

MINUTES
CEMETERIES BOARD OF TRUSTEES
CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE CITY HALL
100 N. ANDREWS AVENUE – 8TH FLOOR
Thursday, May 12, 2005 - 3:30 PM

BOARD MEMBER	PRESENT	CUMULATIVE FROM 3/05	
		P	A
Mark Van Rees, Chair	P	2	0
Ann Platt, Vice Chair	A	1	1
Joe Goldberg	P	1	1
Franci Bindler	P	2	0
Sharon Navarro	P	2	0
Walter Boyd	P	2	0
Victoria Mowrey	P	2	0
Connie Christensen	P	2	0
Larry Sherman	P	2	0
Albert McWhite	A	1	1

ALSO PRESENT:

Julius Delisio, Cemetery Board Liaison
Bruce Larkin, Director, Business Enterprises
Mitch Rose, Carriage Services
Aaron Seaman, Carriage Services
Frank Snedeker, Acting Chief Architect
Lisa Edmondson, Recording Clerk

The meeting was called to order by Chair Van Rees at 3:40 p.m.

1. MINUTES APPROVAL

A. Meeting of 03/10/05

Motion made by Ms. Mowrey, seconded by Mr. Goldberg, to approve the minutes of the 03/10/05 meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

2. OLD BUSINESS

A. Sunset Memorial Gardens Building Update

Mr. Delisio advised that the bids were received and all exceeded the expected amount of \$600,000 with the lowest bid being \$1,099,000. Adding engineering fees of approximately 17%, this would take the project to a total cost of \$1,285,830. The City Commission, at their April 19th meeting, had rejected all bids. It was expected the bids could be awarded in two phases; Phase I being Section 7 and the roadway, and Phase II for the building and development of the rest of the land and maintenance area. Phase I bids were as expected with the low at \$228,170. The low on Phase II bids was \$746,000.

Mr. Delisio advised that after speaking with the City Attorneys Office the bids could not be awarded in phases since the bidders placed allowances against the total project (insurance, bonding etc.). He added it is anticipated City engineering costs can be negotiated down to 7%.

Mr. Snedeker, City Engineering, addressed the Board indicating that the design of the building was the reason for the unexpectedly high bids. He explained the process from this point, stating that they will now need to have the plans redrawn at a cost of \$50,000 to the consultants and then have the project rebid with the goal to substantially lower the cost of the building.

Mr. Larkin indicated he would be meeting with the City Commission and will recommend the hiring Keith and Schnars to redesign the structure as the "lesser of many evils." He understood the Board being upset over the length of time it has taken to get the project started.

Mr. Snedeker advised that although the water permit had been renewed, they could lose their permit window and have to reapply, adding further expense.

Ms. Mowrey stated they would be lucky to reduce the cost by \$225,000, delays could negate any initial cost reduction, and it makes no sense to take another year to commence the project.

Mr. Goldberg agreed, pointing out that they may wind up spending more money and having less building, and asking what it will take to get the building built now.

Mr. Snedeker believed they could cut \$150,000 with design modifications by removing a few elements and could possibly have the redesign completed in weeks, saving the \$50,000 consultant fee.

Mr. Delisio reminded the Board that they must approve release of the trust fund monies in order for the project to again go out to bid.

Ms. Mowrey suggested allocating more funds and sending the project back out for bid. Mr. Goldberg inquired whether allocating more funds for the building would affect their ability to effectively run the cemeteries. Mr. Delisio stated that taking out an additional \$600,000 would reduce yearly interest income in the amount of \$30-40,000.

Ms. Christensen stressed it is important for the sake of the community and the families utilizing the cemetery that this project be implemented as expeditiously as possible.

***Motion** made by Ms. Mowrey, seconded by Ms. Christensen, to approve up to \$1.2 million to cover Phases I and II of the project, and further requesting that City Engineering undertake redesign of the building to be completed no later than July 1, 2005, with the bid package to be resubmitted as of July 1, 2005 with or without the engineering modifications. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.*

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Pre-Installation of Vaults

Mr. Delisio reported that the contractor, Carriage Services, is permitted to sell vaults on a pre-need basis. Vaults sold pre-need must be trusted in the Service and Merchandise Trust Fund regulated by the State of Florida. Prior to a vault being delivered as a pre-need item, the customer must authorize the pre-installation. Mr. Delisio stated it had come to their attention in 2004, that vaults were being preinstalled without authorization from the customer, with the contractor afterward sending notification to each customer with a pre-installed vault. However, the City Attorney determined that the letter did not meet the criteria of Florida Statutes. Vaults are ordered at that time a work order is generated. Mr. Delisio explained that the motivating factor to install the vault is that the Service Merchandise trust funds are given to the contractor when the product is delivered.

Mr. Delisio also expressed concern regarding the number of vaults stored on the cemetery grounds and possible liability if, when customers need their vault, it has become damaged or non-usable. He also questioned the status of pre-installed vaults when the property is turned over to a new owner, requiring de-installation. There are also maintenance issues and the problem of property not being fully paid for after a vault has been installed.

There are currently 222 vaults which are the subject of discussion.

***Motion** made by Mr. Goldberg, seconded by Mr. Sherman, 1) instructing the contractor to cease pre-installation of vaults, and 2) requesting that Mr. Delisio work with the City Attorney to resolve the statutory question and report back to the Board. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.*

B. Maintenance Reimbursement Jan-Mar 2005

Mr. Delisio pointed out that there was a variance in the salaries of maintenance contract employees as temporary personnel were now being hired. Chair Van Rees questioned the quality and consistency of the work being produced by temporary employees.

Mr. Delisio advised that Mr. Rose was being reassigned and Mr. Seaman would be taking over his responsibilities at Carriage.

He reported that they are working with an arborist to trim and prune the trees to reduce the density of the canopies, and removing holly berry trees along the waterline.

***Motion** made by Mr. Goldberg, seconded by Ms. Mowrey to approve Carriage Services' Reimbursement Request January-March 2005. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.*

Ms. Christenson invited everyone to the Memorial Day Service at Lauderdale Memorial Park.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.