needs to discuss possible funding options within the cemetery budget but that funding must be considered on a long term basis (min. of three years). Mr. Waters will contact Caras Nursery to suggest the dirt level in boxes be reduced by a few inches to allow

better water retention. **Motion: Mrs. Gordon moved that flower boxes be continued for FY09 and be reviewed in FY10. Mrs. Cordis seconded. Approved unanimously.**

5. New or Continuing Items for Discussion:

a. FY09 Budget -

i. CIP - The cemetery is requesting a backhoe in the FY10 CIP process. Mr. Waters stated that in the past, the cemetery has very conscientiously 'moved out' equipment that did not need immediate replacement. The cemetery backhoe, however, cannot be delayed any longer. It is a 1989 piece of equipment. It is estimated to cost \$85,000 with a possible trade-in of \$15,000. City Administration stated only 'essential equipment' will be considered for replacement.

ii. Line Items - Tuesday begins the budget process for line items. Mr. Waters stated the cemetery's portion of the budget savings request was \$22,000. He eliminated some line items which totaled \$5,000. The remaining amount of the request needs to be met for FY09 before the cemetery can proceed with required cuts for the FY10 budget. Mr. Waters stated he had previously discussed by telephone with each board member the use of the Care Fund to meet the required cuts. Should he proceed in opening the Care Fund and how should it be spent? At this time, Mr. Waters sees the choices limited to a cut in staff, use of the Care Fund, or a mixture of both. None of the board recalled this telephone conversation and remained adamant on upholding the ordinance and keeping all funds intact. Mr. Waters stated that after his phone conversation with the Board, he conveyed to City Administration that the Care Fund would be used and it is now expected to be the cemetery's funding source. Mr. Regan suggested the board consider the option of not opening the ordinance or funds but instead, offering all revenue generated for FY10 to be deposited into General Fund instead of the Care Fund. Would administration consider this option as the cemetery's 3.75% required savings for both FY09 and FY10? The Board unanimously requested a special meeting with the Mayor for clarification on the budget and the City's required savings / reductions. They remained adamant the Care Fund not be touched per the approved ordinance. Mr. Waters will try to arrange a meeting in the next two weeks stating the importance that all board members be present. Much discussion followed as to the value of individual line items.

b. Stories and Stones tour - Mrs. Stubb distributed [information](#) on the cost of the tour, the value of donated items, and the amount of donations. Attendance was estimated at almost 2000 people to this free public event. Due to budgetary issues, Mrs. Stubb asked the board to consider options for the tour in the future. She specifically asked the Board whether they wished to continue with the tour this fall. If so, then that decision needs rendered no later than August. Mrs. Stubb suggested the Board consider ways the tour could generate revenue. Numerous ideas were suggested: admission fee, guidebook fee, percentage of vendor sales, hayride fee, etc. One or a combination of these items has the potential to generate enough revenue to pay for the event. The tour is excellent publicity for the cemetery but currently generates less than \$1,300 in revenue through monetary donations. Mr. Regan asked whether staff could donate their time instead of being paid or whether staff could rotate work schedules so overtime was not incurred. Mr. Waters stated he could check into that but Mrs. Stubb believed it was a liability issue and not possible. Reducing printing costs by using a synopsis rather than the full biographies is an easy option for reducing cost. Deferring the program for a year was suggested. Mrs. Stubb cautioned that publicity, continuity, and momentum for the tour would be lost and when the program started again, it would be like starting from scratch. Mrs. Stubb

suggested that if the Board decides they no longer want the cemetery to handle this project, maybe one of the local history groups would be interested in taking over the project with minimal cemetery assistance.

At the October 2008 meeting, the Board tentatively reserved donations from this year's tour to purchase an advertising banner. Mrs. Stubb recommended this idea be suspended due to the current budget savings requirement to be met. The Board decided to re-visit the banner concept once the City's budget stabilized.

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

*Cemetery staff suggested numerous ways for the cemetery to possibly generate revenue. Ideas suggested were all unique for this cemetery. The Board was encouraged to contemplate these ideas and think out of the box for other ideas that would not take cash investment. Ideas may eventually become agenda items for public discussion.

*March agenda item – Annual review of monument foundation requirements.

7. Adjournment 3:05pm. Next meeting: March 5, 2009

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