



CITY OF ELOY

PUBLIC NOTICE
ELOY CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, October 27, 2020, 6:00 PM
Eloy City Council Chambers
595 North C Street
Eloy, Arizona 85131

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

IV. Appearances from the Floor

Individuals wishing to **ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE** may do so by signing in on a form provided by the Committee Secretary, identifying the topic(s) or agenda item(s). **ACTION** taken as a result of public comment regarding non agenda items will be limited to directing staff to study the matter or rescheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date. During an open session, the Committee shall not hear personal complaints against City personnel or a person connected with the City. **TIME LIMIT FOR SPEAKERS WILL BE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON.**

V. Director's Report:

- A. Burials and Work Orders
 - Cemetery Maintenance
 - Monument Installation
 - All Souls Day
 - Marking Layout of Cemetery Sections
 - Identification Markers - Section A

VI. Business: Possible Discussion and/or Action on the Following:

- A. Approval of Minutes: May 14, 2019

VII. Adjournment

POSTED BY THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2020, BY 5:00 P.M. AT ELOY CITY HALL, ELOY POST OFFICE, TROY THOMAS COMMUNITY CENTER, TOLTEC COMMUNITY/SENIOR CENTER AND CITY WEBSITE: www.elayaz.gov

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mary Myers", followed by a horizontal line.

Mary Myers, CMC, CPM
City Clerk

INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS MAY CONTACT LORENA LaSALDE-RIOS, ADA COORDINATOR FOR THE CITY OF ELOY AT 520-466-9201 OR 520-466-7455 (TDD). IF POSSIBLE, SUCH REQUESTS SHOULD BE MADE 72 HOURS IN ADVANCE. ONE OR MORE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE AND/OR STAFF MAY PARTICIPATE BY TELEPHONIC OR VIDEO MEANS.

**MINUTES OF
THE ELOY CEMETERY COMMITTEE
CITY OF ELOY
628 NORTH MAIN STREET
ELOY, ARIZONA 85131
MAY 14, 2019
5:00 P.M.**

Staff Present: Paul Anchondo-Community Services Director; Mary Myers-Committee Secretary; Jerry Calvillo-Parks Superintendent; Lorena LaSalde-Rios- Administrative Assistant

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Tidwell called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chairman Powell led the Committee and the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: J.W. Tidwell-Chairman; Micah Powell-Vice Chairman; Natasha Tidwell; Steven Paulson; Elva Lile; Marie Botello

Committee Members Absent: Andrew Rodriguez

IV. APPEARANCES FROM THE FLOOR

None

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Anchondo conveyed the following communications to the Committee:

a. **Burials and work orders**

Since last report (9/17/18) the parks crew has conducted 33 burials; set 41 headstones and poured 23 foundations.

b. **Cemetery Maintenance**

1. Watering has increased at the park due to the warmer weather. Mr. Anchondo pointed out this has resulted in some sunken graves. He said the crew is making every effort to backfill the graves as soon as possible. However, there are instances where the crew has to wait for the ground to dry before bringing in equipment to backfill.

Chairman Tidwell wanted to know if the sprinklers turn on automatically.

Mr. Calvillo said the sprinklers are not automated. They are manually moved to each location.

Chairman Tidwell conveyed that at his last visit to the cemetery, he noticed a number of broken sprinkler heads, water bubbling up from underground, and water shooting up in the air. He asked Mr. Calvillo when he plans to fix the sprinklers.

Mr. Calvillo, said his crew has been working diligently to repair the heads. He is also replacing the screw-in type of sprinklers with a more updated style because the screw-ins tend to leak.

2. The road inside the park was recently fog sealed for road preservation. Mr. Anchondo said fog sealing will occur every two to three years to preserve the condition of the road.
3. Whenever possible, he will continue to utilize inmate labor to help with clean ups and application of gopher baits. Mr. Anchondo said he may also use inmates to assist with preparations for the Memorial Day event at the park.
4. Additional cemetery benches are being purchased for installation throughout the park.

c. **Memorial Day Event**

The event is scheduled for May 27th at 9:00 a.m. The city will provide canopies and other equipment requested by the Eloy Chamber of Commerce.

d. **Cemetery Identification Markers**

It's been suggested that the city look into purchasing and installing section markers for the cemetery. Mr. Anchondo said Member Tidwell has provided the board with some samples in a handout. He asked the committee to please let him know how they wish for him to proceed with this after reviewing the samples.

Chairman Tidwell asked Mr. Anchondo if it is possible to make a sign for each section with a diagram of that section (ex. Section B, Block 1, Section B, Block 2).

Mr. Anchondo said he could take the information to a local company to see if it is possible to create the signage. Mr. Anchondo told the committee that there could still be some confusion with the public and that people will probably continue to contact administration for assistance in finding graves.

Chairman Tidwell conveyed that if someone has a grave location, but does not know how a section is laid out, the only way a person will find a particular grave is to walk back and forth until it is found. He said for people who are not familiar with the section layouts, it is going to be difficult for them to find a grave unless there is a chart showing the layout of the section.

Mr. Anchondo agreed. He reiterated that he would look into possible signage for the sections if this is the wish of the committee.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Tidwell pointed out a typo on the last page of the minutes under *Cemetery Maintenance*, second bullet point. She said the word “report” should be replaced with the word “repair.”

Secretary Myers conveyed that she would make the correction.

Motion by Vice Chairman Powell, seconded by Member Paulson to approve the September 17, 2018 meeting minutes with the correction as noted by Member Tidwell, passed unanimously.

VII. BUSINESS

A. APPOINTMENT OF ACHAIRPERSON FOR 2019

Chairman Tidwell opened the floor for nominations for Chair.

Vice Chairman Powell nominated J.W. Tidwell for reappointment.

There being no further nominations, Chairman Tidwell called for a motion.

Motion by Vice-Chairman Powell, seconded by Member Tidwell to reappoint J.W. Tidwell as Chair for 2019, passed unanimously.

B. APPOINTMENT OF A VICE-CHAIRPERSON FOR 2019

Chairman Tidwell opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chair.

Member Tidwell nominated Micah Powell for reappointment.

There being no further nominations, Chairman Tidwell called for a motion.

Motion by Member Tidwell seconded by Member Paulson to reappoint Micah Powell as Vice-Chairman for 2019 passed unanimously.

C. DISCUSSION ON CURRENT ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE OF SCHEDULING BURIALS AT THE ELOY MEMORIAL PARK

Transcribed verbatim

Anchondo: Chairman, Members of the committee; the current administrative practice when scheduling burials is to allow a four hour window in between body burials. Traditionally, this four hour window allows families time to observe the burial service without the interruption of the arrival of a second group. This also allows staff time to prepare for a second burial, if needed. Recently, it's been brought to our attention that there may be a need to adjust this practice in efforts to be more accommodating to the public. Staff is prepared to move forward based on the priority of the committee. If you have any questions regarding this window or any details as to how we handle two burials in one particular day, we're prepared to field those at this time.

Vice-Chair: I know from experience that it can be done within two hours with two people per burial. I know that four hours is okay, but nowadays when there are families that are wanting services on Saturday and that's kind of the only time they can come in, it's hard to tell a family that we already have one scheduled when there was never direction by this committee or even by council that it went to a four hour separation. Those days can be long for the grieving families and also for the staff. My suggestion is to do it within two hours or even sooner because I know it can be done. From my past experience at another funeral home where I've had two, three at one time with less staff. I can say just bluntly, there's no excuse why it cannot be done. So, I'm in favor of doing this to accommodate the families. If we have to bring in staff, which at times there is maybe four, maybe five city staff members at the cemetery at one time for one burial. If you do two at a time, if we have to purchase another lowering

device for a backup system, that's fine. If we have to purchase another awning, that's fine. We have the staff, we can flex them out or pay overtime, I don't care. I think that for us it's not like it's going happen every Saturday, but when it does happen, we need to be accommodating to the family who's grieving at this time, instead of thinking about ourselves. So, I would like to figure out a way where we can change the administrative decision and do it as a board decision. That we change it from four hours to two hours and purchase equipment as needed. I guess the city council would have to approve overtime when necessary or a department head. Like I said, it's not like it's going to happen every day; every Saturday; every Tuesday; every Friday. But, to tell a family that no, you're going to have to wait, that's just ridiculous on my part. And I know that from experience it can be done.

Chairman: Any other comments?

Paulson: Yeah, I'd just like to make one brief comment. I agree with you sir, it probably can be done. I just don't want to get into the appearance of rushing family one out, so you can get family two in, and then rushing family two out so you can get family three in. As long as we treat everyone with the respect that they deserve; so I don't know if 120 minutes is enough time. Maybe three hours? But I think it can be investigated obviously.

Vice-Chair: Well, we don't know when the procession is coming in from the cemetery. But we do know ahead of time where the location of the graves are going to be at. Where the burials are going to be at. We also know that we can talk to funeral staff at the funeral home. The staff who shows up and just tell them, hey this is what's going on. That's what I had to do and the families respect that – they get it. Everybody's not there to have a picnic because it's one of their loved ones passed away. The last thing they want to do is have a disruption between the two families. Now there are going to be those times when there are those knuckleheads in the family, but that's not our fault. The least we can do is accommodate the service of the cemetery for burial at a respectable time and service that our staff can give them. Even to the point where they all understand what's going on.

Paulson: Does anyone know how often this scheduling issue has occurred? I mean, are we talking one or two a year? We're talking one or two a month? We're talking one or two a week?

Anchondo: Chairman, members of the board. Please correct me if I'm wrong Ms. Myers, I think these happen rather seldom. Maybe once or twice a year, is that correct?

LaSalde-Rios: I would say once or twice a year.

Anchondo: Once or twice a year? No more than three times a year. So, I don't think it's a constant issue. I think there's value to allowing one family to leave the cemetery if at all possible before another family arriving. Obviously, not at the expense of others, but I would assume the committee would want to do that if at all possible. To try to schedule them so at least one family has a chance to grieve before the other family arrives. If it's okay, with the committee pushing forward, we'd be more than willing to apply administrative discretion and flexibility in looking at this. So we want to consider, okay, let's look at a shorter window. We would just ask if at possible, to look at it on a case-by-case scenario. Because like Mr. Powell mentioned, if you do have that one instance where you have two potential burials right next to each other, those could be celebrated in very different fashions. So, you know things come into play like culture and religion. We don't want to infringe on the privacy of one another. So if at all possible, if we could look at those; kind of take into consideration, manpower which shouldn't be an issue; with safety as well as location of plots. Just for that one or two instances where it may be an issue and make an administrative decision based on that. How would that sit with the committee?

Chairman: Any other comments?

Paulson: That makes sense to me, if we're talking one or two or three per year. Just allow the flexibility. Don't just say, well we can't accommodate you until 3 in the afternoon. I think most people would appreciate that. But I certainly understand your concern about if they're reasonably close. That can be a problem; physically I mean.

Vice-Chair: The one thing we can't control, nor the staff here or anything is the timing of when the church services are over. There are some cultures that they last 8 hours. They start really early. There are some that are just for an hour or they did like a two day service. We can't time that. You can say okay, historically this is what this type of family would do a service for three or four hours; we can kind of guesstimate from there. And then you have the procession from the church from maybe even as far as Casa Grande to come all the way over here. But it can be done. Even if they're in a fairly close area of each other. All it takes is two city staff over here, two city staff over here. You just have to designate the funeral director for each funeral and say this is what's going on. Okay, that's fine. It's fairly simple. I mean, it's not we're building the space shuttle here. It's very simple to accommodate things like this.

Tidwell: Would it even be possible if, for example, there was a funeral going in section B and other funeral going on in Section M. Could that happen at the same time? I mean, they're far enough apart.

Vice-Chair: The staff's concern is if it's close by each other. But we know that ahead time, when their families are coming in to purchase a plot at that time.

Anchondo: Correct Vice-Chair Powell. That's kind of why I brought that up. So, what we're asking for is just the flexibility if we see that situation that arises where you have one within 100 feet of each other; 50 feet of each other, to have the administrative discretion to decide otherwise in that case. Not those that are on opposite sides of the cemetery; or not an issue of whether we can handle two burials at the same time. But just taking things into consideration like safety; like potentially aware of the different sizes of those arriving at the cemetery. If you have a large group and you have a small group, it may not be an issue. But if you have a group of 150 showing up and another group of 75, are there any concerns in that regard? But, we're more than willing to exercise whatever flexibility the committee sees necessary moving forward. We're just asking for a little administrative discretion, in case we see any issues and can also bring that up to the cemetery chair as well. I doubt that they'll come up, but you never know. And I think we need to prepare for the unforeseen.

Vice-Chair: As long as we don't continue to tell the families that it can't be done. Because it can be done. And I know, maybe not this time, but in the past it's been brought to my attention even when I worked at the funeral home. When you tell a family that it can't be done, that's worse than anything.

Chairman: Anything else? Well, my feelings is that we should never tell a family no, you cannot have your loved one buried at a certain time just because somebody else is being buried at that time. At the time of death, there's enough stress on that family already. For us to say no, you can't have your funeral service at 10:00 because another party is having a service start at 9:00. The only restriction I would see that we should place on it is what section. Now, if it's a large family, both families; I can see a problem, if they were being buried in the same section at the cemetery. But if they're in different sections and they both want to have their service at 8:00 in the morning, we should accommodate them. If it means we have to go out and buy another set of equipment, if it means we have to pay overtime, or if it means we have to train somebody else, because I understand that it take at least two people per service. And right now, parks and rec has five employees. So, if one is on vacation and one is sick, that leaves them three. So, they would have to have somebody as an emergency backup to be that fourth person. But to tell a family no, another family has requested a burial service at the time you wish; for us to tell them no, I cannot go along with that. That's my comments.

Tidwell: Paul, maybe you can answer. What's the city policy on having volunteers for something like this? Like Councilmember Tidwell is saying, if you have two city workers at one and you only have one at the other? What's the policy of having a trained volunteer from the public to come and help and assist?

Anchondo: Chairman, Board Member Tidwell, I can't speak exactly to the policy. I do know that there are liability issues that we have to be concerned with. That would be more on the side of risk management. But I think we can cover that from a staff point of view. We are in the process of hiring two additional employees. Unless, in the case of an emergency, where we may have one on vacation and two sick, I think that is something that we can handle on our end. So, we've already started the cross-training process and I think we'll be prepared. Again, barring any emergencies that may surface. And Mr. Tidwell, moving forward, I'm sure the community services department as well as Ms. Myer's department are more than willing to apply more flexibility to how these things are viewed and to try to take all things into consideration as we try to accommodate the public to the best of our abilities.

Chairman: Paul, do you need Council's approval to purchase the additional equipment?

Anchondo: Mr. Chairman, no, we do not.

Chairman: My recommendation is that we get the equipment that we need in the event we have two requests at the same time for a funeral service. Any other questions or comments?

Tidwell: Do we have to make a motion to accept or is this just a discussion item?

Chairman: I don't think so.

Anchondo: Chairman, members of the board, Vice Chair Powell, are you okay with us applying administrative discretion? Did you want to limit that to a three hour window to a two hour window; to a one hour window? Do you want to specify how you like us to move forward or dealing with this on a case-by-case scenario as I suggested earlier?

Paulson: Well, my preference personally would be to just let you use your professional discretion. This sounds like a fairly rare problem and as our chairman said, just don't tell someone no; work with them. And use your professional discretion and make everybody feel good.

Chairman: Anything else?

Verbatim transcription ends

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Tidwell adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:27 p.m.

J.W. Tidwell, Chairman

ATTEST:

Mary Myers, Committee Secretary