

Ramona Cemetery District

Nuevo Memory Gardens

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Board of Trustees ~ Joe Stupar, Board Chair ~ Pete Smith, Trustee~ Mel Cary, Vice-Chair

MINUTES

Board Meeting

September 8, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Ramona Cemetery District was called to order at 12:06 pm by Board Chair, Joe Stupar.

2. ATTENDANCE:

Members Present: Board Chair, Joe Stupar
Vice Chair, Mel Cary
Trustee, Pete Smith

District Staff Present: District Manager, Patty Estrada
District Secretary, Jessica Yerkey

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

a. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Board Action: MOTION – *Trustee, Pete Smith, moved, “To approve the agenda as presented” Vice Chair, Mel Cary, seconded the motion. Motion carried - Yeas: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0*

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Michael Martin, a Ramona resident, presented information for the cemetery to consider a section for green burials. Mr. Martin said that he believes there is public interest, and would be willing to do his own survey to gauge community interest. The Trustees thanked Mr. Martin for the information he provided.

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- a. None

7. REOCCURRING DISTRICT MATTERS

a. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for August 25, 2026 were submitted for approval.

Board Action: MOTION – Vice Chair, Mel Cary, *moved, “To approve the August 25th 2026 minutes as presented.”* Trustee, Pete Smith, seconded the motion. *Motion carried – Yeas: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0*

b. REVIEW OF BILLS AND SUBSEQUENT BILLS:

District Manager, Patty Estrada, presented the bills for review.

Board Action: MOTION – *Trustee, Pete Smith moved to approve the bills as presented. Vice Chair, Mel Cary, seconded the motion. Motion carried. – Yeas: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0*

c. CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

d. MANAGER’S REPORT:

The Manager gave a general overview of the services done thus far for the month of August. Manager also presented Sales Report, Balance Sheet, Interment Report, and Fiscal Year to Date Budget Report. Manager also gave an update on what has been going on at the cemetery:

- The A/C window unit was replaced with a mini split from Frye Mechanical of Ramona, who graciously donated the unit and the labor.
- Our second lowering device was repaired. A machinist fabricated custom parts that are no longer manufactured due to the original company going out of business. The cemetery now has a working back up.
- Vice Chair, Mel Cary, has volunteered his time to repair and replace all of the section markers. He also made sure that they all correspond to the correct burial areas. There is a long-term plan to have painted curb-style markers.
- We unfortunately had someone drive their vehicle into the northwest gate of the cemetery. There was minimal damage to a pole, with the majority of the damage being to the gates. District Manager will move forward with the most cost-effective fix.
- The recent article in The Ramona Sentinel has prompted additional Rose Garden donations.
- We have had families inquire about memorial benches being allowed. Topic to be placed on a future agenda.

- The Cemetery office had an upgrade. Patty pulled out the old carpet and replaced it with new carpet and the old desks were replaced with sit-stand desks, and a window was added where the old A/C unit was previously.
- Patty and Jessica met with a CSDA representative that came to visit the cemetery. He provided a lot of very insightful information on scholarships available and their upcoming conference next year in San Diego.

8. ONGOING AGENDA MATTERS

a. Possible Merger with RMWD

Nothing to report.

Board Action: None.

9. NEW AGENDA MATTERS

a. Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget Review

District Manager presented the unaudited financial report for Fiscal Year End totals for 2025/2026. Discussion was had on the correct format Trustee Smith was requesting. Financial Report dated September 2nd, 2026 is the correct format. Disregard report dated September 3rd, 2026.

Board Action: MOTION- No Motion

b. Proposal and Engagement Letter from Sonnenberg & Co, CPA's for Fiscal Year Ending June 30th, 2026

District Manager presented to the trustees the Proposal and Engagement Letter from Sonnenberg & Co, CPA's for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30th, 2026 audit.

Board Action: MOTION – Trustee, Pete Smith, motioned “To approve the Engagement Letter for the Fiscal Year June 30th, 2026 audit.” Vice Chair, Mel Cary, seconded the motion. Motion carried. Yays: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0

c. Columbarium Prices

District Manager presented information on the cemetery potentially having columbarium options for urn burials. Two quotes were received with the proposed location to be in the Rose Garden. Trustees requested staking out the location for a visual at the proposed location. Discussion to be continued at the next board meeting.

Board Action: MOTION – None.

d. Veterans Memorial and First Responders

Nothing to report.

Board Action: MOTION – None.

10. FUTURE AGENDA MATTERS:

- a. Green Burials
- b. Columbarium Prices

11. DISTRICT TRUSTEE COMMENT PERIOD:

Board Chair, Joe Stupar thanked Michael Martin again, for all of the information he presented on green burials.

12. CLOSED SESSION MATTERS:

- a. **CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS (Gov. Code section 54956.8)** Property: 904 Elm Street – Agency Negotiator: Patty Estrada
Negotiating parties: Louis Castagnola – Under Negotiation: Price TBD
- b. **CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-ANTICIPATED LITIGATION** Significant exposure to litigation (**Gov. Code section 54956.9(d)(2).**) :(one potential case)

13. CLOSED SESSION MATTERS REPORT OUT:

- a. **Board Action: Motion-** *Board of Trustees authorized Rancho Land Company to do work for less than \$1,000.00, for the ongoing property negotiations. Trustee, Pete Smith, motioned to approve the work, Vice Chair, Mel Cary, seconded. Motion carried. Yays: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0*
- b. **Board Action: Motion-** *Nothing to report, no action taken.*

14. CONFIRM NEXT BOARD MEETING:

Regular Board Meeting October 13, 2026 at 12:00pm at The Ramona Heritage Museum, 645 Main Street, Ramona, CA

15. ADJOURNMENT - Meeting was adjourned at 1:16 p.m.