

**Kern County Cemetery District**  
Minutes for

**July 18, 2024**

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

Call to Order: Call to Order at 12:20 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: Claribel Gutierrez and Carl Olsen

Public Comment: Claribel Gutierrez: Field Representative of Assemblywoman, Jasmeet Bains. Interested in serving the community.

Consent Calendar: Includes the approval of the agenda for the current meeting and minutes of the regular Board meeting for June 2024. The payroll warrants for 24/12 through 24/13 were approved. Vouchers, checks, and financial reports for June 2024 were approved. This was done by approval of the consent calendar by motion of Trustee Ezell and seconded by Trustee Banks; 3 ayes, unanimous.

Management Update

- We had 14 services in Shafter and 9 services in Wasco for the month of June 2024. This gives us 295 services for the fiscal year to date. The District is ending the year with a 22% cremation rate. Total services for the prior fiscal year were a total of 318, with a 19% cremation rate.
- The upcoming CAPC Education Meeting will be held at San Luis Obispo on October 11-12, 2024. Trustee Braun, Trustee Ezell, and three staff members, Caudillo, Carender, and Reveles, will be attending the conference.
- The Wasco Cemetery's window air conditioner broke down. Staff attempted to replace the unit and repair the wall. Unfortunately, upon opening the wall, there was extensive termite and water damage. Neufeld Construction Co. was contacted to make emergency repairs, for approximately \$3,200.00 to \$3,500.00.

Budget 2023-24 – Final Review

Final Budget Review – 2024-25, Manager Caudillo brought a balanced budget to the Board for final review. The Board reviewed the preliminary Budget at the June 2024 Board meeting. The Budget was increased from \$2,387,029 to \$2,425,357, and the increase from the preliminary review was due to the need to purchase replacement mowers as the District unexpectedly lost several mowers due to electrical issues. The increase includes funds for two sound systems for the Memorial Day event. The Budget reflects the employee COLA and several Shafter and Wasco Cemetery projects. The Budget continues to reflect estimated burials of 300. This Budget is a working document that the Trustees will review mid-year at a regular meeting. Top priorities for the year will be the development of Section "B" in Shafter, trimming of trees in Wasco, and demolishing the Shafter rental house.

*The motion to accept the Budget of \$2,425,357 was made by Trustee Ezell and seconded by Trustee Banks; 3 ayes, unanimous.*

### SDRMA Bylaw Revisions

The SDRMA Board of Directors has approved a tentative Bylaw revision in draft form. The BOD's asked that the revision be presented to all members for review and possible comments. The primary changes are related to the change in the election process and minor administrative updates. The Board had no comments or questions. Informational – No action

### CSDA Board of Directors Election

The cemetery district is a member of the California Special District Association. As members of the CSDA, every two years, we participate in an election for their Board of Directors. This year's nominees include Patrick Ostly (incumbent) of the North of the River Sanitary District and Dr. Josh Luke of the North Kern-South Tulare Hospital District. After due discussion, the Board chose to vote for Patrick Ostly.

*The motion was made by Trustee Ezell and seconded by Trustee Banks to vote for Patrick Ostly (incumbent). 3 ayes, unanimous.*

### 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 June 30, 2024, the District has \$8,667,569 as a combined investment of all accounts. The District has \$4,918,663 with the County of Kern, \$978,925 with Stifel in the Endowment Care Fund, \$2,598,053 with Stifel in the Contract Fund, and \$171,928 with WestAmerica Bank. The investments have 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)           \$1,811,829
- Endowment Care (principal and interest)   \$1,425,591
- Contracts   \$1,610,354
- Capital Projects                                 \$70,889
- Stifel Endowment Care                         \$978,925
- Stifel Contract Fund                          \$2,598,053
- WestAmerica Bank                             \$171,928

*The motion was made to receive and file the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter investment 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.*

### Annual Reimbursement Report

Each year California Government Code section 53065.5 requires the District annually disclose reimbursements paid to Trustees and staff for the previous fiscal year. The disclosure was received and filed.

*The motion to receive and file the Annual Reimbursement Report and place it on our web page to be made available to the public was made by Trustee Banks and seconded by Trustee Ezell, 3 ayes, unanimous.*

### Holtermann Lease

The cemetery district leases 20 acres in Wasco to Holtermann Farms, and the lease will expire on December 31, 2024. Manager Caudillo has communicated with the Holtermanns and both parties are interested in renewing the lease. Conversations between the Manager, the Superintendent, and the Holtermann family have brought about a tentative agreement as follows:

The Holtermanns would be interested in a 20-year lease with an annual renewal option not to exceed 5 years. The lease is a bare ground lease, and the Holtermann family will either fallow the ground or possibly plant a grain crop for the first/second year to allow the ground to regenerate itself. Almond trees will be planted for the remainder of the lease. Rent will be waived for five years to allow the trees to mature. Lease payments will remain at \$7,000.00, with \$3,500.00 due in April and \$3,500.00 due in August. The Board directed Manager Caudillo to present a lease agreement for review as soon as possible. No Action.

### Reinvestment of Contract Fund

The U S Treasury Note, a Contract Fund investment, will mature on July 31, 2024, for \$179,706.00. Our Investment Policy requires that we diversify our investments as much as possible within the confines of the law. The District will need to reinvest this money in an Agency Bond, Certificate of Deposit, or reinvest in a US Treasury Note.

*The Board recommended investing the funds, plus accrued interest, in the Federal Home Loan Mtg, Agency Bond, Rating Aaa/AA+, Coupon 5.650. Callable 01/25, Maturity 07/29 and Y-T-M 5.534%, provided this investment is still available by the July 31, 2024, maturity date. If not, then the next most similar investment would be acceptable.*

### Exmark Mowers

The District has purchased four (4) Exmark mowers between 2009 to 2020. Two of these mowers are in the shop for repair; one needs to be repaired and is at the SMP shop, and the 2009 is currently operating but has a broken frame that staff has welded together. All of these mowers have an estimated life expectancy of 2,500 hours. The four cemetery-owned Exmark mowers are near or have exceeded 2,500 hours. Quotes for (2) replacement mowers are as follows:

(2) – Cal Turf Exmark with bagging and blower unit attachments  
\$40,453.47

This includes trade-in for 2009 Exmark Mowers, \$1K each.

(2) – Kioti ZXD61 Mowers with bagger \$49,394.00  
No trade-in allowed.

*The Board provided direction to purchase two (2) mowers up to \$50K, as approved by the 2024-25 Budget. No action was taken.*

### Trustees Comments

Trustee Banks: Enjoyed his time on the Board.

Trustee Ezell: None

Trustee Braun: Would like the District to consider the purchase of truck with Man Bucket. Consider hiring an in-house arborist.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm by Chairman Braun. The next regular meeting is scheduled for August 15, 2024.

Signed,

Eliza Caudillo  
District Manager