



APPROVED
CEMETERY SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF MEETING
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
FIRE STATION 2 ADMINISTRATION/HQ
528 NW 2nd STREET, FORT LAUDERDALE, FL 33311
THURSDAY, MAY 9, 2024 – 3:30 P.M.

Members	Attendance	Cumulative Attendance	
		03/2024 through 02/2025	
		Present	Absent
Mark Van Rees, Chair	P	1	1
Patricia Zeiler, Vice Chair	A	1	1
Scott Busa	P	2	0
Chelsea Krebs	A	1	1
Fred Nesbitt	P	1	1
Dennis Ulmer	P	2	0
Michael Watson	A	1	1

City Staff

Stacy Spates, Parks & Recreation
 Kenya Baker, Parks & Recreation
 Amy Jean Baptiste, Deputy Director, Parks & Recreation
 Raymond Myers, Parks & Recreation

Guests

Dylan Smith, Truist
 Skeet Jarnigan, Resident
 Karen Cruitt, Recording Secretary, Prototype-Inc.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Van Rees called the meeting to order at 3:31 p.m.

A. Roll Call

Roll was called.

B. City Ordinance No.C-09-05, Quorum Requirement (Discussion)

It was determined a quorum was present.

C. Approval of Meeting Minutes for March 14, 2024 (Discussion/Motion)

Motion made by Mr. Busa, seconded by Mr. Ulmer, to approve the meeting minutes for March 14, 2024. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously. (4-0)

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. Cemetery Software Update (Discussion)

Ms. Spates announced the new Deputy Director, Parks and Recreation, Amy Jean Baptiste. Ms. Baptiste introduced herself and provided an overview of her background, including oversight of the cemeteries of Delray Beach.

Chair Van Rees asked additional guests to introduce themselves. Dylan Smith of Truist, Skeet Jarnigan, member of public, and Raymond Myers, Parks Manager, all introduced themselves.

Ms. Spates noted that there was no significant update, but documentation has been provided to the City Attorney's Office. She noted additional conversations within the next week or so.

Mr. Ulmer inquired about the duration since the vendor was hired. Ms. Spates explained that the contract was awarded in October 2020, with discussions commencing in January 2021. Chair Van Rees pointed out that one issue was the low number of bids received. Mr. Nesbitt suggested adopting the same system used by another city. Chair Van Rees concurred and briefly mentioned the HMIS system.

B. Sunset Mausoleum Update (Discussion)

Mr. Myers provided an update. He noted a vendor, Sargaris, Corp, was selected and the contract was being finalized.

Ms. Spates inquired about the warranty on mausoleums. Chair Van Rees replied the warranty is three years, which is standard.

Mr. Ulmer reminded the Board they previously requested a presentation from the vendor. Ms. Spates affirmed.

C. Administration of the Fort Lauderdale Merchandise Trust with CFS (Discussion/Motion)

Ms. Spates mentioned that the City Attorney's Office had a conversation with the attorney for Carriage Funeral Services regarding the next steps. She highlighted that the City Attorney also contacted the State's Chief Counsel to discuss the City's potential application for a pre-need license. However, there was a concern about the risk involved, as obtaining the license might result in the City losing its exemption. She hoped to provide an additional update in July.

Discussion ensued about Chapter 497, filing a complaint, and liability.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Perpetual Care Trust Fund Investment Review/Truist Bank (Discussion)

Mr. Dylan Smith, Truist Bank, reviewed the following: Economic Review and Outlook; Performance Summary (as of March 31, 2024); Magnificent 7; Forward Earning Estimate; Economy; Truist Investments; Cemetery Portfolios; Portfolio Composition; Periods Ending March 31 and April 20, 2024; and Manager Performance.

He pointed out the increased rates, which posed challenges for those on a fixed income. He remarked that all sectors were showing positive trends, except for real estate, which was encountering stagnant rates. He emphasized that the market would likely react to the upcoming election, leading to variability and vulnerability, but reassured that the portfolio was designed for the long-term.

B. Quarterly Maintenance Expenditures Code of Ordinances Chapter 10 – Section 10.47 of percentage set aside (Discussion)

Ms. Spates highlighted that Commissioner Herbst raised a concern regarding the allocation of 19% set aside, considering that the State only mandates 10%. He requested the City Commission to deliberate on the possibility of reducing this percentage. She asked the Board for feedback.

Chair Van Nees sought clarification on Commissioner Herbst's rationale. Ms. Spates clarified that Commissioner Herbst opposed allocating 19% towards the corpus, which cannot be touched.

Chair Van Nees said he does not fully understand Commissioner Herbst's thought process and asked for more information.

Mr. Ulmer inquired about a joint meeting with the City Commission. Chair Van Nees recalled discussing it but no formal request was ever made.

Mr. Nesbitt inquired about the operating fund expenses. Ms. Spates clarified that no support is provided from the City's General Fund, and they are an enterprise fund.

Mr. Nesbitt asked why they no longer approve monthly maintenance reimbursements. Ms. Spates explained the previous City Manager directed them to cease seeking reimbursements, spend down, and to allow the perpetual care fund to grow.

Ms. Spates suggested that Mr. Nesbitt, as Commissioner Herbst's appointee, should engage in further discussion with Commissioner Herbst to gather additional information.

Chair Van Nees reiterated his desire to know more about the thought process about the 19%.

Mr. Ulmer would like to know the City's Commission's desire to expand or future plans.

A discussion followed regarding niche banks. Mr. Myers offered to provide information on the topic at the next meeting.

Motion made by Mr. Ulmer, seconded by Mr. Nesbitt, to redesignate some of the private estates locations at Evergreen Cemetery to columbariums. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)

C. Other Business

Mr. Busa asked about pets within cemeteries. Chair Van Rees noted advisement by police and park rangers that there are designated areas on the beach with picnic tables. Ms. Spates noted the City Commission are discussing and clarified that service animals are always permitted.

Mr. Ulmer stated they can ask the City Commission to make cemeteries exempt.

Ms. Jean Baptiste mentioned that the proposal would be revisited by the City Commission in June, with an anticipation of scaling it back to a few designated parks.

In response to Mr. Busa's question, Mr. Myers confirmed resealed roads at Lauderdale and Sunset. Mr. Busa voiced worry that Evergreen couldn't be secured during the night due to ongoing paving activities.

Mr. Ulmer raised the question of whether a motion was necessary for the City to proceed with resolving the software issue given the extended timeframe. Ms. Spates affirmed that Ms. Jean Baptiste is actively managing the situation.

D. Communication to the City Commission

None.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING: Thursday, July 11, 2024 - 3:30 P.M.