

MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 9, 2026 @ 9:00 AM
Kern River Valley Cemetery District
8441 Burlando Road
Wofford Heights, CA 93285 County of Kern

A. CALL TO ORDER at 9:00 am

B. ROLL CALL OF THE BOARD : ☒ Mike Ryan ☒ Deborah Hess ☒ Kat Barnum

☒ Esteban Olivares

☒ Kathy Agapiou (Connect remotely from 11208 Sheldon St., Sun Valley, CA 91352)

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE and MOMENT OF SILENCE

D. PUBLIC REQUESTS, COMMENTS OR PRESENTATIONS

This portion of the meeting is reserved for people to address the Board on any matter not on this agenda but under the jurisdiction of the Board. Board members may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed. They may ask a question for clarification, make a referral to staff for factual information or request staff to report back to the Board at a later meeting. Also, the Board may take action to direct the staff to place a matter of business on a future agenda. **SPEAKERS ARE LIMITED TO THREE MINUTES. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME BEFORE MAKING YOUR PRESENTATION. THANK YOU!** (Gov. Code Sec. 54953)

E. CONSENT AGENDA:

The following items are considered routine and non-controversial by District Staff. Consent items are ACTION items, and they may be approved with one motion if no member of the Board or member of the public wishes to comment or ask questions. If comment or discussion is desired, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and approved separately.

Ryan separate financials from consent agenda and makes own category. Make sure to look closely - Move under financial report?

1. Regular Board Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2026
2. Financial Report – May 2026, Account Balances and P&L –
Mike asks if there is anything seen in the financial report that is concerning? He expresses there is currently “severe financial constraint” for the district. Orion ensures we will make it through to October. Mike thinks we need severe cutbacks. Are there any other questions Mike asks. None were asked
3. Cemetery Monthly Payment Report relayed for May 2026
4. Authorize Transfer of Funds from 42012 to 42010 for Pre-Need Services Executed

Action: First motion made by Treasurer Oliveras then seconded by 2nd Vice-chair Hess and passed individually and unanimously with all ayes

F. AUDIT Report:

1. Fiscal Year 2024/2025 (Kevin Brejnak) Tentative Information Only - Fiscal year 2025 not ready yet. Is on time for July approval

G. MANAGER’S REPORT (Information Only)

Orion Sanders, District Manager

1. Audits – 24/25 on time for July approval
2. Finances – Monthly Payment Report – Did well in May – Good income this month – Taxes came in from county. Assures not in bad shape. Will continue to be in a recovery mode, letting things build back up

3. FEMA/CalOES Project – A&E Bids ready for approval – Received one bid. Is still open to the public
4. Well Project – Under county consultation – County is working on this an
5. Cemsites Software – Clean-up of Reserved Properties -Tara has made good progress on this
6. Groundskeeping – Solar data report, Well performance
 - a. Well doing great and have upped sections to 20 minutes. May increase upper minutes or split morning and afternoon.
 - b. Trustee Agapiou asks if manager Sanders thinks it will continue through the end of summer. Manager Sanders will keep evaluating. He believes it will be maintainable and will keep the board posted.
 - c. Chairman Ryan asks if there are or were any specific problems the board would need to know about? Manager Orion said a valve stuck open in the water tank and the tank emptied and ran dry. It was noticed day one and out of water one day. Ryan asked how long it was running without water and manager Sanders explained it was not long and the pump still works. Moving forward he and Reno will observe every day to make sure it is not sticking again.
7. Volunteer Projects – KRVHS Historic Cemetery Sign fundraising – The cemetery itself cannot solicit money for the Historic Sign project fundraiser, but the historical society and museum can. A BBQ event is being arranged for July 25th. Funds already raised through donations is \$1000. The material will be bought with that \$ - \$7000 is the total projected cost for wrought iron sign in old cemetery.
8. Improvements – None currently due to financial constraints but Reno and Orion are re-building fences in and around the entire cemetery using what they have in supplies and doing so with **no additional costs**.
9. Marketing – Burial Service Guide – The guide is complete and being handed out at different events, on social media, and to local businesses to be distributed.
10. Events – Memorial Day Ceremony, Veteran headstone dedication – There were 130 attendees – Honored vets, new veteran headstones, and their lives given fighting for our freedoms. Event went wonderful. Chairman Ryan officially thanks Orion for a great cemetery.
11. Training – none currently

Kat asks how Cemsites transition is going. Walk and recording of Section one (1) by Tara is complete. All filled in. Working on Section two (2). All information gets loaded into the software and progress is well on the way.

H. OLD BUSINESS:

1. 2026 Goals and Objectives – Hold until more revenue is available in budget or other grant arise.
2. Dry Landscape Concept Design – On hold currently until spending available and allocated in the new budget.
3. Historic Cemetery A&E Bid revealed and approval - Orion stated there was only one bid – WZI. Chairman Ryan states he was aware of another company on a different platform that was interested but has not bid yet.

Discuss: Fema Funding already receiver is \$45,000 for the A&E.

Action: First motion to approve made by 2nd Vice Chair Hess seconded by Treasurer Oliveras and passed individually by all board members with all ayes

I. NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2026/2027 Budget Proposal presentation – Ryan asks if cemetery is to pay the \$45000. Tara and Orion state (Under \$250000 projects are funded more quickly) we have already received the funds from the county.

Financial Budget Presentation – ORION

- a. Any overage can be moved to general account
- b. Pulling “preneed” totals from total sales (s/b \$19000 – Tara did not pull out preneed)
- c. More interest paid in endowment care account
- d. Small increase on equipment and landscaping
- e. Saturday services up from last year

- f. Concrete liners cost came down – due to cremations - guesstimation
- g. Burial rights went down – lots of preneed this year
- h. Began charging banks fees and will offset some cost (1700 in fees previous)
- i. Regular program – will follow regular maintenance schedule – regular costs will follow – Core sample analysis sent to company
- j. Kathy disconnected – Recall to Kathy
- k. Expense account – Cemsites, machinery, coming down on costs, increased trustee pay,
- l. Kat - \$950 question about why so little paid for whole year. Tara explained canceled meetings caused low total.
- m. Money for truck was separate account
- n. Kathy – What happened to work truck – Orion said gave it to tow company – had no keys and did not run
- o. Utilities coming down due to solar fix – Tara – Effron security – unforeseen solar replacement cost
- p. Tara reconciling Quickbooks – Cemsites

Questions - None

Orion reports – One-time expense of full audit compliance was \$102000 – Well re-hab \$20000 – Still moving forward on new well project as we do not know how long the well will run until dry again.

- 1. Chairman Ryan asks if anyone hoses off solar panels? Manager Orion states they **do** and he will see how much is being pumped out before and after they are cleaned, then noting the difference (which has been significant in the past). Using no soap on panels is the best way to clean; just water. Increased output by 20% to clean regularly for efficiency is verifiable.
- 2. Cemetery Sales - \$95,000
- 3. Investment income- \$9,500
- 4. Total income forecast \$250,000

Expenses

- a. 2024-2025 - went up
- b. 2025-2026 - Well – went up
- c. Trends show income going up and major projects completed for 2026/2027
- d. Tax income down with expenses cut 12%
- e. Manager Sanders explains that late payments are always coming in (according to Tara)
- f. There are no “county numbers” to report since April 30, *Will always be one month behind because county not to make payment until 10th of the month. Next payment will be Dec.*

Action – First motion by made by 2nd Vice-chair Hess then seconded by Treasurer Oliveras and passed unanimously with all ayes, individually given

J. CLOSED SESSION: ***Postponed to next meeting***

- 1. District Manager, Employee Performance Evaluation - July

K. CLOSED SESSION REPORT - July

L. DIRECTORS COMMENTS OR REPORTS NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA

Board Member Announcements or Reports (Information Only): On their own initiative, Board members may make an announcement or a report on their own activities. They may ask a question for clarification, make a referral to staff or take action to have staff place a matter of business on a future agenda. (Gov. Code Sec. 54954.2[a])

Ryan comments – CalPERS is demise for budget – biggest expense is CalPERS – does not understand why they went with it – It is not a solvent retirement program. Questions about what option would be cheaper and better for the employees, the district, and

the state, etc. CalPERS runs in the red. Seems is a demise for the state of California and the cemetery district. Chairman Ryan doesn't know when it was voted in. He will be looking into options and feels it could bankrupt the district.

Discussion – Federal level funding vs. county level – Maintenance of the cemetery - What grants do we qualify for financially?

- I. Old “Friends of the Cemetery” – Original organization was **not** a 501c3 – What type funds can we use for Zero-scape?
- II. Certain types of funding cannot be for endowment care. Money donated & grants collected cannot go for endowment care. WHY? Because that is what the cemetery charges for.
- III. Historic cemetery may have funding opportunities, and many are being looked at and considered, but we do not qualify for many.
- IV. Secretary Overall states she is witness to the trends toward cremations. There is a need to promote in-ground cremations too. There are places (e.g. section 3A), where we cannot do full burials due to large underground rock formations, but can get deep enough to do cremation burials.
- V. Financial report will be “pulled” from the consent agenda and will stand alone in category. Will be working with Treasurer Oliveras on the report before the next meeting.

M. ADJOURNMENT – Chairman Ryan motion to adjourn at 10:01 am

Next Regular Board of Trustees Meeting: July 14th, 2026 @ 9:00 AM