

# Rainier Cemetery District

## Regular Monthly Meeting

October 17, 2022

The regular meeting was called to order by Janice Carstensen, Board Chair, at 5:00pm at 24952 Alston Rd (cemetery office), Rainier, OR; Board member(s) present: Scott Falconer and Rick Fletcher

Board member(s) absent: None

Cyndi Warren, District Bookkeeper/Manager - present.

### Visitors:

#### **Sharon McGlone**

Mrs. McGlone suggested the District investigate the 7% government discount for large purchases.

Mrs. McGlone wanted further clarification regarding the 'law' to open and/or keep the gate open at Neer City Cemetery that was cited at the June meeting.

Why are there fire trucks parked at the cemetery office? Director Fletcher stated that the fire station behind the cemetery office had some concrete work done and while the concrete was curing the fire district needed a close and secure location to store the fire trucks for easy access to the volunteers in this area to be able to respond to an emergency. It is mutual aid between two special districts, with no liability to the cemetery district.

Mrs. McGlone wanted to know how many other District's Cyndi managed? One.

Mrs. McGlone stated that the plug needs to be pulled.

Mrs. McGlone stated that Cyndi, the District Manager, fired Kevin.

Mrs. McGlone wanted to know how long Director Fletcher knew Cyndi. He stated about 3 years. She then asked the board how long they had known Director Fletcher and they stated since he started coming to the meetings.

#### **James McGlone**

Mr. McGlone requested the job duties of the cemetery manager; Director Carstensen stated record the minutes, work with staff to set schedules.

Mr. McGlone asked if it was a conflict of interest that the cemetery manager was also the person who managed the budget? Director Carstensen stated that no, she did not believe this to be a conflict.

Mr. McGlone wanted to know how much the District Manager is paid. \$1,575 minimum a month per contract.

#### **Carol St. Onge**

Mrs. St. Onge stated that if precedence's were going to be cited, that having the gate at Neer City Cemetery locked for the last 20 years, should be considered.

Mrs. St. Onge stated that they would like to see the line items in the budgets more specific to each employee, positions, sub-contractors, etc.

#### **David St. Onge**

Mr. St. Onge was upset that the maintenance and safety with regards to the ruts in the access road at Neer City had not been taken care of.

Mr. St. Onge also stated that they are not seeing 3 quotes/estimates for things being done in the District and stated that transparency is (a curse word was used); he was asked to curb his language.

Mr. St. Onge questioned the Board's decision and process to appoint Rick Fletcher to the vacant board position since he and Mr. McGlone both expressed an interest in the position.

Mr. St. Onge stated that they will be looking to replace Director Carstensen at the next election.

Mr. St. Onge stated that he and Mr. McGlone are speaking to everyone they can to make sure the District does not pass the 5-year operating levy again.

Mr. St. Onge stated the board of directors needed a wakeup call.

Mr. St. Onge asked for a copy of the minutes, it was stated that once they are approved, they are posted on the website and can be accessed at no charge, however, to receive a paper copy would require a records request and would only be minutes that were approved. Margaret Magruder stated that was not correct. Director Fletcher, during this conversation, handed his copy of the minutes to Mr. St. Onge and when Board Chair Carstensen requested that he hand them back, the request was refused. He did return them once he had read them.

It was stated that in the future, that the unapproved minutes could be posted to the website before the monthly meetings and later reposted as approved.

Mr. St. Onge stated that use of the County crew should be re-evaluated as they waste a lot of time when at the cemeteries and having people of that nature who are already in trouble at the cemeteries is not a good idea.

Mr. St. Onge stated that the District has bodies buried where they are not supposed to be at Neer City Cemetery and other cemeteries.

Mr. St. Onge stated that Kevin isn't working and would come back to the District, except that Cyndi, the District Manager, either would not let him or he wouldn't come back as long as she was here.

**Shirley Roberts**

**Delyla Laughlin**

**Amy Painter**

**Monica Hackenburg**

Mrs. Hackenburg stated that for fear of the district employee being fired, as has been threatened, that she would not say who, but that Cyndi, the District Manager, has stated that volunteers are not welcome on District property.

Mrs. Hackenburg wanted to know how much the maintenance staff makes an hour. \$21.50/hr

She stated that maybe the District should consider a raise for manual labor, as her grandson makes \$19/hr to pick groceries off the shelf at Walmart.

**Margaret Magruder**

**Leona Zimmer**

Wanted to give her 5 minutes to Mr. Dave St. Onge.

Ms. Zimmer inquired about the headstones down over the bank at Neer City Cemetery; she stated they are to the right of the access road with the ruts toward the County road.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Bottle Drop Account**

The new bottle drop account balance is: \$112.20.

The question was asked what this money is used for, and it was explained that it is used to keep the fridge stocked of drinks for the staff.

#### **Purchase of new mower**

Due to a misunderstanding at the time of being ordered and the cost being more than \$3,000 than originally discussed, this project will be cancelled at this time. New quotes will be gathered as time allows. As asked by a member of the public, the 7% government discount will be investigated as well.

### **Headstones at Neer City Cemetery**

Ms. Zimmer asked if anything had been done to locate these headstones, like speaking to Kevin Crawford, and it was stated by the District Manager, that yes, Kevin was asked about these headstones and he stated that he had not seen them and had heard this ‘rumor’ for years himself, from Sexton’s before him.

Ms. Zimmer stated that the headstones should be to the right of the access road with the ruts, down the bank towards the County road.

### **Murray Hill Cemetery**

It has been discovered by some recent land development in the area that one of the columbaria and the memorial garden are not on cemetery property. However, the company doing the land development has been in contact and are likely to deed this portion of the cemetery to the District as they do not want to disturb cemetery operations.

It was discovered that the City of Clatskanie (when they had ownership of the cemetery) entered into an agreement with Herb Clifford, the now deceased previous owner of the property, for a lot line adjustment at his expense of this particular piece of property for 6 plots in the cemetery: however, Mr. Clifford did not follow through with his end of the written agreement.

The board suggested that a letter be drafted to the family of Herb Clifford to determine whether they can complete the original agreement of a lot line adjustment at their expense OR return the unused plots.

***Nothing new to report on this situation at the time of the meeting.***

### **Address to the public regarding recent issues (Updates)**

Survey of Neer City Cemetery- KLS Survey has been contacted. ***Nothing new to report at the time of this meeting.***

District’s Shop & Office Building Safety – The fire marshal has been on site and requested that a maximum occupancy sign be hung (49 people) – ***completed.***

The use of some extension cords and/or power strips be addressed by an electrician. ***Rawhide Electric has been contracted to perform the required electrical work; nothing has been scheduled as of tonight’s meeting.***

Volunteering with the District – While the District’s equipment is likely to be unavailable for use due to being used by staff, the District welcomes and appreciates all volunteering opportunities when properly coordinated with District staff.

### **Policy Addendum – Cemetery Hours of Operation for Public Use**

Director Falconer made a motion and Director Fletcher seconded that the policy addendum stating dawn to dusk hours of operation for all district cemeteries be approved as presented, motion carried; all in favor.

***Janice – yes, Scott – yes, Rick - yes***

A sign design to be placed at all 12 cemeteries is being drafted with a local sign company.

### **Drone Pictures of Cemeteries**

Matt Hadley provided some sample pictures; however, he had mentioned that he wanted to provide better pictures, but they hadn’t been provided by the time of tonight’s meeting.

***It was suggested by a visitor at the tonight’s meeting that instead of spending the money on this project, that the District use Google maps.***

### **Neer City Cemetery Road Improvement Project**

This project has been split into 3 phases due to budgetary concerns.

Phase 1 – Placing 11-14 large boulders at the upper parking area and down below to prevent driving access to the undeveloped road to the back of the cemetery.

Phase 2 – Scraping the grass and adding more gravel to the road and parking area up above.

Phase 3 – Building a road and parking area on the flat area off the entry road.

Coordination with the contractors is still being worked out, so there are no estimates/quotes for discussion at this time.

### **Murray Hill Cemetery (Mr. & Mrs. Green) – Water Drainage Issue**

The new culvert has been installed and the ditches cleaned out by the County. We are just waiting for Kynsi Construction to return from working on an out of state project to meet and give us a quote to have a water bar installed at the entrance and exits, that will direct the water running off these roads to the ditches and culverts.

It will be added to the regular maintenance schedule for this cemetery that the ditches be checked, and any debris build up at the culverts be cleaned out and once the water bars have been installed, they will also be kept free of debris so as not to block the flow of water into the ditches.

### **Preventative Tree Maintenance with Clearview Tree Service**

The District Manager did a walkthrough with Mr. Shulda at Murray Hill (\$5,175), Maplewood (\$7,100) and Cedar Hill (\$3,495) cemeteries to discuss and identify trees with possible safety concerns and/or are impeding the work of the maintenance staff.

Since two of the estimates are over the \$5,000 threshold, it was suggested that the District contact Dorian Graff, Titan Tree Care, LLC., to get another estimate. 360-747-3712

### **Deputy State Fire Marshal Report of Shop & Office**

There are some extension cords being used, where there should be some outlets hardwired. Power strips must be plugged directly into an outlet, not another power strip or extension cord.

***The required 50% deposit has been mailed and they will be contacting with us with a scheduled work date soon. Nothing new to report as of tonight's meeting.***

## **New Business:**

Director Falconer made a motion and Director Fletcher seconded that September's meeting minutes be approved as presented; all in favor. **Janice – yes, Scott – yes, Rick - yes**

Director Fletcher made a motion and Director Falconer seconded that the bills be approved and paid as presented; all in favor.

**Janice – yes, Scott – yes, Rick - yes**

### **Board of Directors Meeting Rules**

Director Fletcher made a motion and Director Falconer seconded that the Board of Directors Meeting Rules being accepted as presented; all in favor. **Janice – yes, Scott – yes, Rick – yes**

The rules will be posted on the District's website.

### **Discuss the purchase of second district vehicle**

Director Fletcher, as the mechanic for Clatskanie Fire, was willing to take a look at a 2009 Ford 150XLT 4x4 Super Cab with 144,000 miles, to assess if it might be a good purchase for the District as an additional vehicle.

The asking price is \$9,000, he felt that based on some items that would need to be fixed and/or replaced on the truck (tires, AC unit), that an offer of \$7,000 would be a fair price.

It was decided that until the District's property tax funding comes in next month, this would be tabled.

**Maintenance & Office Staff Reports:**

**Office Staff**

Misty has been doing research on a plot organizing program for the District. She has narrowed it down to two companies; CemSites (\$18,500) and Plotbox (\$18,281), they are both comparable with regards to start up and annual costs, however CemSites seems to have a better customer service option. While the initial costs are significant there are ways to cut some of the initial costs, as well as the option to start with 1-2 cemeteries and add others as time and money allows.

The board asked that Misty come to the October or November meeting and provide feedback on why and how this kind of project and expense would benefit the District and the public.

***Misty was unable to attend tonight's meeting, so is this being tabled until November.***

**Maintenance Staff**

The cemetery maintenance rotation seems to be working. Now that mowing is slowing down, the staff has begun work on the perimeters of the cemeteries and tackling the weeds/blackberries, as well as other maintenance issues that need to be addressed.

**Board Reports**

Director Falconer

Asked Margaret Magruder about the order of commissioner's meetings and how they were handled; if the commissioner's dealt with hostility like at this meeting and that listening to the public is very important.

Director Carstensen

Stated that she does not understand the continued hostility at the meetings.

She wanted it noted how much she appreciates the District Manager.

She understands how important the role of the board of directors is to listen to the public and the staff and to make informed decisions with regards the District.

Director Fletcher

He felt this was a productive meeting but does not appreciate or understand the continued hostility at these meetings.

He asked for a board workshop to go through the budget to familiarize himself with the District's budget and to discuss prioritizing maintenance projects, bringing back the Sexton's position, the possibility of an additional District vehicle, as well as the plot organization program.

Meeting adjourned at 6:46pm. Next regular meeting will be:

**Monday, November 21, 2022, at 5:00pm**

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_