

Kern County Cemetery District **Minutes for**

October 20, 2023

Regular Board Meeting
Shafter Memorial Park Office
18662 Santa Fe Way, Shafter, CA

Call to Order: Call to Order at 12:15 pm by Chairman Braun. Chairman Braun led the flag salute and invocation.

Roll Call: In attendance was Barry Braun, Chairman of the Board; Belton Banks, Vice-Chair; Jerry Ezell, Secretary of the Board.

Employees: Eliza Caudillo, District Manager; Denton Carender, Superintendent; Alicia Reveles, District Secretary.

Visitors: Pardeep Kaur Hunjan

Public Comment: None

Consent Calendar: Includes the approval of the agenda for the current meeting and minutes of the regular Board meeting for September 2023. The payroll warrants for 23/19 through 23/20 were approved. Vouchers, checks, and financial reports for September 2023 were approved. This was done by approval of the consent calendar by motion of Trustee Banks and seconded by Trustee Ezell; 3 ayes, 0 Nays.

Management Update

- We had 12 services in Shafter and 13 services in Wasco for the month of September 2023. This gives us 79 services for the fiscal year to date. We have had 18 cremation services in Shafter and 5 in Wasco for a total of 23 cremation services. We are at a 29% cremation rate.
- California Association of Public Cemeteries Education Seminar was held in Sacramento, California. Manager Caudillo, District Secretary Reveles, Superintendent Carender, and Trustee Banks attended. Day one was to educate attendees on Green Burial, Highlights of the Brown Act, Interment and Disinterment Fors: Best Practices and Procedures. Day two featured the Breakout sessions, Best Practices for Interviewing and Hiring, and Stand Operation Procedure and Checklists.
- Winter grass seeding has been completed for both cemeteries. The grass is deemed necessary for the health of our turf and to remove undulation. The cost of ryegrass has doubled since 2020. Costs have gone up in every area of operation.
- Manager Caudillo requested the cancellation of the November 2023 Board Meeting due to vacation scheduling and the Thanksgiving holiday.

3rd Quarter Review of Investments

The Investment Manager presented the Board with a letter explaining the investments of the District, including the Stifel, the County, and the WestAmerica investments. As of September 30, 2023, the District has \$7,884,866 as a combined investment of all accounts. The District has \$4,192,161 with the County of Kern, \$3,431,663 with Stifel, and \$261,042 with WestAmerica Bank. The investment in the Wells Fargo Investment has been made in accordance with the requirements set forth by the State of California and our Investment Policy. Manager Caudillo, as investment manager, “Acknowledged that the district has ample liquidity to meet its obligations for the next 6 months”.

The amount that is in each Kern County Cemetery District account is as follows:

- Maintenance and Operation (M&O) \$1,337,958
- Endowment Care (principal and interest) \$1,317,576
- Contracts \$1,134,058
- Capital Projects \$ 402,569
- Stifel – Endowment Care \$ 936,218
- Stifel – Contract Fund \$2,495,425
- WestAmerica Bank \$ 261,042

The motion was made to receive and file this information and make it available to any who may wish to review its contents by Trustee Banks and seconded by Trustee Ezell; 3 ayes, unanimous.

Reinvestment of Contract Fund

The Apollo Real Est. for \$99,499 matured on October 15, 2023. Sandra Wheeler, the Stifel Advisor, provided several options available for investment. The committee authorized the purchase of the JP Morgan Chase & Co. Corporate Bond, with a coupon for 5.45%, a Y-T-M of 5.448%, and a maturity date of 6/23/2028, callable on 06/25 @ 100. The 2nd option would be the Federal Home Ln Mtg Corp with a coupon of 6.05% and a Y-T-M of 5.832% to mature on 10/12/2028, Callable 04/24 @ 100. The District policy requires us to diversify our investments as much as possible within the confines of the law. These exact options may not be available after the Board authorizes the investment. If the selected options are unavailable, Sandra Wheeler will re-invest the funds as close to the Board’s authorized selection as possible.

2022-2023 Audit Review

Chris Albert presented the 2022-2023 draft audit as done by Albert and Associates. He reviewed the status of our funds and described the Endowment Care Spendable and Non-spendable amounts. He reviewed the Balance Sheet and the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances as of June 30, 2023, and the fund balances show the restricted funds. Chris stated that the audit did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that could be considered a material weakness.

The motion to accept the 2022-2023 draft audit and authorize the forwarding of the audit to the County Auditor-Controller was made by Trustee Banks and seconded by Trustee Ezell: 3 ayes, unanimous.

Prevailing Wages Consultant

Manager Caudillo presented to the Board the need for a Prevailing Wage Consultant to follow the compliance of the Contractors hired for the Wasco Automated Irrigation System and the Shafter Section “B” development. CCMI provided a quote of NTE \$6,000, and Kya Group offered to be a “Place Holder” for this and all future projects with a per-project consultant cost; an exact quote was not provided. The company hired would follow the projects from start to finish and ensure the State required Prevailing Wages are paid, and the appropriate documents are filed.

The motion to authorize the acceptance of the bid from CCMI with the NTE \$6,000 was made by Trustee Ezell and seconded by Trustee Banks: 3 ayes, unanimous.

Trustees Comments

Trustee Banks: None.

Trustee Ezell: None

Trustee Braun: None

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:04 p.m. by Chairman Braun. The next regular meeting is scheduled for December 21, 2023.

Signed,

Eliza Caudillo
District Manager