

**MINUTES OF
THE ELOY CEMETERY COMMITTEE
CITY OF ELOY
595 NORTH C STREET
ELOY, ARIZONA 85131
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2022
5:30 P.M.**

Staff Present: Paul Anchondo-Community Services Director; Mary Myers-Committee Secretary; Lorena LaSalde-Rios-Administrative Assistant; Michael Legate-Parks Maintenance Crew Leader

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Micah Powell called the meeting to order at approximately 5:32 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: Chairman Micah Powell; Vice Chair Natasha Tidwell; Member Steven Paulson; Member Mary Lou Martinez; Member Sylvia Guanajuato Rodriguez; Member Andrew Rodriguez; J.W. Tidwell

Committee Members Absent: None

IV. APPEARANCES FROM THE FLOOR

None.

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Anchondo conveyed the following communications to the Committee:

➤ **Burials and Work Orders**

Since the last board meeting (3/21/22), the cemetery staff has conducted 35 burials; set 18 headstones; poured 45 foundations and processed 71 miscellaneous work orders.

➤ **Cemetery Maintenance**

1. Watering of the cemetery will be discontinued after the All Souls Day event. Mr. Anchondo said due to colder temperatures, staff will reduce watering and the grass will slowly transition into a dormant state. Increased watering would resume in the spring.

2. Bill Brown Fence Company is currently on site installing the automatic gate opener. Mr. Anchondo said once the gate is installed, there would no longer be a need for police staff, Vice Chair Tidwell and Members Tidwell to close the gates.

Member Guanajuato Rodriguez suggested notifying the public of the automated gates.

Mr. Anchondo said this could be done, and pointed out that the park hours would remain the same. He said if someone is inside the cemetery when the gates close, the gates would open to allow them to leave.

3. Met with IT staff to discuss possibly installing video surveillance at the cemetery. Mr. Anchondo said there are some issues (trees and lack of electricity), however, they would like to start with installing a few cameras along the roof of the shop building at the cemetery.

➤ **Update on Section E (new)**

Epiphany Landscaping was contracted to plant sod in the new section. Mr. Anchondo said once the grass is fully established, the surveyor will return around the beginning of November to pin the burial plots. He anticipates the section to be ready sometime in the beginning of 2023.

Chairman Powell wanted to know would trees be planted in the new section.

Mr. Anchondo said yes. The plan is to install trees around the perimeter of the section and pine trees to mirror the other sections.

Vice Chair Tidwell asked would the first two rows in the new section be designated for veterans only like the other sections.

Mr. Anchondo said this hasn't been determined, but would take it into consideration.

Chairman Powell asked about a section dedicated for double depth plots.

Mr. Anchondo said double depth plots would be available throughout the new section.

Chairman Powell commended Mr. Anchondo and his staff for doing an outstanding job maintaining the cemetery.

Chairman Powell announced that the council is looking at restructuring fees for the city. He told committee members that they also need to look at restructuring burial fees. He pointed out that Eloy's cemetery is the least expensive place for burials, while other cemeteries have increased their fees. Chairman Powell said with increased cost for water and personnel, the committee needs to consider increasing burial fees.

Mr. Anchondo conveyed that Brian Wright, finance director, is currently evaluating all city fees, including cemetery fees.

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

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 21, 2022

Chairman Powell asked the Committee if there were any questions, comments or corrections to the minutes.

Vice Chair Tidwell noted an error on page 2, paragraph four, "*Chairman Powell thanked Vice Chair Tidwell and Mr. Tidwell for volunteering their time to close the gates on weekends.*" Vice Chair Tidwell said it should read, "...**open** the gates..."

Mrs. Myers said she would make the correction; however, she believes "close" is what Chairman Powell said.

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

Motion by Member Tidwell, seconded by Member Paulson, to approve the March 21, 2022, meeting minutes with the correction as noted by Vice Chair Tidwell, passed unanimously (7-0).

B. COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER AMENDING CURRENT CEMETERY RULES AND REGULATIONS AS IT PERTAINS TO THE PREPARATION AND CONSUMPTION OF FOOD AT ELOY MEMORIAL PARK.

Mr. Anchondo conveyed that at the last meeting, there was discussion on possibly amending the current rules and regulations at the cemetery to allow for preparation of food on cemetery grounds during the All Souls Day event. The committee requested at that time that the item be brought back for formal action. Mr. Anchondo conveyed that staff is recommending that the current rules and regulations stay in place - only prepackaged and precooked meals be allowed on cemetery grounds. He said this rule was approved by the committee in 2010, and so far, have served well. However, he and staff are ready to abide by the wishes of the committee.

Member G. Rodriguez said she is okay leaving it as is, however, she wants there to be ample notice (English and Spanish) given to the public.

Chairman Powell pointed out that he believes the issue is more about the bands, mariachis and deejays at the cemetery than the cooking, which is getting out of hand. He stated that most of the violators are from out of town. He also stated that it's important to continue to educate the public on the rules and regulations during events at the cemetery.

Member Rodriguez said he also supports keeping the current policy, but would like staff to be more vigilant when it comes to traffic control and safety at large events such as All Souls Day. As far as music, Member Rodriguez conveyed that other cemeteries do not allow music, but Eloy has been lax in allowing this. He said the rules need to be a little stricter when it comes to music.

Member G. Rodriguez did not want to prohibit music at the cemetery, but rather allow only calming, soothing, appropriate music to be played.

Mr. Anchondo pointed out that the difficulty with policing music is very subjective by nature as to what is offensive to one, may not be offensive to another. He said if his cemetery staff receives a complaint about music, the staff will ask the individual(s) to leave the cemetery. Mr. Anchondo stated there is a provision in the cemetery guidelines that prohibits loud or offensive music. As far as traffic control, Mr. Anchondo said he plans to contact the police department tomorrow to request police patrol for that day. He said if the police department cannot do it because the cemetery is in the county, he would contact the county sheriff's department.

There were several other members who also voiced their support their support to keep the current rules and regulations in place.

There being no further discussion, Chairman Powell called for a motion.

No motion made; item died. The committee took no formal action.


Member G. Rodriguez said she would like staff to have flyers posted notifying the public of the rules and regulations for that day.

Mr. Anchondo conveyed that he would work with Mrs. Myers and her staff to get the information out to the public on the city's social media pages.

Chairman Powell requested a "Communications" section be added to the agenda for members who want to have an item placed on a future agenda for discussion.


VII. ADJOURNMENT

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



Micah Powell, Chairman

ATTEST:



Mary Myers, Committee Secretary