

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District
Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
Friday, February 13, 2026
8:00 a.m.

A meeting of the Governing Board of the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District (“District”) was held at the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Executive Building at 44801 Village Ct., Suite 104, Palm Desert, CA 92260 on Friday, February 13, 2026, at 8:00 a.m.

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, February 9, 2026, at the following locations:

1. CVPCD Administrative Office – 82895 Avenue 52, Coachella, CA 92236
2. CVPCD Executive Office – 44801 Village Ct., Suite 104, Palm Desert, CA 92260
3. The CVPCD website – <http://coachellacemetery.org>

Chair Ernesto Rosales called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m., those in attendance were as follows:

Trustees present:

Ernesto Rosales, Chair
Judy Vossler, Vice Chair
Marcos Coronel, Trustee
Bruce Underwood, Trustee
John Rios, Trustee

Additional participants:

Josh Bonner, General Manager
Sherry Winder, Finance Manager/Clerk of the Board
Carlos Campos, General Counsel
Jayson Braude, Kiley & Associates *(via Zoom)*
Alaynè Marie Sampson, CTP, Chandler Asset Management *(via Zoom)*

Additional participants for Public Comment:

Yvonne Gonzalez of Indio
Jonathan Silva, Conserve LandCare
Shannon Speratos, Conserve LandCare
Jason Jackson, Southwest Landscape & Maintenance

FLAG SALUTE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Two anonymous public comments were received and distributed to the Board of Trustees.

Yvonne Gonzalez of Indio addressed the Board with concerns about cemetery rules and regulations, including mowing schedules and headstone care and replacement procedures.

Jonathan Silva and Shannon Speratos of Conserve LandCare addressed the Board regarding Item 3.1.

Jason Jackson of Southwest Landscape & Maintenance also addressed the Board regarding Item 3.1.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions to the agenda.

1. PRESENTATIONS

1.1 Presentation by Jayson Braude, Kiley & Associates

Road Funding Update

Jayson Braude of Kiley & Associates provided an update on road funding, reporting that President Trump signed the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) funding into law, which includes \$1 million for CVPCD. He stated HUD will administer the funds and will provide guidance on next steps, including whether the District must rebid the road construction project now that federal funding has been approved. Chair Rosales and GM Bonner thanked Mr. Braude for his assistance and noted the \$1 million is expected to cover more than two-thirds of the remaining project cost.

1.2 Presentation by Alaynè Marie Sampson, CTP, Chandler Asset Management

Quarterly Investment Review

Alaynè Sampson of Chandler Asset Management presented an economic update and quarterly investment review, including options for investing \$1.1 million previously reserved for the road project. Board discussion ensued, with direction to hold \$300,000 for the District's share of the road improvement project and to invest the remaining funds in staggered maturities to maintain access as needed. The Board thanked Alaynè for her presentation.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

2.1 Trustee Minutes

- a. Board Meeting – January 9, 2026

2.2 Finance and Administration

- a. Approval of Expenditures – Checks and ACH transactions as detailed (December 2025 and January 2026)
- b. Investment Report (December 2025 and January 2026)
- c. Budget to Actual (December 2025 and January 2026)

2.3 Temporary Extension of CPA Services

Approval of agreement with Eide Bailly LLP

Staff Recommendation: Approve the amendment letter from Eide Bailly LLP extending the timeline of the District's accounting and audit services engagement through April 15, 2026, and authorize the General Manager to execute the agreement.

Financial Analysis: This amendment extends the timeline of the existing engagement and does not modify the previously approved scope of work. Any costs associated with completion of the FY 2024/2025 audit remain within the framework of the existing agreement. Failure to complete the audit within the required timeframe could result in additional administrative burden and potential compliance impacts.

2.4 Cal OES Authorized Agent Resolution and Signature Authority

Federal and state public assistance funding (FEMA)

Staff Recommendation: Authorize the Board Chair to execute Cal OES Forms OES-FPD-130 and, if required, OES-FPD130SA, designating Authorized Agents and establishing signature authority for purposes of federal and state Public Assistance funding eligibility.

Financial Analysis: This item is administrative and procedural. No fiscal impact is associated with approval of the authorization documents. Failure to maintain current authorization may result in delayed reimbursements or loss of eligibility for disaster assistance funding.

Discussion: Vice Chair Vossler complimented Clerk Winder on the quality of the minutes.

Motion: Coronel - Move for approval

Second: Underwood

Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios

Abstain: None

No: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

3. ACTION ITEMS

3.1 Award of Landscape Contract

Consideration of proposals received in response to RFP and follow-up negotiations

Staff Recommendation: As directed, staff has negotiated down the original proposal from Southwest Landscape and reached a new proposed monthly price of \$35,172.90. If it is the wish of the Board to maintain the current provider of service for factors including continuity of service and the best interest of the District, the Board may reject all original proposals received from the RFP issued on November 18, 2025, and direct the General Manager to enter into an agreement with Southwest Landscape per the terms proposed in Exhibit C.

Financial Analysis: *The proposal submitted by Southwest Landscape reflects a monthly cost of \$35,172.90, representing a 5 increase over the previous contract rate of \$33,498 per month. Under the proposed agreement, the annual fiscal impact would be \$422,074.80, resulting in an increase of \$20,098.80 above the prior annual cost. By comparison, the lowest responsive proposal received through the RFP process was submitted by Conserve LandCare at \$298,323 annually. The Southwest Landscape proposal exceeds the lowest RFP proposal by \$123,751.80 on an annual basis.*

Public Comment: Conserve LandCare representatives introduced their team, highlighted cemetery experience, and described transition plans to avoid service gaps. Southwest Landscape & Maintenance outlined service changes, including earlier summer start times, a one-day mowing schedule, and edging on a two-week rotation, with pricing at a 5% increase over the current contract.

Discussion: GM Bonner reported the Board previously directed staff to negotiate a more favorable rate with the current landscape vendor and stated negotiations resulted in a reduced rate from the vendor's prior RFP submission.

GM Bonner read the staff recommendation and stated the RFP results ranked Conserve LandCare as the highest-scoring proposer and that staff previously recommended selecting Conserve LandCare under the procurement process. GM Bonner noted the Board could prioritize continuity with the current vendor but stated the decision rests with the Board. Counsel Campos stated the Board would first reject all RFP responses in order to continue services with the current vendor. Board discussion ensued regarding the procurement process, fairness and consistency in the RFP process, continuity of service, transition timing, and performance expectations, including KPIs and contract remedies

Motion: Rosales - Reject all bids received through the RFP process presented at the meeting on January 9, 2026

Second: Coronel

Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Rios

Abstain: None

No: Underwood

Absent: None

Motion passed.

Motion: Coronel - Award the contract to Southwest Landscape & Maintenance and direct GM Bonner to execute the agreement, including a 5% increase, a monthly KPI report submitted to the Board, quarterly presentations to the Board, and a performance indicator

Second: Underwood

Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios

Abstain: None

No: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

The Board thanked the vendors for attending and for their time.

*A recess was called at 9:28 a.m.
The meeting resumed at 9:38 a.m.*

3.2 First Amendment to General Manager Employment Agreement

Proposed amendment to include vehicle stipend and compensation increase

Staff Recommendations: *The committee is recommending that the Board approve the transition of the General Manager from a District owned vehicle benefit to a monthly vehicle stipend in the amount of \$500, along with an increase of \$1,000 to the General Manager's monthly salary. This change would be implemented through an amendment to the General Manager's current employment agreement, which is attached as Exhibit B for reference. No other terms or conditions of the existing agreement would be modified. Approval of this action would authorize the Board Chair to execute the required amendment to the General Manager's current contract, attached as Exhibit C.*

Staff is further recommending the Board decommission the 2022 Ford Explorer (Serial Number 1FMSK7BH2NGA09016) and designate the vehicle for liquidation. The District will attempt to sell the vehicle at public auction (GovDeals) but will utilize offers to purchase from public retailers (i.e. Carvana, CarMax, etc.) if it yields a higher cost recovery.

Financial Analysis: *The current District provided vehicle benefit consists of a District owned 2025 Chevrolet Silverado 1500, with all associated costs paid by the District, including depreciation, insurance, fuel, and maintenance. This benefit is estimated to have a monthly value to the employee of approximately \$1,399 pre tax (\$16,788 annually), and an estimated value of approximately \$1,900 per month post tax (\$22,800 annually).*

By comparison, the proposed transition to a vehicle stipend of \$500 per month, combined with a \$1,000 monthly salary adjustment, would result in a total District cost of \$1,500 per month, or \$18,000 annually.

The District may also benefit from this arrangement by shifting certain liability risks associated with vehicle operation from the District to the employee. While difficult to quantify, this represents a potential long term reduction in exposure.

In addition, the proposed elimination of one fleet vehicle would reduce ongoing operating costs and avoid future insurance, fuel, and maintenance expenditures. The estimated current market value of the 2022 Ford Explorer (69,000 miles), based on national pricing guides, has a private party resale value estimated between \$19,000 and \$26,000, depending on condition and trim level, with actual auction proceeds potentially varying.

Note: The District elected not to sell the newly purchased 2025 Silverado due to its recent acquisition and higher replacement cost. Accordingly, the Ford Explorer is proposed as the more appropriate surplus vehicle for sale.

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed that a concern raised at the January meeting was signage on the General Manager's vehicle, and a suggested option was to transition to a stipend. The Board agreed that Trustee Coronel and Vice Chair Vossler would meet as a committee with GM Bonner and return

with a recommendation. The recommendation presented was to transition GM Bonner to a \$500 per month vehicle stipend and increase his monthly pay by \$1,000 per month. Board discussion ensued regarding the proposed changes, noting the intent was to transition from the District-provided vehicle benefit to a stipend-based approach that reflects an equivalent overall value.

Motion: Vossler - Support recommendation

Second: Coronel

Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios

Abstain: None

No: None

Absent: None

Motion passed.

GM Bonner noted there was a second part to the motion to liquidate the Ford Explorer.

Motion: Vossler – Sell Explorer

Second: Rios

Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios

Abstain: None

No: None

Absent: None

Motion passed

3.3 Authorization to Accept Anticipated Federal Funding

Federal earmark related to road construction project

***Staff Recommendation:** Adopt Resolution 137, attached as Exhibit B, authorizing the General Manager to execute and submit documents, certifications, and assurances required to accept federal funding in the amount of \$1,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Fund for the Road Rehabilitation Project, subject to the condition that any material program obligations, project agreements, or expenditure of funds shall be subject to subsequent Board approval.*

***Financial Analysis:** The anticipated funding amount is \$1,000,000. At this time, no funds have been received, and no expenditures are proposed under this action. Acceptance of funds would be subject to future budgetary and project approvals, depending on final program requirements.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reported there are several unknowns with the approved federal funding because it was secured through appropriations rather than a traditional grant. GM Bonner stated information may be received on a short timeline and could require a designated representative and a resolution authorizing that person to act. To avoid delays, staff recommended the Board adopt a resolution authorizing GM Bonner to accept the funding. GM Bonner noted this is intended as a safeguard in case timing becomes an issue.

Motion: Coronel - Move approval

Second: Underwood

Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

4. INFORMATION ITEMS

4.1 Annual Safety Feedback Summary

Annual survey conducted in compliance with SB 553

Discussion: GM Bonner noted that per SB 553 the District is required to do an annual survey of employees regarding safety, which has been completed, along with annual training on WVPP. It has been included in the report to the Board – acknowledgement of high heat, lighting, PPV concerns received. Rios questioned if there was negative feedback received. GM Bonner noted they were all things we were already aware of: potholes, traffic flow, ADA review, etc.

4.2 Quarterly Budget Review

Overview of budget against current and projected revenue and expense

Discussion: Finance Manager Winder reported there were no current areas of concern and reviewed the Mid-Year Budget Review. She reported the District is meeting its reserve policy requirement of maintaining 35% of the current-year budget, plus unearned Pre-Need revenue, and noted the District has also maintained additional funds in the General Fund investment account. GM Bonner stated he would like to discuss increasing the reserve percentage at the May session. The Board commended Finance Manager Winder for budget improvements and thanked her and her team for their work in receiving the GFOA Certificate of Achievement.

4.3 Travel Request Form

Review of proposed form to assist with District travel requests

Discussion: Finance Manager Winder reviewed a proposed travel request form for staff and Trustees to submit registration and travel requests. She noted that Trustee out-of-state travel, or any Trustee travel over \$2,000, requires prior Board approval. She stated a fillable PDF will be provided to each Trustee. GM Bonner noted the form will help keep travel arrangements organized.

5. COMMITTEE UPDATES

5.1 LAFCO MSR Ad Hoc Committee

Trustee Underwood reported the committee met with BB&K to request initial legal research on annexation of properties within the District's Sphere of Influence, and noted there are three areas the committee plans to move forward with. Counsel Campos noted annexation involves multiple steps and that the current work is limited to preliminary research. GM Bonner stated the committee would need to bring the item back on future agendas for Board consideration and approval.

6. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

6.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Chair Rosales reported Congressman Ruiz called to inform him about the signing related to the District's federal road funding. Chair Rosales also noted he liked the Affidavit of Ownership included in GM Bonner's report. GM Bonner stated the Affidavit of Ownership was developed in response to the Noble headstone request to address similar requests more efficiently.

Vice Chair Vossler reported she and Trustee Coronel met with GM Bonner regarding the vehicle stipend.

Trustee Coronel reported CSDA invited the District to participate in an interview about the District of Distinction and the District's progress, and GM Bonner clarified the invitation was directed to Trustee Coronel. Trustee Coronel stated he emphasized the Board's role in setting a vision for the District and noted the District was featured in a CSDA publication for its recent CSDA presentation with Desert Recreation District (DRD). Trustee Coronel requested expanding employee eligibility for education benefits and supporting certification pay for employees with Notary commissions, and Trustee Underwood supported adding both items to a future agenda. Trustee Coronel also requested an item for future agenda development so the Board could discuss priorities, and GM Bonner stated he could add a "projected discussion" column to the project spreadsheet provided to the Board. Trustee Coronel recognized the City of Indian Wells for its recent announcement of having no debt, \$100 million in cash, and no pension liability. Trustee Coronel stated he values public comment and wanted constituents to know District employees care about the public, are compassionate and caring, and are enforcing Board-approved policies, and GM Bonner noted that most of the Board has loved ones buried at the cemetery.

Trustee Underwood reported attending a City Manager meeting in Indian Wells, a meeting with Congressman Ken Calvert's liaison, Glenn Miller (with Trustee Coronel), a Riverside County SDARC meeting, and a GCVCC meeting to stay informed and network. Trustee Underwood suggested joining the Indian Wells Chamber of Commerce to broaden the District's reach. GM Bonner noted the cost would be minimal and stated staff could proceed unless the Board objected. Trustee Underwood also noted the Board should consider irrigation system needs and pension liabilities, and GM Bonner stated those items would be addressed at the May Planning Session in connection with endowment interest.

Trustee Rios thanked everyone for their well wishes and expressed his appreciation. Trustee Rios commented on the public comment received, stating staff take pride in their work, are courteous, and are consistently accommodating in assisting the public.

6.2 General Manager Update

GM Bonner reviewed the General Manager's report and highlighted that the Funeral Home online scheduling portal is now live. GM Bonner complimented Finance Manager Winder on the work completed and noted the portal should improve service. GM Bonner also noted SDRMA Safety Day is scheduled the day before the CAPC Annual Conference and that SDRMA will be presenting the District with an Innovation Award. GM Bonner stated upcoming agenda items include CSDA and LAFCO board seats for the March agenda, and that a community forum will be brought forward as a future agenda item based on public comment received.

Meeting was adjourned to closed session at 10:25 a.m.

7. CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

7.1 CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION
Significant Exposure to Litigation, Pursuant to Government Code Section
54956.9(d)(2)/(e)(1) Two (2) Potential Case

Meeting resumed from closed session at 10:45 a.m.

Counsel Campos reported received direction, no reportable action.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION

Friday, March 13, 2026

8:00 a.m.

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Executive Office

44801 Village Ct., Suite 104

Palm Desert, CA 92260

Respectfully Submitted,
Sherry Winder
Clerk of the Board

Approved: _____ BOT Mtg.