



**PUBLIC NOTICE
ELOY CEMETERY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Meets

Tuesday, June 27, 2023

5:30 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
- Memorial Day Celebration
- Update on Section E (new)

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

- A. Approval of the Minutes: March 22, 2023

VII. Communications

VIII. Adjournment

POSTED BY 5:00 PM, THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2023, AT ELOY CITY HALL, ELOY POST OFFICE, TROY THOMAS COMMUNITY CENTER, TOLTEC COMMUNITY/SENIOR CENTER AND CITY WEBSITE: www.loyaz.gov



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
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2023
5:30 P.M.**

Staff Present: Paul Anchondo-Community Services Director; Mary Myers-Committee Secretary; Lorena LaSalde-Rios-Administrative Assistant; Jerry Calvillo-Parks and Facility Supervisor, Brian Wright-Finance Director

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Natasha Tidwell called the meeting to order at approximately 5:37 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chair Tidwell led the Committee and the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: Natasha Tidwell (Vice Chair); Steven Paulson; Mary Lou Martinez; Sylvia Guanajuato Rodriguez; Jose Garcia; J.W. Tidwell

Committee Members Absent: Micah Powell (Chairman)

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 (10/25/22), the cemetery staff has conducted 39 burials; set 15 headstones; poured 25 foundations and processed 54 miscellaneous

work orders. Mr. Anchondo stated that for 2022, the staff conducted a total of 71 burials; set 26 headstones; poured 75 foundations and processed 114 miscellaneous work orders.

➤ **Cemetery Maintenance**

- Irrigation of the cemetery will resume in April. Mr. Anchondo reminded the Committee that sunken graves will often occur when this type of watering is done. He said the staff would make every effort to backfill the graves as soon as possible. However, they will have to wait until the ground is dry before bringing in equipment. He asked the Committee to please refer all comments, concerns and questions they may receive to the department so they can be addressed.
- Approximately six benches were installed at the cemetery. Mr. Anchondo said every section with the exception of E (new section) would have at least two benches for the public to sit on.
- The cemetery recently purchased security cameras to install around the perimeter of the cemetery office building. Mr. Anchondo anticipates the City's IT staff to have the cameras installed within the next 30 to 60 days.

➤ **Wreaths Across America**

The annual Wreaths Across America ceremony was held at the cemetery on December 17, 2022. With the assistance of cemetery staff and volunteers, Mr. Anchondo said 475 wreaths were placed on the gravesites of the veterans buried at the cemetery. Mr. Ralph Varela served as master of ceremonies and Chairman Powell who was also at the event, addressed those in attendance.

➤ **Update on Section E (new)**

Irrigation and sod has been installed, and plots have been pinned. Mr. Anchondo said he anticipates the new section will be open by July 1st.

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

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 25, 2022

Vice Chair Tidwell asked the Committee if there were any questions, comments or corrections to the minutes presented.

With there being none, Vice Chair Tidwell called for a motion to approve.

Motion by Member Tidwell, seconded by Member Martinez to approve the October 25, 2022, meeting minutes as presented passed unanimously (6-0).

B. APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON FOR 2023.

Vice Chair Tidwell opened the floor for nominations for chairperson.

Mrs. Myers informed the Committee that Chairman Powell wanted her to convey his interest in continuing to serve as chairman.

With there being no further nominations or discussion, Vice Chair Tidwell called for a motion.

A motion was made by Member Tidwell and seconded by Member Paulson to reappoint Micah Powell as chairman for 2023, passed unanimously (6-0).

C. APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE VICE CHAIR FOR 2023.

Vice Chair Tidwell opened the floor for nominations for vice chair.

Member Martinez nominated Natasha Tidwell to continue serving as vice chair.

With there being no further nominations, Vice Chair Tidwell called for a motion.

Motion by Member Martinez, seconded by Member Paulson to reappoint Natasha Tidwell as vice chair for 2023, passed unanimously (6-0).

D. APPROVAL TO INCREASE THE CEMETERY RATES FOR ELOY MEMORIAL PARK, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2023.

Mr. Anchondo and Mr. Wright presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee on the cemetery's current rates, compared rates of other cemeteries, and proposed rate increase options for Eloy Memorial Park.

Mr. Anchondo conveyed that the cemetery staff strive to provide courteous and professional services to families who lay their loved ones rest at Eloy Memorial Park. He said it's important that the cemetery is self-supporting, however, current rates do not allow for this to happen. Mr. Anchondo said 2011 was the last time the Committee increased rates. He pointed out that the Committee at that time increased the rates by 40%. Mr. Anchondo said increase funded 75% of a full time employee, but no capital improvement projects, which is currently being supported by the general fund.

Mr. Wright provided information on the cemetery fund as it relates to expenses and revenues. He estimates operational revenue at \$144,000.00 and operational expenses at about \$266,000.00. Mr. Wright said the difference of \$122,000.00 would be made up through support from the general fund. He also pointed out that it's estimated that Mrs. LaSalde-Rios utilizes approximately 40% to 50% of her time meeting with families for burial arrangements and processing paperwork, all of which is covered through the general fund. Mr. Wright presented four proposed options to the Committee for consideration. He said the following proposed rates and fees are based on resident and non-residents status:

- Option A: Increase rates 50%.
This would fully fund the cemetery employee with benefits, O&M, 40% of administrative costs, and fund capital projects on a yearly basis of up to \$25,000.
- Option B - Increase rates 40%.
This would fund everything in Option A, but decrease administrative contribution to 20%.
- Option C - Increase rates 30%.
This would fund everything in Option A, but decrease administrative contribution to 0%.
- Option D - Keep current rates with no increase.
Anything above and beyond what is budgeted would continue to be subsidized by the general fund.

Mr. Wright stated that staff is recommending the Committee support Option A. he said selecting this option would make the fund self-supporting with no general fund support.

Vice Chair Tidwell wanted to know if the cemetery in Marana city-owned or privately owned.

Mr. Anchondo said he believes the cemetery is privately owned.

Member Martinez wanted to know why there is a fee for Pinal County resident instead of a non-Eloy resident (ex. Casa Grande resident).

Mr. Anchondo explained that this language is part of the current rate structure. The new rate structure will have rates for Eloy residents and rates for non-residents. Anyone outside of the Eloy city limits would be considered a non-resident.

Member G. Rodriguez wanted to know if the staff looked at other municipal cemeteries or just privately owned ones.

Mr. Anchondo conveyed that he did look at a few city-owned cemeteries, and the fees varied. He asked the Committee to keep in mind that the goal is for the cemetery to be self-supporting and to capture the costs for administrative and maintenance salaries, including capital improvements. Mr. Anchondo said neither him or Mr. Wright take the issue of increasing rates lightly, and understand the stress this can put on a family. But, at the same time, staff has to take into consideration the cost of labor and materials, and the fact that rates have not increased in over 11 years. Mr. Anchondo said he and Mr. Wright support the 50% increase, but anywhere within those tiers would be a good place to start. He said a 30% or 40% increase is better than doing nothing at all.

Vice Chair Tidwell would people still be able to make monthly payments on plots.

Mrs. Myers said yes. A down payment of 25% of the total cost of the plot is required at the time of reserving, and giving the person 11 months to pay the balance with minimum monthly payments.

Vice Chair Tidwell asked the Committee to select an option.

A motion was made by Member Tidwell and seconded by Member Martinez to select Option B, increasing cemetery rates and fees 40%, effective July 1, 2023, passed unanimously by roll call vote (6-0).

VII. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications from the Committee

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice Chair Tidwell adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:05 p.m.

Micah Powell, Chairman

ATTEST:

Mary Myers, Committee Secretary