



# CITY OF ELOY

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**ELOY CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, June 8, 2021, 5:30 PM**  
**Eloy City Council Chambers**  
**595 North C Street**  
**Eloy, Arizona 85131**

## AGENDA

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**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. Introduction of Newly Appointed Committee Members**

**VI. Director's Report:**

- A. Burials and Work Orders
- B. Cemetery Maintenance
- C. Memorial Day Event Recap

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

- A. Approval of the Minutes: March 2, 2021

**VIII. Adjournment**

**POSTED BY THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 2021, 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](http://www.elayaz.gov)**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Myers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right. Below the signature is a solid horizontal line.

Mary Myers, MMC, 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  
595 NORTH C STREET  
ELOY, ARIZONA 85131  
MARCH 2, 2021  
5:30 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**

Vice Chairman Powell called the meeting to order at approximately 5:31 p.m.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Member Andrew Rodriguez led the Committee and the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. ROLL CALL**

**Committee Members Present:** Micah Powell-Vice Chairman; Natasha Tidwell; Steven Paulson; Elva Lile; Marie Botello; Andrew Rodriguez; Sylvia Guanajuato Rodriguez

**Committee Members Absent:** None

**IV. APPEARANCES FROM THE FLOOR**

None

Vice Chairman Powell welcomed Member Guanajuato Rodriguez to the committee. He also thanked Mr. J.W. Tidwell who was in attendance for the years of service and dedication as chairman of the Cemetery Committee.

**V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

A. Mr. Anchondo conveyed the following communications to the Committee:

### **Burials and Work Orders**

From October 27, 2020 to date, the cemetery staff has conducted 56 burials; set 70 headstones and poured 41 foundations.

### **Cemetery Maintenance**

- Cemetery staff will begin the watering cycle at the cemetery next week.
- Staff has seen some improvement to the gopher situation at the cemetery. He said staff will continue to address the situation.
- Mr. Anchondo said he would be purchasing several benches for the cemetery. Cost for the benches would be about \$1500 per bench. He told the committee that if there is a particular location they would like a bench placed, to please let him know and they would do their best to accommodate the requests.
- Mr. Anchondo conveyed that he is working with a sign company to develop an interpretive (directional) entry way sign and additional section signage. He said once he obtains more definitive numbers he will bring it to the committee for comments.

Member Rodriguez commended Mr. Anchondo and his staff for doing an outstanding job at the cemetery. He said there are times when he gets complaints from people about the cemetery, however, the public tend to forget that the grass has to be watered and headstones are going to get dirty.

Member Rodriguez also expressed his gratitude to the cemetery staff for taking quick action following an incident at the park. He received a call from his best friend who had just finished having a funeral service for his father. When the funeral procession arrived at the cemetery, his friend told him that a had not been prepared for his father. Member Rodriguez said he contacted Lorena at city hall, who informed him that she was not aware of a burial occurring that day because she never received the information from the funeral home.

Mr. Anchondo conveyed to the committee that the error was on the side of the funeral home. He said there was another potential error on the funeral home's side for another burial, but Mrs. LaSalde-Rios caught it and was able to bring it to the funeral home's attention for correction. Mr. Anchondo said he is not aware of there being any issues since then.

Vice Chairman Powell said the funeral home wanted to meet with city staff to discuss the incident, but the funeral home canceled the meeting.

Mr. Anchondo pointed out that the city's process has not changed over the years, and it's been fairly foolproof. He said the city clerk staff are very thorough when processing burial work orders. Mr. Anchondo stated that a step was missed by the funeral home and

fortunately, two cemetery staff members were at the cemetery and was able to address the situation quickly and prepare the gravesite for the burial within a couple of hours.

Vice Chairman Powell and Member Rodriguez thanked the cemetery staff again, and praised them for stepping up to take care of the matter.

Member Guanajuato Rodriguez wanted to know how much time is allotted for burials.

Ms. LaSalde-Rios conveyed that in the past, four hours was allotted for body burials and two hours for cremations. However, the committee recently decided that they wanted the staff to accommodate families, so there are no allotted times. She said there could be two to three burials going on at one time.

Member Guanajuato Rodriguez said she has heard concerns from the public about this. There can be a burial in one part of the cemetery that may be more of an intimate gathering, and another going on at the same time that have mariachis and music. She said this encroaches on the other family's grieving process. Member Guanajuato Rodriguez pointed out that she is not insensitive to grieving families, but wanted to know the reason from going to having scheduled allotments to no allotments. She said she is the newest member on the committee and would like to get a better understanding of the process.

Mr. Anchondo explained there was some discussion among the committee after the city was unable to accommodate a family due to the four hour window. It was decided among committee members that the city would do its best to accommodate up to two burials at the same time, if requested. He said the staff makes every effort to take into consideration if burials are close in proximity to each other, but for the most part, if the request is to have both burials at the same time, staff has decided to move forward with the accommodation. Mr. Anchondo stated that the board can re-evaluate this and make changes at any time.

Member Guanajuato Rodriguez asked is four hours necessary for each burial, and has someone accessed how long it takes to conduct a burial from start to finish. She said she is aware that every service is different, but is there a policy that states that burials take only two hours and that families must adhere to it in order to accommodate other families.

Mr. Anchondo said there is no written policy in place. The four hour policy is something that has been practiced over the years. Having conversations with former chairman J.W. Tidwell and the committee, Mr. Anchondo said the committee directed staff to accommodate the families. Mr. Anchondo explained that the time frame for burials are difficult to gauge because of cultures and religious beliefs. He and the staff believed that a four hour time frame would give the crew time to set up, break down and give families

time to grieve before leaving the cemetery. Mr. Anchondo said the staff has been able to accommodate the families so far.

Vice-Chairman Powell said having worked at funeral homes in the past, he pointed out that every funeral service is different. He said it is not uncommon to have more than one burial occurring at the same time at cemeteries. Vice-Chairman Powell said at one time, the city had four staff members at a burial. It was decided to reduce the staff to two per burial to accommodate multiple burials. He said that everyone's family is different, but you cannot give them a deadline to leave the cemetery. Vice-Chairman Powell said the only restriction the city has is that funeral processions have to be inside the cemetery by 3:30 p.m. for burials. Other than that, a time limit cannot be put on burials services.

Member Guanajuato Rodriguez said she understands this, but how do the city prevent something like this from happening? She said she is sensitive to families, but is concerned there are no guidelines. Member Guanajuato Rodriguez wanted to know what time does the cemetery staff complete burials.

Vice-Chairman Powell said the funeral procession has to be inside the cemetery by 3:30 p.m. If not, there is no burial or the staff has to stay over to accommodate the family.

Member Guanajuato Rodriguez wanted to know how often does this happen.

Mr. Calvillo conveyed it is very rare, but there were a few burials where staff finished around 4:15pm-5:00pm.

Member Guanajuato Rodriguez also wanted to know how employees are being compensated for overtime, and are employees also working until 3:00 p.m. on the weekends.

Mr. Anchondo said if an employee works beyond their normal 40 hour work week, the employee is entitled to overtime pay. He said the employee must have actually worked 40 hours to receive overtime. If not, then the employee is paid straight time for the extra hours. Mr. Anchondo said there are no burials conducted on Sundays.

Mr. Anchondo briefly explained to the committee how the city process burial arrangements starting from when families first come into city hall to make arrangements to the burial work orders that are received by his department.

Member Rodriguez asked about the burial fees. He pointed out that July 2011 was the last time fees were increase.

Mr. Anchondo conveyed that it has been a while since the committee increased the fees, and that it would be difficult to find anyone who is lower than the city. However, as to possibly charging more for burials, Mr. Anchondo said it is his opinion that this would be difficult for the public to swallow. However, if this is something the committee wants him to pursue, he can do so.

Vice-Chairman Powell said he knows of desert sections at some privately owned cemeteries that are doubled the price of what the city charge.

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

**A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 27, 2020**

Vice Chairman Powell asked the Committee if there were any comments or changes to the minutes presented in the packet.

There being no comments or questions, Vice Chairman Powell called for a motion to approve.

Motion by Member Paulson, seconded by Member Tidwell to approve the October 20, 2020, meeting minutes as presented, passed unanimously.

**B. APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER TO SERVE AS CHAIRPERSON FOR 2021**

Vice Chairman Powell open the floor for nominations.

Member Lile nominated Vice Chairman Powell for chairman.

There being no further nominations, Vice Chairman Powell closed nominations.

Motion by Member Lile, seconded by Member Botello, to appoint Micah Powell as chairman for 2021, passed unanimously by roll call vote.

**C. APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER TO SERVE AS VICE-CHAIRPERSON FOR 2021**

Chairman Powell opened the floor for nominations.

Member Botello nominated Natasha Tidwell for vice-chair.

There being no further nominations, Chairman Powell closed nominations.

Motion by Member Botello, seconded by Member Lile to appoint Natasha Tidwell as vice-chairperson for 2021, passed unanimously by roll call vote.

#### **D. SCHEDULING OF QUARTERLY MEETINGS FOR 2021**

Chairman Powell asked Mr. Anchondo if he had any recommendations for the meetings.

Mr. Anchondo recommended the following meeting dates:

June 8, 2021, September 7, 2021, and December 7, 2021

It was the consensus of the committee to accept the recommended meeting dates with a start time of 5:30 p.m.

Chairman Powell called for a motion.

Motion by Member Paulson, seconded by Vice-Chair Tidwell to approve the meeting dates and time as recommended by staff, passed unanimously.

Vice-Chair Tidwell conveyed that she would like to add a discussion/possible action item to the next meeting agenda. She received a complaint from a person whose husband is buried at the cemetery. The individual had a small pine tree on her husband's grave that was removed. Vice-Chair Tidwell said the person had plan to decorate the pine tree with valentine items, but it was removed because it was a Christmas tree. She wanted to know if the committee would consider possibly amending the cemetery rules and regulations to permit pine trees kept with current holiday themes.

Chairman Powell said he was okay with putting this on the next agenda for discussion. However, he hoped that it could possibly be resolved with staff before the next meeting.

Chairman Powell encouraged Member Guanajuato Rodriguez to review the cemetery rules and regulation brochure for any questions she may want to address with the committee or staff at the next meeting.

#### **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Powell adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:58 p.m.

**Note: After the meeting adjourned, Vice-Chair Tidwell informed Chairman Powell that she would like to withdraw her request to add an item to the next agenda.**

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Micah Powell, Chairman

ATTEST:

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Mary Myers, Committee Secretary