

**GREENFEILD CEMETERY DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY SEPTEMBER 15TH, 2025
5:30 PM @ 618 APPLE AVE (LIONS HALL)
GREENFIELD, CA 93927**

CALL TO ORDER: TIME: 5:31PM Adjourned: 7:00 PM

ROLL CALL: David Kong (Chair), Beatriz Diaz (Clerk), Raul Rodriguez, Clara Valdivia, James Thorp

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Members of the public will be afforded the opportunity of a **3-minute** public comment *for items not on the agenda*, and may do so when the board opens public comments. “The board will normally not respond to public comments.” *If an item is already on the agenda and you want to make a public comment, please save your comment and make it when the public comment for the item is presented.*

1. Public comments:

- **Mister Gomez** – Spoke about his daughter – wanting to put a bench in and were informed that the benches were on hold for right now. David let the individual know that they’re not accepting benches. Clara informed him in Spanish. The board stated they were working on the policy – this would happen via the Cemetery subcommittee. The conversation was had in Spanish.
- **Ruben Prado** – Inquired about a position at the Cemetery District. He was informed that there was a position possibly opening and it was up to discussion. The conversation went on in Spanish and that he’d need to turn in his application.

2. Approval of Minutes for August 18th, 2025.

Motion by: **Jim Thorp** made a motion to approve the minutes. Second by: **Clara Validiva** seconded the motion.

Motion: The motion was unanimously approved by the board by all stating “aye” when prompted.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT + PROJECT MANAGER REPORT – JANET THORP:

A. The oral report will be presented by Janet Thorp.

- The website total views was reported as: **3,639** to date.
- Informed the board updates were being made to the City Website as per working with Jesus Perez and Galilea Silva with the Greenfield Recreation Department, so as updates are made to the Greenfield Cemetery Website it was easier for individuals to navigate.
- Met with Johnny and the project of block I & P was discussed: adding lawn to the side of the block(s) 6 inches of lawn and 2 inches of border.
- Updated that receipt book scans were being made, 480 entries were made to the cemsites software, and the inventory mapping project was being closed to being finalized. Presented David with the process.
- Organized permits of dispositions with original receipts after finding them in the office. Adjusted the filing system in the office for current files to be in the top drawer (last 10 years) and the remaining years to be below. Found old paperwork and removed it from the office.
- Made the board aware that Phyllis Gonzales will be retiring on October 15th, officially and asked board permission to get her a gift card of the sorts – pitched the Garden House.
- Arroyo Seco Wireless (Mattie Barrington) reached out and inquired about the possibility of putting cameras into the cemetery. Just brought it up to the board for reference.

- Johnnhy and I discussed having a clean up again at the cemetery if the board was open. Originally pitched November 15th, but the board suggested a month earlier to avoid the possibility of rain being an issue. Also, it would be before The Day of the Dead (Dia De Los Muertos).
 - Thanked Johnny and Daniel for team work over the last month.
- B. Board Comments & Questions**
- Beatriz Diaz inquired about electricity for the cameras.
 - Raul Rodriguez inquired about the cleanup day and what it would look like and was informed it was for community volunteers.
- C. Public Comments**
- No public comments were made on this report.
- D. Final Comments**
- The date for the clean-up was finalized for mid-October.

4. MANAGER REPORT – JOHNNY MATA:

- A. The oral report will be presented by Johnny Mata.**
- Reported upon request he's been flipping headstones in the back upon request – turned redirected. Stated does it while the family is there.
 - He placed some grass in the back.
 - Began mapping out the project for blocks I & P. He stated he could go to Voelkers and pick out lawn for this project.
 - Excavator came in last week and it's been a big plus. Johnny is going to have Mikes Towing to move it to the other cemetery so they could use it for an up and coming burial.
 - Community workers: WAP workers and United Way have been a big asset.
- B. Board Comments & Questions**
- The excavator was delivered to Oak Park Cemetery for Johnny and Daniel to learn how to use the machinery with plenty of space.
 - Raul had a concern that Daniel was working by himself at the Cemetery. He seemed to want to change the schedule so he was not working on. His concern was there needs to be 8 hours of work.
 - Jim wanted to know what the concern was with an employee working alone. Stated that Jesus Mireles worked on his own.
 - Raul inquired about burials and Daniel's schedule – prompting the questions of: does he work on his days off and if he trades with Anival because Johnny knows ahead of time when burials are meant to happen.
 - Four headstones were completed and two were to happen this week. He had three burials since last month's meeting. All full body burials.
 - Quoted a leaf blower was \$549.00 at Ace Hardware. Clara stated she had one and she was going to donate it to the Cemetery.
- C. Public Comments**
- Anival made the board aware that he was not being called by the cemetery manager when it came to these schedules switches.
- D. Final Comments**
- The conclusion was that Johnny agreed to call and that better communication needs to be made in terms of burials so they don't bury people alone.
 - Beatriz informed the board his days off are Tuesday and Wednesday.
 - David stated that there needs to be a call, email, or text be made as a courtesy.

- David inquired about the edging and the consensus was that Johnny was telling individuals the project was going to happen soon and he had measured it out. David stated he'd try and get the border to him.
- Raul inquired about headstones and moving them if there was a burial. – Johnny stated not always. Asked about a Martinez burial about a headstone that was moved and it was not placed back for many days. There was communication with the family due to the possibility of that stone needing to be replaced. Stated it had been close to a week.
- Beatriz brought up the flipping of the stones and there was a letter written, a waiver of liability, and there was no vote. The board decided to put an ad in the paper. The board felt that families should be informed.
- Anival had mapped out the back sections.
- The information was agreed upon that should be in the paper and put on the website due it needed to be communicated into the paper.
- May need waivers if there is a special request.

Motion Adopted: No.

- The board will discuss the ash and full body plot policy, and amending to allow three ashes on a single or double body plot/vault.

A. The item will be presented by Janet Thorp.

- Last meeting Johnny and Janet brought up a woman wanting to bury the ashes of her loved one's in a plot in the Oak Park believed to be a full body plot with two ashes currently interned. Pending probing the board discussed adding/allowing a third and modifying the policy.

B. Board Comments & Questions

- Clara Valdivia stated that we had discussed it previously.
- Raul Rodriguez stated that he was for it due to the fact that we are running out of space, and we could always readjust the policy as necessary.

C. Public Comments

- No public comment was made on this item.

D. Final Comments

- No further comments were made on this item.

Motion Adopted: Yes

Motion by: Jim Thorp made a motion to adopt a third ash be allowed. This would amend the current policy of two ashes in a full body plot (single/double vaults). **Seconded by:** Clara Valdivia seconded the motion.

Motion: The board unanimously passed this motion by stating "aye" when prompted.

- The board will discuss Greenfield Cemetery District equipment update on the excavator.

A. The item will be presented by James Thorp.

- Jim informed the board the excavator was delivered on Thursday – September 11th, 2025. He has the contract in front of him. Everything looks good. Informed the board that there was taxes to be paid \$1,100. The down payment needs be \$13,110. The check has already been made from the Rec District to the Cemetery District to purchase half of the backhoe and that is what will be used for the down payment. There will be 58 payments of \$906.35 and there will be one of \$906.25 at the end. That will be the end of the lease and then the District can purchase it for \$1.00. He'll sign it and return it tomorrow.

B. Board Comments & Questions

- No comments were made on this item.

- C. Public Comments
 - No public comments were made on this item.
 - D. Final Comments
 - No further comments were made on this item.
- The board will discuss the employee handbook and consider the possibility of adopting; pending additions from the board.
 - A. The item will be presented by Janet Thorp.
 - The board was all sent the Employee Handbook created by our lawyer Brian Hughes at BBK Law. It was reported they went over it last month as he had the majority of it completed minus some fill in the blanks and any questions or concerns.
 - B. Board Comments & Questions
 - Raul inquired about the dress code and specifically mentioned work boots. Asked about steal tow.
 - Jim stated that steal tow wasn't maybe necessary but work boots would be a good idea.
 - David suggested recommending to workman's comp that they wear appropriate shoes and Johnny stated that dressing appropriately is provided via the programs.
 - Jim stated that they weren't a part of the employee handbook.
 - Beatriz inquired about the work hours being 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM.
 - Raul suggested for the vacation time we supply one week paid vacation for the first year for full time employees (management). It could be adjusted accordingly when it comes to accumulation of vacation hours. Groundskeepers don't get vacation.
 - In terms of breaks it's 10 minutes every two hours – but the board consensus is it should be 15 minutes as per conversation.
 - C. Public Comments
 - No public comments were brought up on this item.
 - D. Final Comments
 - The board suggested paying the employees for Christmas and New Years – Clara and Jim spoke on that.
 - Raul suggested employees could move their schedules around as to have no paid holidays, but allow staff to take those days off. The handbook should state no paid holidays.
 - Clara wanted to pay Christmas and New Year's.
 - A bonus was made last year.
 - David stated that someone should go over the employee handbook with the employees.
 - Beatriz brought up SDI up to the board and if they'd consider it. Jim and Clara were both surprised. There was confusion on why the board does not pay into it. This would be a question for Brian.

Motion Adopted: No.
- The board will discuss the possibility of hiring help at the Cemetery – review description and title.
 - A. The item will be presented by Janet Thorp.
 - Per last meeting upon the board's request Janet reported she reviewed the previous job description for the Manager and modified it for an assistant manager and or groundskeeper for both the Cemetery and Recreation District individually as directed in the previous meeting. David and her reviewed it at our agenda meeting on September 8th, and it was sent to all board members.

B. Board Comments & Questions

- Raul made the suggestion again that the employee be for both Districts. Three days at the cemetery and three days at the park; part time, so he wouldn't work over time. It'd be a good incentive.
- David's thoughts were that someone would be available in case Johnny needs help in case Daniel is not available and on call.
- Raul stated that assistant manager would replace would the groundskeeper position, and so Daniel's position would be eliminated. Stated would pay a little higher than minimum wage.
- Jim inquired about who the employee would answer to.
- Raul stated he'd be at the park three days and the cemetery three days and answering to the managers. Stated it's worth a try and it'd help each manager and a lot more would get accomplished.
- Beatriz stated that there should be a full time employee for both Districts and it's important with how much work is at both Districts.
- Janet stated that was how it was written because that was how it was written in the minutes.
- Jim stated that is what he understood was going to happen per conversation at the last meeting. He didn't know that the same person was going to work at both Districts.
- Raul stated it was an option. Raul stated he didn't think it was necessary.
- This was stated that it was a long time ago how that system was working with a shared employee by both Jim and Beatriz.
- Raul stated that only 40-50 burials were happening per year.
- Jim stated that means 400-500 more people were buried which means that many more headstones and plots were being needed to maintain. The workload has not decreased.
- Raul stated there wasn't enough work for two full time employee – him personally.
- The average number was requested.
- Clara stated that we should start it three and three.
- Raul stated that it was always easier to fire than hire.

C. Public Comment.

- No public comment was made on this item.

D. Final Comments

- The board asked Janet to research before they were comfortable making a decision.
- Raul stated that one day someone from the county came and gave the Districts a presentation and they used ours as a model. In a way this is how efficient Greenfield is.
- Clara stated that we have two young people right now.
- Jim asked if there was a concern if we're going to spend too much money on employees.
- Raul stated that would always be a concern for him with spending. Brought up the Rec District.
- Jim stated this wasn't the Rec District meeting, but did make a reference that there hasn't been money spent at that park for many years and it should have already been spent.
- Johnny brought up the water and was reminded that would be discussed during the Rec District meeting, but the well would need to be replaced.
- Raul brought up the balance of funds for the Rec District and both Clara and him further noted that they stated the funds needed to be spent. Raul went on to say the employees were low after so many years and the District wasn't working on

equipment, maintenance, and that money stayed there for a while. Now we're using it. He doesn't think that means we should hire more employees.

- Jim stated that he wasn't concerned about the employee spending as a board member himself.
- Clara stated that we should start three and three – her suggestion.
- Beatriz disagreed and stated we should bring it back after discussing with local cemeteries.
- Raul stated any information is good, but it shouldn't dictate how we decide.
- David inquired about the groundskeeper position and that individual being replaced.
- Raul stated yes, we would no longer be there.
- Jim stated – really all is your doing is replacing Daniel and paying someone more money.
- A couple board members stated yes.
- Some believe that you're paying someone more to do the same job but others state no it's not the same job.
- David suggested having Janet bring it back to the board and it was a discussion to not make a final decision.

Motion Adopted: No

- The board will further discuss employee overtime amid board members concerns establish policy (employees & manager).
 - A. The item will be presented by David Kong.
 - David said he guessed there was a concern about working overtime.
 - Janet inquired how about establishing overtime and policy. How did the board want to go about that process?
 - B. Board Comments & Questions
 - Raul states that the employee handbook states that the manager needs to communicate with the board. It also cites consequences if the hours are not approved.
 - Beatriz said that some sort of communication should be made.
 - Since the employee handbook has not been adopted it was suggested that the manager calls a board member about overtime.
 - Raul referenced overtime of 12-13 years of overtime and discussed that Saturday community workers come in and they should work our schedule. Stated that Anival (park manager) should not work overtime due to community workers. Went on to reference Daniel and Anival are both there at the park, so it should be organized accordingly.
 - Jim stated that he thinks the managers should go on salary and it would negate this issue. It was done for a long time and this board decided to put the managers on hourly and he didn't understand why they weren't salary. If they needed to work the overtime it wouldn't be that big of a deal.
 - Clara stated that she thought it was a great idea the managers go on salary and the reference to how it was in the past as right. She agreed that to avoid all the overtime we should implement salary.
 - Raul stated that it was discussed and they couldn't figure out what the salary would be and there wasn't a Brian to confirm. Salaried employee's need to be paid an equivalent of \$35.00 an hour. Raul said that they have to do administrative work. Raul stated that the cemetery may be able be maintained as a 40 hour work week.

Referenced Hector the park manager as not working over 40 hours on salary. We have to ask what a salaried employee does. Stated he knows that it is \$35.00 an hour equivalent.

- Jim stated that after employees were brought on as hourly – they put in the hours required (40 hours). Jim stated that he wasn't sure the \$35.00 was the case due to having spoken to a couple attorneys and it could be a package; referenced the house as a possibility.
- Raul stated that he doesn't think that the Districts are complicated enough to avoid overtime.

C. Public Comments

- Anival was going to make a comment about the overtime, but was reminded that this was the Cemetery District meeting by Clara Validiva and Jim Thorp.

D. Final Comments

- Beatriz brought up that four hours of overtime as well.
- Johnny said it was due to a burial.
- Raul inquired about where was Daniel and he should not bury people alone.
- Jim stated that all his employees get overtime.
- David stated as long as people communicate as to why.
- Clara stated they should call David.

Motion Adopted: No

- David attended the CSDA Conference in Monterey, CA on behalf of the District.
 - A. The item will be presented by David Kong.**
 - David stated he'd do the presentation at another time due to the meeting running long. He went on the scholarship and that the District saved around \$1,300.00 - \$1,400 dollars.
 - B. Board Comments & Questions**
 - No comments were made on this item.
 - C. Public Comments**
 - No public comments were made on this item.
 - D. Final Comments**
 - No further comments were made on this item.

Motion Adopted: No

5. FINAL BOARD COMMENTS:

- Each member of the board will take 1 minute to finalize comments and introduce items for October.
 - Jim stated that we should maybe need to have meetings on different nights because Beatriz suggested and item for the Rec Board Meeting and was reminded it was the Cemetery District meeting.

6. CLOSED SESSION:

- PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT (Gov. Code section 54957(b)(1).) Title: General Manger (District), and Salary.
 - Janet excused herself from the meeting and Beatriz took notes for the board to review.

7. THE BOARD WILL OPEN THE MEETING BACK UP AND REPORT WHAT HAPPENED IN CLOSED SESSION & MAKE ANY MOTIONS AS NECESSARY.

- The meeting was opened back up and the only thing to report was back pay from a raise given to Janet back in 2024. They believed it happened during closed session sometime around July.