Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District
Board of Trustee Meeting Minutes
Saturday, May 3, 2025
8:00 a.m.

A meeting of the Governing Board of the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District ("District") was held at the Best Best & Krieger LLP Office located at 74760 Highway 111 on Saturday, May 3, 2025, at 8:00 a.m.

Public Notices were posted by the Clerk of the Board on Monday, April 29, 2025, at the following locations:

1. CVPCD Executive Office – 82847 Avenue 52, Coachella, CA 92236
2. Best Best & Krieger LLP Office – 74760 Highway 111, Indian Wells, CA 92210
3. The CVPCD website – http://coachellacemetery.org

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL
Chair Ernesto Rosales called the meeting to order at 8:04 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

FLAG SALUTE

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PUBLIC COMMENT
An email from customer Alicia, relayed by Donna Ayala following an in-person visit to the Administrative Office, was received regarding memorial damage.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA
None

1. PRESENTATIONS

1.1 Presentation by Joshua Bonner
District Annual Report and Review of Key Data

GM Bonner reviewed the District Annual Report presentation, highlighting key metrics, awards received, and major projects and accomplishments. He remarked that the year had been successful overall.

1.2 Presentation by Sherry Winder & Joshua Bonner
2025-2026 Proposed District Budget

Finance Manager Winder presented two budget options—Accrual and Cash Basis—for the Board to determine the preferred budgeting method moving forward. It was also noted that Endowment Care revenue had been removed from the budget and properly reclassified to the Balance Sheet, representing an annual adjustment of approximately $300,000. GM Bonner discussed concerns with both formats, particularly the financial impact of pre-selling services, for which he had prepared a PowerPoint presentation he shared with the Board. Following discussion, the Board directed staff to continue using a cash basis budget. The Board also directed staff to consult with legal counsel to develop contract terms for the sale of non-fixed assets. Under these terms, if the cost of a non-fixed item increases after a pre-need purchase, a notice would be sent electronically to contract holders—provided current contact information on file—and posted on the District website. The notice would offer the opportunity to pay the additional fees in advance; if not prepaid, the family would be responsible for the cost difference at the time of need. This cost adjustment responsibility would not apply to fixed assets - plot purchase and endowment care. Additionally, the Board requested that Capital Budget items be removed from the presentation for budget approval.

1.3 Presentation by Joshua Bonner
2025-2026 Capital Budget and 10-Year Capital Budget Outlook

GM Bonner provided an overview of the Capital Budget, highlighting the GIS Mapping Project and reviewing planned expenditures outlined in the 10-Year Plan. He also suggested remodeling the Administration Building to include a family meeting room. The Board directed staff to proceed with remodeling the existing space and noted that any decision on new construction will be deferred until completion of the 10-Year Master Plan.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

2.1 Trustee Minutes
Board Meeting – April 11, 2025

2.2 Finance and Administration

a. Approval of Expenditures – Checks and ACH transactions as detailed April 2025

Motion: Coronel – Move approval as presented
Second: Vossler
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

A recess was called at 9:22 a.m.
The meeting resumed at 9:28 a.m.

3. ACTION ITEMS

3.1 Board Meeting Schedule for 2025-2026

Consider and recommend a Board meeting schedule for July 2025 through June 2026

Staff Recommendations: *Staff recommends the Board approve the proposed schedule and provide direction for staff to present a formal resolution at the June meeting to codify the adopted calendar.*

Financial Analysis: *There is no known financial impact resulting from this action.*

Discussion: GM Bonner presented the proposed meeting schedule, noting that Board approval was needed to prepare the annual resolution for adoption at the June meeting. The Board reviewed the schedule and agreed to maintain the second Friday of the month meeting format.

3.2 Annual Review of Committees

Dissolution or Renewal of Committees for 2025-2026

Staff Recommendations: *Staff is neutral on this subject.*

Financial Analysis: *There is no known financial impact resulting from this action.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed that committees are to be evaluated annually to determine whether they should be dissolved or renewed for the upcoming year. Following discussion, the Board determined that the LAFCO Committee will remain active with its current members, and Trustee Underwood was designated as the primary LAFCO contact.

3.3 Interment Guidelines for Smaller Plots

Establishing policy for ¼ and ½ lots

Staff Recommendations: *Staff recommends the Board authorize the following changes to the District's "General Rules and Regulations" as follows:*

Amend the Full Size Lot burial allowances as follows:

1. *Two (2) Adult burials*
2. *One (1) Adult and one (1) Cremation*
3. ***Up to four (4) cremations*** *(amended from 2)*
4. *One (1) Cremation and one (1) Child (any size casket*
5. *Two (2) Children (any size caskets)*
6. *One (1) Adult and one (1) Child (any size casket)*
7. *Two (2) Adult burials and one (1) Cremation (Cremated remains must be contained within one of the Adult caskets and must be interred concurrently with the casket)*
8. *One (1) Adult or Child and two (2) Cremations (both cremations must be received before or after casket interment)*

Establish allowances for ½ lot as follows:

1. *Up to four (4) urns*
2. *One (1) Baby vault and one (1) urn*

Establish allowances for ¼ lot as follows:

1. *Up to two (2) urns*
2. *One (1) infant vault*

Financial Analysis: *There is no known direct financial impact resulting from this action.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed that this item was brought back at the Board's request with a staff recommendation for approval. The proposed changes include increasing the urn allowance on full-size lots from two to four and establishing burial allowances for ¼ and ½ lots. Following discussion, the Board approved the recommendations as presented.

Motion:	Coronel – Move approval as presented
Second:	Underwood
Yes:	Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain:	None
No:	None
Absent:	None

Motion passed.

3.4 Protest of Award – Tree and Brush Removal Services Contract

Review of protest received from award of contract

Staff Recommendations: *Staff recommends that the Board:*

1. *Dismiss the protest submitted by United Pacific Services, Inc. as factually and procedurally insufficient under the District's Protest Procedures.*

2. *Affirm the award of the Tree and Brush Removal Services Contract to Southwest Landscape, as previously approved.*

Financial Analysis: *There is no known financial impact resulting from this action.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reported that United Pacific Services, Inc. submitted a protest regarding the award of the Tree and Brush Removal Services contract, challenging the Board's application of the local vendor preference outlined in the District's purchasing policy. Following discussion, the Board dismissed the protest and affirmed the award of the contract to Southwest Landscape as previously approved.

Motion: Coronel – Move to use recommendation and reject the protest
Second: Underwood
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

3.5 Review and Direction for Endowment Interest

Designation for spend or investment of existing endowment care interest earned

Staff Recommendations: *Staff is recommending the Board utilize the available funds to pay down the District's current long-term OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefit) deficit. As of the last actuarial analysis, the projected balance stands at $863,868 (as of June 30, 2024).*

Financial Analysis: *This recommended allocation would remove $451,848.96 from the Endowment Care Interest Account (as the funds become available for withdrawal). The payment towards the OPEB balance would bring that projected balance down to $412,019.04.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reported that Endowment Care interest has accumulated to $451,848.96 and noted that staff had been directed to provide an annual recommendation for its use; staff recommended applying the funds toward the District's OPEB liability. The Board expressed support for this approach, highlighting the importance of reducing outstanding obligations in advance of any future facility projects.

Motion: Coronel – Contribute $451,848.96 of Endowment Interest to pay down OPEB balance
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

3.6 Review of District's Pension Liabilities

Discuss possible investment to pay down projected debts

Staff Recommendations: *Staff is recommending the Board not utilize any budget surplus resulting from the final 2024-2025 budget. Rather, we are recommending the Board utilize the available Endowment Care Interest account funds in the amount of $451,848.96 to pay down the OPEB balance. By avoiding utilization of budget surplus, and instead tapping Endowment Care Interest funds, the Board may bypass the 50% cap found in the policy and more aggressively address the significant shortfall in the OPEB balance.*

Financial Analysis: *This recommended allocation would remove $451,848.96 from the Endowment Care Interest Account (as the funds become available for withdrawal). The payment towards the OPEB balance would bring that projected balance down to $412,019.04. The recommendation would have no impact on the existing 2024-2025 budget (Profit and Loss).*

Discussion: This item was discussed in conjunction with Item 3.5 and did not require separate discussion.

3.7 Accelerated Purchase of Capital Expenditures

Consideration of purchasing some capital items scheduled for 2025-2026 Budget now

Staff Recommendations: *Allocate $74,000 in capital spending to the 2024-2025 budget and begin the procurement process immediately.*

Financial Analysis: *This action would add $74,000 to the 2024-20205 Capital Budget, bringing the current capital budget for the year to $1,750,162.65.*

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed anticipated tariff-related inflation as the basis for staff's recommendation to accelerate the purchase of three capital items from the 2025–2026 budget. Following discussion, the Board approved adjustments to the 2024–2025 capital budget totaling $74,000 to allow for the purchase of a Ford F-150 replacement ($50,000), a new shade structure ($12,000), and an AC unit for the Administration Building ($12,000). GM Bonner noted the Ford F-150 would be replaced through RFP and trade-in.

Motion:	Coronel – Move for approval of staff recommendation
Second:	Rios
Yes:	Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain:	None
No:	None
Absent:	None

Motion passed.

3.8 Annual Adoption of Publicly Available Pay Schedule

Pursuant to CalPERS requirements and recommendations

Staff Recommendations: *Staff recommends that the Board of Trustees motion to approve the Publicly Available Pay Schedule as presented.*

Financial Analysis: *There is no known financial impact resulting from this action.*

Discussion: Finance Manager Winder reviewed the recommendation that the District annually adopt its current salary schedule to ensure accuracy and compliance. Following discussion, the Board approved the salary schedule with an effective date of July 1, 2025.

GM Bonner made a preliminary request for the Board to consider establishing a Maintenance Supervisor position to reflect the supervisory duties that have naturally shifted to the Maintenance Specialist following the departure of the Maintenance Services Manager.

Motion: Coronel – Move approval as presented
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

3.9 Fraud Protection

Possible fraud protection steps to protect District

Staff Recommendations: *Staff recommends that the Board of Trustees defer implementing the Wells Fargo CEO fraud protection services and instead transition all vendors to ACH payments where automatic payments are not already in place. To facilitate this, staff will issue an ACH Payment Authorization Form (Exhibit B) to vendors, targeting full transition within 90 days. Staff further recommends reassessing the need for additional fraud protection measures six months after completing the vendor transition.*

Financial Analysis: *The estimated costs for implementing all three fraud protection services are as follows:*

Service	***Monthly Cost***	***Annual Cost***
ACH Fraud Filter	*$45.00*	*$540.00*
Positive Pay	*$25.60*	*$307.20*
Payment Authorization	*$65.30*	*$783.60*
Total	***$135.60***	***$1,627.20***

Discussion: Finance Manager Winder reviewed fraud prevention services recommended by the District's bank and proposed deferring implementation in favor of transitioning vendors to ACH payments, with a six-month reassessment. Following discussion, the Board approved the deferral,

clarifying that ACH payments would continue to require approval by the General Manager and one Trustee.

Motion: Underwood – Move approval for staff recommendation
Second: Rios
Yes: Rosales, Vossler, Coronel, Underwood, Rios
Abstain: None
No: None
Absent: None
Motion passed.

4. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

4.1 Projects and Action Items for 2025-2026

Review of staff scope of work for the upcoming fiscal year

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed the upcoming scope of work, including previously discussed and deferred items, and recommended adding Managerial Purchasing Authority. He also noted that Trustee stipend and travel qualifications are currently vague, allowing for broad interpretation of eligible activities, and recommended revisiting the policy to ensure reimbursements align with Trustees' official duties. The Board requested that all items be included in the 2025–2026 scope of work, though GM Bonner cautioned that doing so would significantly increase staff workload. Trustee-identified priorities included expanding administrative capacity through an Administrative Analyst or Assistant General Manager, developing a parking ordinance, implementing agenda management software, requiring department managers to present staff reports, and evaluating overtime eligibility for exempt staff supporting after-hours events. The Board also suggested adding the District Foundation and CAPC as subcategories under Events Management.

4.2 Replacement of District Vehicles and the Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation

ACF and its impact on current and future District fleet

Discussion: GM Bonner noted this was an informational item and encouraged the Board to review the material independently.

**** To accommodate Trustee Rios's departure, the Board advanced the Closed Session on the agenda.***

Meeting was adjourned to closed session at 10:47 a.m.

7. CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

7.1 PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION
Title: General Manager

Meeting resumed from closed session at 11:11a.m. and Counsel Campos reported no reportable action and noted that the Board of Trustees had completed the General Manager's annual performance appraisal, providing positive feedback on his performance.

Trustee Rios left at 11:11 a.m.

4.3 Dia de los Muertos Event Planning
Potential for additional event cost savings

Discussion: GM Bonner noted that, since Día de los Muertos falls entirely on a weekend this year, staff identified cost savings by maintaining regular closing hours (6:00 p.m.), with final services at 5:00 p.m., instead of extending into the evening. The Board supported the recommendation from a fiscal standpoint but expressed concern about how the community might respond, as previous events have included evening activities. The Board ultimately decided to keep the schedule unchanged. Rising event costs were also discussed. Additionally, the Board requested that staff explore whether the Indio Police Department could provide support in place of CHP.

4.4 Headstone Setting Fee Refund Eligibility
Proposal to amend refund eligibility

Discussion: GM Bonner reported that multiple refund requests had been received from families who paid the setting fee for a double headstone but later purchased a single, creating unaccounted-for administrative work. He suggested making setting fees non-refundable to encourage families to finalize headstone selections beforehand. The Board directed staff to bring back a policy change recommendation with the upcoming fee study, including a proposed transaction fee to cover administrative costs for contract changes, such as upgrades from single to double markers.

4.5 Memorial Day Flyover
Budget allocation and sponsorship consideration

Discussion: GM Bonner reviewed that the Memorial Day flyover has traditionally been funded by a sponsor and requested direction on whether the Board wished to pursue sponsorship, fund the flyover directly, or forgo it if no sponsor is secured. He added that sponsors are recognized during the event and in marketing materials. The Board directed that the District should not fund the flyover and that staff should proceed only if sponsorship is obtained.

4.6 Marketing Campaign to Promote Columbarium Niches

June marketing campaign to raise columbarium awareness to local market

Discussion: GM Bonner proposed a two-month advertising trial for cremation inurnments, particularly in the Columbarium and ¼ lots, noting it aligns with the 10-Year Master Plan recommendation and is supported by available Communications funding. The Board supported the proposal and recommended using direct mail with District pricing.

4.7 Holiday Pay Eligibility for Part-Time Employees

Review of current eligibility criteria for holiday pay

Discussion: GM Bonner requested clarification on the current holiday pay policy language. While part-time employees are not benefits-eligible, the policy states that "all employees" receive paid holidays, leading to part-time staff receiving paid time off when scheduled on holidays. The Board directed staff to revise the policy to clarify that part-time employees are not eligible for holiday pay.

4.8 Evaluation of Vacation Advance Election to Cash Out Policy Usage

Requested review of policy use

Discussion: Finance Manager Winder noted the report was prepared in response to a Trustee request for a review of the District's Vacation Advance Election to Cash Out Policy, specifically regarding annual participation and eligibility data. She presented a five-year summary comparing eligible employees to those who elected to participate. The Board questioned the total amount paid out to date under the policy and requested a revised report including that information. They also expressed interest in exploring an increase to the allowable cash-out hours.

4.9 Online Service Scheduling Tool for Funeral Homes

Self-service options for scheduling

Discussion: Finance Manager Winder reviewed a proposed online calendar to provide Funeral Homes with a self-service option for scheduling interments. The Board expressed concern about potential misuse, such as blocking times without intent to proceed. GM Bonner suggested that requested service times be subject to approval by the Cemetery Services Team. The Board directed staff to include an approval step before finalizing service times and to pilot the system with local Funeral Homes.

5. COMMITTEE UPDATES

5.1 LAFCO MSR Ad Hoc Committee

Discussion: Trustees Underwood and Coronel reported on their April 9, 2025 committee meeting, during which they met with city representatives to gather information. The committee recommended that the District move forward with exploring annexation and requested the item be placed on a future Board agenda. It was also noted that the LAFCO Sphere of Influence (SOI) map has not been updated for CVPCD. GM Bonner requested that the committee meet with legal counsel to identify the necessary steps for annexation and prepare a presentation for the Board.

6. TRUSTEE/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

6.1 Trustee Comments and Event/Function Report Out

Trustee Coronel inquired about AB requirements for a public hearing posting open positions before approving the budget, to which GM Bonner explained that, due to exemptions, the requirements do not apply to the District. Trustee Coronel also reiterated his request to include a Governance section in the final 10-Year Master Plan presentation.

Trustee Underwood reported attending CSDA networking events at the Special District Leadership Academy in La Quinta, where he connected with others regarding his role on the CVPCD Board and LAFCO. He also attended the CalLAFCO meeting for networking purposes and had an informal conversation regarding bond attorneys.

GM Bonner noted that his monthly report would be distributed electronically and reminded the Board of his scheduled vacation from May 7 to May 23.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

NEXT MEETING TIME, DATE AND LOCATION
Friday, June 13, 2025
8:00 a.m.
Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Executive Office
82847 Avenue 52
Coachella, CA 92236

Respectfully Submitted,
Sherry Winder
Clerk of the Board

Approved as corrected: _____ BOT Mtg.