

**MINUTES OF THE
CITY OF CARLSBAD
CEMETERY ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MUNICIPAL ANNEX CONFERENCE ROOM
114 S. HALAGUENO
THURSDAY, JULY 21, 2022**

1. ROLL CALL OF VOTING MEMBERS AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM.

Voting Members Present:	Suzanne Carlsen	Chairman
	Desiree Kicker	Member
	Regina Ballard	Member
	Alan Wood	Member
Voting Members Absent:	Jason Shirley	Member
Ex-Officio Members Present:	–	
Ex-Officio Members Absent:	John Lowe	City Administrator
	Dale Janway	Mayor
Others Present:	Diana Dorado	Cemetery Coordinator
	Pat Cass	Director of Public Works
	Orlando Garza	Cemetery Groundskeeper

2. NOMINATE AND VOTE FOR A NEW CEMETERY BOARD PRESIDENT:

The motion was made to nominate Suzanne Carlsen as Cemetery Board President by Mrs. Kicker and seconded by Mrs. Ballard Voting Yes - Carlsen, Kicker, Ballard, Wood. Voting No – None. Absent – Shirley. The motion passed.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The motion was made to approve the Agenda by Mrs. Kicker and seconded by Mrs. Ballard Voting Yes - Carlsen, Kicker, Ballard, Wood. Voting No – None. Absent – Shirley. The motion passed.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 20, 2022:

The motion was made by Mrs. Carlsen and seconded by Mrs. Kicker to approve the Minutes for the January 20, 2022 meeting. Voting Yes - Carlsen, Kicker, Ballard, Wood. Voting No – None. Absent – Shirley. The motion passed.

5. CEMETERY FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mrs. Carlsen asked if anyone from Finance Department would be attending the meeting to discuss the Financial Reports. Diana said that she had contacted Sandy Gonzales from the Finance Department to see if

she would be attending and she was not going to be able to attend. Sandy suggested that Diana contact Melissa Salcido, the Finance Director to see if she might be able to attend the meeting. Diana stated that she had emailed Melissa and her reply was that she would not be able to attend the meeting due to her having to stay and prepare some financial reports for the Mayor. Mr. Cass told the Board that he would try to answer any questions the Cemetery Board might have regarding the Financials. Mrs. Ballard asked Mr. Cass what the meaning of a particular page in the Financials that was titled Project Central meant. Mr. Cass said that the meaning of Project Central was a list of the capital line items for projects that were budgeted for the Cemetery Department. Mrs. Ballard added that she had been reviewing past meeting minutes and she could not find where Mr. Adon Rodriguez had come to present the Honor Guard Cemetery Project to the Board for their approval. Mr. Cass stated that The Cemetery Board was not asked for their approval. Mrs. Ballard then asked if City Council had approved it and Mr. Cass stated that the City Council had not approved it either. He added that the Administration had approved it. Mrs. Ballard then stated that according to the current NM State Statues for the Cemetery Board, it should have been presented to the Board for their approval. Mrs. Ballard added that if the current State Statues are outdated then they need to be updated to meet the current standards. Mrs. Carlsen stated that this is the first time that the Honor Guard Cemetery has been a part of the Financial Report. Mrs. Ballard added that someone should have come discuss that Honor Guard Cemetery Project with the Board. Mr. Cass said that the Project has never been put on the Agenda so therefore no one would be coming to discuss it with the Board. Mrs. Carlsen stated that since the Honor Guard Cemetery Project was a part of the Financial Reports it should not be required to be added to the Agenda in order to be able to discuss it. Mrs. Carlsen added that nothing will be solved today regarding the Honor Guard Cemetery so they needed to move on to the next Agenda line item. Mr. Wood stated that from what he understood the Cemetery Board is suppose to be revamped and will no longer be a Board and instead be more of a Committee that makes suggestions to the Administration and the Mayor. Mr. Wood added from what he understood is that they are currently and actively working towards making those changes. Mrs. Carlsen stated that since some City Council members are aware that she sits on the Cemetery Board she has been approached by a couple of City Councilmen to inquire about the status of the Honor Guard Cemetery. She said that she could not answer any of their questions because the Board has never been presented with any information regarding the Honor Guard Cemetery. Mrs. Carlsen then said that it was time to move on and asked if anyone was going to make a motion to approve the Financials. Mrs. Ballard said that she did not feel comfortable approving the Financials since no one had really explained them to the Board. Mr. Cass stated again that he would answer any questions that the Board might have regarding the Financials. He added that the Board is not actually approving or disapproving if the money could be spent because the money has already been spent. Diana stated that the Financials were actually not something that the Board normally Approves or Disapproves. She added that the Board is only suppose to approve line items on the Agenda that say "Approval".

6. MONTHLY CEMETERY REPORTS

The Cemetery Board looked over the Monthly Reports for April, 2022 through June, 2022. Mrs. Carlsen stated that everything looked good. Mrs. Ballard stated that she noticed that Mr. Garza does not have any complaints and he must be doing an excellent job. Mr. Cass added that Mr. Garza is indeed doing an excellent job at all the cemeteries.

7. CEMETERY MAINTENANCE REPORT

Mr. Garza discussed his monthly report. He and his crew have been mowing, edging, doing trash pickup and watering every day. Mr. Garza said that the real big issue that he is currently having is code enforcement and all the regulation violations. He added that it is severely making his job a lot harder when he has stop to remove all the items that people are placing on the gravesites in order to be able to mow or weedeat around the gravesites. Mr. Garza discussed an incident that had recently occurred when he attempted to remove dead flowers from a gravesite. He said that he did not realize that the plot owner was standing beside him when he was attempting to remove the dead flowers. He said the plot owner had gotten irate about the issue. Orlando stated that he just backed away to diffuse the situation. He added that he had read through his

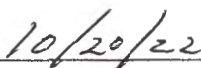
contract and it stated that the Cemetery Office is suppose to contact the owners before any removal of items from the grave. Diana stated that she had never been told by anyone that she is to contact all plot owners before code enforcement could proceed. Mrs. Kicker added that having to contact all plot owners before proceeding with code enforcement sounded like a very time consuming job. Mrs. Kicker suggested maybe attaching some type of note that informs the plot owners that they are in violation of the regulations. Mr. Cass said that Mr. Garza, Diana and himself would have a meeting at a later time to discuss those issues. Mrs. Carlsen stated that in the late 90's before the City started using contractors for the cemeteries two City workers used to maintain all the cemetery grounds and do all the code enforcement with no problems. Then the City started using contractors and hired a Cemetery Manager so then the Cemetery Manager as doing all the code enforcement with no problems. Then they did away with the Cemetery Manager position and now no one has been doing the code enforcement and it definitely shows. Mrs. Carlsen added that she had recently met up with Mrs. Ronnie Barnhart to show her available property at Carlsbad Cemetery. She said that Mrs. Barnhart was in disbelief of how bad the cemetery looked and could not believe all the extra items and decorations that people were being allowed to place on a lot of those gravesites. Mrs. Carlsen added that what had upset her the most was when they came upon a fresh grave and someone had placed at least 150 flat marbles all along the length of the grave. She added that the marbles will definitely be causing major problems to the weedeaters and mowers. Mrs. Carlsen stated that it has just gotten so bad due to no one doing code enforcement at Carlsbad Cemetery. Mrs. Ballard stated the she had printed out the Cemetery Rules and Regulations that are on the City Website and wanted to know if they are the current and updated rules. She added that the very first line in the City Website regulations states that the public is encouraged to plant live flowers. Mr. Garza said that is definitely not allowed and in fact that is one of the regulations posted on the signs that are placed on the cemetery grounds. Mrs. Carlsen recalled a time when everyone that was on the Cemetery Board at that time were all in agreement and adamant that the City needed to start enforcing all the rules and regulations. In fact, to help spread the word the former Cemetery Board President, Joanna Sieberg went to the Carlsbad Current Argus to discuss all the cemetery code enforcement issues and to inform the public that the City was going to start enforcing all the Cemetery Regulations. That article wound up on the front page of the Carlsbad Current Argus but nothing ever came from that. Mrs. Carlsen added that the City needs to start enforcing the cemetery rules and regulations now before it gets way out of control.

8. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.



Chairman



Date