

**TOWN OF SILVER CITY  
MINUTES OF THE CEMETERY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING**

**January 27, 2021 - 10:00 a.m.**

**REMOTE GOtOMEETING IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE NM OPEN MEETINGS ACT**

**Present:** Twana Sparks, Chair  
Linda Nunez  
Jeff Fell  
Elizabeth Miller  
Linda Nunez

**Also, present:** Councilor Guadalupe E. Cano  
Peter Pena, Public Works Director  
Olivia Britton, Finance Department  
Ann Mackie, Town Clerk

**CALL TO ORDER** – Chair Sparks called the meeting to order at 10:18 a.m. Paul Baca was absent (excused). A quorum of the Board was present.

**CHANGES TO THE AGENDA** - None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 28, 2020 Regular Meeting** – Chair Sparks asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Nunez moved to approve the October 28, 2020 Minutes, and Ms. Miller seconded. All were in favor, motion carried.

**PUBLIC INPUT** – None.

**REPORTS –**

**A. Public Works Representative –**

**1) Update on the coping issues in the new section.** Mr. Pena said there were still four gravesites with different types of copings in the new section. He said they spoke to the people and explained the rules, and that he was giving them until the end of January to get them removed or the department would box them up and return the items to the people. He confirmed that the forms were updated to include the name of the person responsible for the gravesite.

**2) Update on the Manager’s approval of the rules and regulations change for cremains burial spaces. Note: Staff was going to research granite sizes.** Mr. Pena said he spoke to Alex Brown, Town Manager, and he was 100% behind it and liked the idea. He said he explained to Mr. Brown that they picked a section that was not currently being used; that it would be devoted to cremains, and the size would be 2 ½ feet by 2 ½ feet, and he talked to Mr. Brown about the cost. He said Mr. Brown wanted to see if the Board had a recommendation on the cost before he made a final decision.

There was further discussion about the following: how they had previously discussed how there would be eight spaces in a plot; how people could buy a whole plot in the new section and use it for a casket and a cremain or two cremains; and how people can only reserve four large plots in the new section. Chair Sparks said the new language could say there were two options for cremains: buy a large plot to place two cremains in each or buy a small plot at 2 ½ feet by 2 ½ feet in the cremains section. She asked if they should limit the number of the small cremains plots that people could buy. Ms. Nunez said she thought it should also have a limit of four. They discussed how the cost of a large plot, size 5 feet by 10 feet, was \$600 and the cost of a cremains plot could be \$100 each. Mr. Fell commented that the costs of the Memory Lane Cemetery were significantly underpriced compared to other cemeteries in the area, and how they should discuss raising the prices in the future. There was further discussion about all of the costs. Mr. Fell suggested they have Mr. Pena go back to Mr. Brown with the following proposed costs: a full-size plot price change from \$600 to \$800, and the cremains plot, size 2 ½ feet by 2 ½ feet, to be sold at \$100 each, and the current rates for opening and closing remain the same. Ms. Nunez said the prices

would not go in the Rules and Regulations; that if Mr. Brown approved them, it would be done by Resolution.

There was further discussion about how the Rules and Regulations were changed after the October 28, 2020 Board meeting and Mr. Brown approved the changes in December. Clerk Mackie said she would update the Rules and Regulations accordingly, Part II. Purchase of Burial Spaces. Item 7.

Chair Sparks said she asked Ms. Nunez to call around to get prices on plaques for the cremains. She said Ms. Nunez learned there were three sizes and they were all over-priced as far as she could tell. Ms. Nunez said they should keep it uniform and require a certain size, and the plaques were expensive for very small stones. Ms. Nunez said there was a 16" x 8" x 4" plaque at \$145 at New Mexico Granite and \$307 at Terrazas, and there was a 20" x 10" x 4" that was \$325 at New Mexico Granite and \$436 at Terrazas. She said there was a 24" x 12" x 4" that was \$383 at New Mexico Granite and \$579 at Terrazas. She said it was just the gray color and the colored granite was probably twice as expensive. Chair Sparks said they should name a size and choose the smallest for the least expensive price, and all they get is the person's name, date of birth, and date of death. She asked Ms. Nunez to make a motion. Ms. Nunez made a motion that they require a 16" x 8" x 4" headstone for the cremation section. Mrs. Miller seconded the motion. Mr. Pena said he thought people should be able to buy whatever size they could afford as long as it fit in the section and not encroach on another section. He said as far as maintenance any of the three sizes would work, as long as they fit in the section. Ms. Nunez said she thought they should really mandate the size. Chair Sparks asked for a vote on Ms. Nunez's motion. All were in favor, motion carried.

**B. Chair** – Chair Sparks said her report was handled in the discussion above. After that discussion she said they would get back in order on the agenda and asked Mr. Fell to give his report under Unfinished Business.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS -**

##### **A. Update from Vice Chair Fell on future reports from the Town and Country Garden Club.**

Mr. Fell said he was not able to meet the Town and Country Garden Club, and their little shop downtown was not always open; that he kept playing phone tag. He suggested that if anyone else had connections to try to contact them. Ms. Britton said she would try calling. Mr. Fell said they called him once, but they had not reconnected in order to see if they could have someone come to the meetings and report on the Rose Garden status. There was further discussion about the locked gate at the Rose Garden.

#### **NEW BUSINESS –**

**A. Election of Chair of the Cemetery Board.** Chair Sparks asked for nominations. Ms. Nunez nominated Twana Sparks to keep the Chair position. There were no other nominees so it was accepted by acclamation that Ms. Sparks remain the Chair. Ms. Sparks accepted. She asked all those in favor to say aye, and all four members said aye.

**B. Election of Vice-Chair of the Cemetery Board.** Chair Sparks asked for nominations. Ms. Nunez nominated Jeff Fell for Vice-Chair. Mr. Fell respectfully declined because he was close to retiring, etc. There was further discussion and Paul Baca was elected by acclamation. Chair Sparks asked all those in favor to say aye, and all four members said aye. Chair Sparks asked Ms. Nunez to confirm with Mr. Baca that he agrees to be Vice-Chair, and how they could take another vote in the future if Mr. Baca did not want to do it.

**C. Discussion and possible vote on the cost of cremation plots.** See Reports: Public Works Representative above. Chair Sparks asked Mr. Pena to discuss the prices with Mr. Brown.

**D. Discuss the headstones and/or plaques for the cremation plots and vote on any language to add to the rules and regulations.** See Reports: Public Works Representative above.

Chair Sparks said they already stated that the plaques should be 16” x 8” x 4”. She said they needed to decide if they wanted to add that language to the rules. There was further discussion about the following: how they should follow the rules and not negotiate with people if they did not purchase a regulation headstone; how they needed to notify the funeral homes about the cremation plots and regulation headstones; how in the past it cost the Public Works Department a lot more than it would have if the rules had been followed; how the Public Works Department followed the Board’s wishes and it was best to follow the rules; how the Town has the right to remove anything; how rules were there for a reason; how they can provide people with contacts on who provides the headstones and how only one size was approved for the cremains section; how the funeral homes were critical in providing the information to the families; and how Chair Sparks was willing to go to each funeral home or call them to inform them of the new rules. Chair Sparks asked for a motion to change the word “regulation” to “16” x 8” x 4” granite headstone. Chair Mackie asked for a sentence for the brochure. Mr. Fell said the second sentence should say, “Each plot will measure 2 ½ feet by 2 ½ feet with granite headstone measuring 16” x 8” x 4”. Ms. Nunez moved that each plot will measure will measure 2-1/2 feet by 2-1/2 feet with regulation granite headstone measuring 16” x 8” x 4” for plot. Mr. Fell seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

**E. Discussion and possible vote on bench style headstones for the cemetery.** Mr. Pena said the pictures were sent to Mr. Brown by Mr. Baca and they were headstones, but also benches. He said on the double plot they met all the size requirements, but on a single plot they were too long, except for one. He said only a few would fit on a single plot. He asked the Board if they wanted to adjust the Rules and Regulations or not for the bench-style headstone. He said Mr. Baca said they could be made smaller. Mr. Pena asked that they postpone the agenda item until Mr. Baca was in attendance. There was further discussion. Ms. Nunez made a motion to postpone the item to the next meeting. Mr. Fell seconded. All were in favor, motion carried.

**F. Discuss the agenda items for the meeting scheduled for April 28, 2021.** Ms. Nunez said the benches would be discussed under Unfinished Business. Mr. Fell said there would be an update on the Town and Country Garden Club from himself and Ms. Britton. They would also review the Master Plan and discuss adding items to the Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Chair Sparks asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Nunez moved to adjourn at 11:09 a.m. and Mrs. Miller seconded. All were in favor, motion carried.

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Twana Sparks, Chair

Attest:

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Town Clerk