

Ramona Cemetery District

Nuevo Memory Gardens

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Board of Trustees ~ Joe Stupar, Acting Chair ~ Pete Smith, Secretary ~ Mel Cary, Trustee

MINUTES

Board Meeting

May 19, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Ramona Cemetery District was called to order at 12:07 pm by Acting Chair, Joe Stupar.

2. ATTENDANCE:

Members Present: Acting Chair, Joe Stupar
 Secretary, Pete Smith
 Trustee, Mel Cary

District Staff Present: District Manager, Patty Estrada
 General Counsel, Brian Hughes
 District Secretary, Jessica Yerkey

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

a. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Secretary, Smith, suggested discussing Agenda Item 9-g. Review Audit Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025, prior to Manager’s Report.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: No public comments made.

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

a. New Board of Trustee member, Mel Cary, introduced himself.

7. REOCCURRING DISTRICT MATTERS

a. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for March 10, 2026 were submitted for approval.

Board Action: MOTION – *Secretary, Pete Smith, moved, “To approve the minutes as presented” Acting Chair, Joe Stupar seconded the motion. Motion carried - Yeas: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0*

b. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes for March 13, 2026 were submitted for approval. - Tabled

c. REVIEW OF BILLS AND SUBSEQUENT BILLS:

May pending expenses were presented.

Board Action: MOTION – *No motion taken*

d. CORRESPONDENCE:

No correspondence.

e. MANAGER’S REPORT:

The Manager gave a general overview of the services done thus far for the month, which included 8 total services for the month of April. 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 rose garden remodel has started, thanks to the LaVelle family, that offered to do this in memory of their loved one.
- The grounds crew are working to get the cemetery ready for the Memorial Day service.
- The fence on the west side of the property will be replaced with a privacy fence thanks to an anonymous donor.
- A leaning tree was removed, along with the stump.
- The new interment section is planted and will be ready for sales to begin in June. The cemetery is now accepting credit card payments, with a 3% fee that is added by the company that processes the payment.
- The Manager gave an update about the recent leadership training she and Acting Chair, Joe Stupar, attended in San Diego. Manager gained vital information as to the roles the Trustees and Manager have in cemetery operations. Manager would like to establish an onboarding for new trustees and employees, in regards to legally required training, such as The Brown Act and SB827.
- Manager shared that she met with the RMWD Ad-Hoc committee. The Ad-Hoc committee came to the cemetery and took a tour, then met at the office, to discuss the potential merger of districts and what it would entail.

8. ONGOING AGENDA MATTERS

a. RESPOND TO AUDIT DEFICIENCIES:

Board Action: MOTION – Tabled

b. BUDGET INCREASE FOR LEGAL OF \$65,000 FOR FY TOTAL OF \$75,000

Board Action: MOTION – Tabled

9. NEW AGENDA MATTERS

a. Individual Board Member emails.

Discussion was had on benefits and concern of individual district emails. Consensus was to have a general email for the district, and the manager would forward to the trustees as needed.

b. Non-Resident Fee policy.

Manager suggested a policy to clarify the parameters for charging a Non-Resident fee to Ramona residents that have lived out of the area in the last 5 years. Trustees requested a policy be drafted and presented at the next board meeting.

c. Cemetery Fees increase.

Manager presented a draft cemetery fee schedule with proposed increases to be effective July 1, 2026.

Board Action: MOTION – Secretary, Pete Smith, motioned to accept the proposed fee schedule as recommended by Manager. Acting Chair, Joe Stupar, seconded the motion. Motion carried - Yeas: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0

d. Adding office assistant permanent position.

Manager asked the board to extend the office assistant position for the month of May and June. Making the position permanent in the new fiscal year.

Board Action: MOTION – Acting Chair, Joe Stupar, motioned to extend office assistant through June 30, 2026. Secretary, Pete Smith, seconded the motion. Motion carried. – Yeas: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0

e. Employee wages for FY 2026-2027

The Manager gave a preliminary report on potential employee wage increase and the Fiscal Impact.

Board Action: MOTION – Tabled

f. Preliminary Budget for FY 2026-2027

Manager presented the preliminary budget for fiscal year 2026-2027.

Board Action: MOTION – Tabled

g. Review Audit Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

Irene Lane, CPA, Audit Manager from Sonnenberg & Co, CPA's, presented the draft audit for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025. Irene answered and clarified a number of questions asked by the trustees, legal counsel, and manager. Secretary, Pete Smith requested that within the Management Representation Letter, changes be made in items #14, 15, 16, and 19 to say "Except as disclosed under item #13."

Board Action: MOTION – Secretary, Pete Smith, moved, "To approve to accept the Audit Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025 as presented, with the modifications to the Management Representation Letter, items #14,15,16, and 19 have verbiage to the effect of 'as discussed in #13, above'." Trustee, Mel Cary, seconded the motion. Motion carried - Yeas: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0

h. DA Investigation

Brian Hughes, General Counsel, reported DA's office conclusion on the investigation, with no findings, no requests for following up or further information, or continued time spent on the matter.

10. FUTURE AGENDA MATTERS:

- a. Update on merger with Ramona Municipal Water District.

11. DISTRICT TRUSTEE COMMENT PERIOD:

Secretary, Pete Smith, welcomed Trustee Mel Cary, to the board. Acting Chair, Joe Stupar, would like to offer the public a tour of the cemetery.

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. **PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT (Gov. Code section 54957(b)(1).)**
Title: Additional Special Counsel

13. CLOSED SESSION MATTERS REPORT OUT:

- a. **Board Action:** *To enter into a purchase and sale agreement to pursue land acquisition. Motion carried - Yeas: 3, Nays: 0, Absent: 0*
- b. *Nothing to report out.*

14. CONFIRM NEXT BOARD MEETING:

Special Board Meeting May 28, 2026 at 12:30pm
Regular Board Meeting June 9, 2026 at 12:00pm

15. ADJOURNMENT - Meeting was adjourned at 4:09 p.m