

MINTURN CEMETERY DISTRICT  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
August 15, 2023

Members Present:

Art Chavez  
Stephen Jones

Members Absent:

John Sheehan

Staff:

Sidney Harrington  
Ray Sforzo  
Peggy Peters

I. CALL TO ORDER

Art called the regular meeting to order at 4:42 p.m. at the Riverview Cemetery Mausoleum, Minturn, CO.

II. ROLL CALL

Stephen, Art, Ray, Peggy and Sidney were present. John was absent due to illness.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

n/a

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Stephen motioned to approve the meeting minutes from the June 13, 2023 regular meeting, Art seconded, and all were in favor.

V. DISCUSSION

- A. Sidney announced that as of August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023, John Sheehan has been appointed by the Eagle County Board of County Commissioners to the Minturn Cemetery Board of Directors for another term of service.

B. Shed Building Site Plan Revisions:

Pedro from Zehren & Associates attended the meeting to provide a Town of Minturn shed building project application update to the board and staff members. We are very close to project submittal and Pedro is here to update us with final

design details. The delay in submittal comes with the new code adoption. Minturn's application requirements have become more detailed specifically with grading and site plan including landscape notes about erosion. Pedro says the plans are "almost construction documents at this point".

Once approved by DRB (where board and staff will likely attend), we will want to move quickly. It is more and more difficult to secure general contractors to perform the work let alone get firm bids due to materials supply and demand.

Discussion about the Redirock wall and the property line continued. Two trees will need to be removed to accommodate the project within the cemetery boundaries. We will look at replanting the trees somewhere within the cemetery.

We will likely do this project in phases and will hire subcontractors instead of seeking an RFP publicly or in an all-inclusive bid for the project. Stephen agrees with this strategy to piecemeal the project with our own trusted subs.

Staff reminded the board that the shed building project submittal has already been approved by motion at the June board meeting.

C. Cemetery Shade Tree Planting Proposal:

Ray pointed out to the board that the upper cemetery tree plantings have been completed. All agreed it looks really good and is in balance with the opposite side of the upper cemetery.

Staff has recently battled the intense summer conditions that have dried out the cemetery in record time. Keeping sod watered, along with plants and grass has its challenges when mother nature does not deliver water. Sidney showed board and staff some images of a cemetery that has many trees planted throughout cemetery headstones and burials. To provide shade, there are non-invasive root system trees that we can consider for our cemetery. Shade will help keep the grass greener. From a plot-sales perspective, everybody who comes to the cemetery loves the trees and would prefer to buy a plot near the trees. There are areas of the cemetery that have unmarked infant and unknown burials where we can strategically plant shade trees.

Art asked if we plant trees, are we attracting wildlife? Ray reminded everyone that wildlife is attracted to flowers and plants more than trees.

Discussion ensued and board and staff all agree that grass is not the best option with the drought conditions and the watering restrictions that are only going to become more restrictive. Stephen commented that he is anti-grass and welcomes the idea of planting more trees.

James Fitz, Fitz Landscaping, attended the meeting to discuss trees within in the cemetery grounds to provide much needed shade to further prevent the brown

and dormant grass conditions. James says we can avoid trees like Aspens that have massive root systems, and provided a list of trees that would work. James is continuing to research trees that are going to provide adequate shade and thrive in our climate. The list includes trees that you see up and down the Eagle River Valley. James prefers the native Box Elder, the Patmore Ash, the Choke Cherry, and the Bur Oak.

Board and staff walked through the cemetery to look at the identified areas for potential plantings. We would like to wait to approve any trees until John Sheehan is also present and we have all three board members in meeting attendance. Stephen and Art support the idea of planting shade trees and James will continue to source ideal trees for the cemetery. Staff would like to see flowering trees if possible.

This discussion will continue at the September board meeting.

D. Mechanical Drive-in Gate Hours:

Board and staff discussed the mechanical gate hours of operation. Since the moose incident, we have kept the drive-in gates closed for the most part. We have opened the drive-in gates on most summer weekends from about 9am – 6pm. Ray and Sidney had a cemetery patron call to alert us that their elderly family member fell and injured themselves while walking up the hill and sent a photo of the injury. We will make sure Eagle County Sheriff and Emergency Services has our gate codes just in case of an emergency situation.

Art said he has also received comments from the community about the drive-in gates and access to the cemetery this summer.

Discussion ensued about the wildlife activity and gate operations. Ray says at 9am there are no wildlife entering through the cemetery gate. Art says it's impossible to make every person happy and we still need to run a business. Installing game cameras and motion sensors may be a good idea here and everyone likes the idea. Ray will do a little research.

Ray asked the board to approve automatic gate hours of 9am – 6pm for the remainder of the summer and fall and all agreed to those hours.

VI. BILL PAYING

The following electronic funds transfers were made:

n/a

The Following check payments were made:

8/15/2023    3277   Century Link 272.02

8/15/2023	3278	ERWSD	6,323.18
8/15/2023	3279	Firstbank	225.58
8/15/2023	3280	Fitz Landscaping	11,989.70
8/15/2023	3281	The Home Depot	430.00
8/15/2023	3282	MW Window Cleaning	430.00
8/15/2023	3283	Peggy Peters	2,646.00
8/15/2023	3284	PSI	3,999.50
8/15/2023	3287	Sidney Harrington	4,050.00
8/15/2023	3286	Sforzo Enterprises, Inc.	4,690.00
8/15/2023	3285	RD Trucking LLC	50.00
8/15/2023	3289	Vail Valley Landscape Supply	1,445.00
8/15/2023	3288	Vail Honeywagon	120.29
8/15/2023	3290	Xcel Energy	1,036.49
8/15/2023	3291	Zehren and Associates, Inc.	1,632.97

VII. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Old Edwards Cemetery, tree plantings, Shed building project

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

At 6:16 p.m. Stephen motioned to adjourn the regular board meeting, Art seconded and all were in favor.

**The next regular board meeting date and time will be September 12th at 4 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted:  
Sidney Harrington  
Administrator

ATTEST:

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Stephen Jones  
Minturn Cemetery District  
Secretary/Treasurer