

The North Kern Cemetery District Minutes of Regular Meeting held June 12, 2025

The North Kern Cemetery Board meeting was held at 1401 Garces Hwy, Delano, CA., at 4:15 p.m. The meeting was called to order by George Chase, Present were Pearl Rivera, Susana Valenzuela, Alicia Santiago, Jorge Jaime Jr, Manager, and Connie Sandoval, Absent Andrew Mendoza

Audience: Fernando Bravo, Sandra Espinoza, and Daniela Barreto

Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum: George Chase introduced and welcomed the district's new board member, Alicia Santiago.

Public Comment: Sandra Espinoza addressed the board, stating that she disagrees with moving forward with item #10 on the agenda, which involves changing the flower pick-up schedule from monthly to weekly. Sandra also asks the board if she can donate a tree near her loved one's lot.

OPEN SESSION:

Approve Transfer of Revenue May 2025 to the County Treasurer for \$88,213.53. Motion was made by Pearl Rivera and seconded by Susanna Valenzuela. Motion passed. No nays.

Approve May 2025 Bill List in the amount of \$74,087.70. Motion was made by Pearl Rivera and seconded by Alicia Santiago to accept the bill list. Motion passed. No nays.

Approve Financial Report for May 2025.

The District Manager requests that the board remove the Wells Fargo account from the financial report because the funds show a zero balance, as they have been transferred to Stifel. Alicia Santiago suggests closing the Wells Fargo account permanently, as it is not in use and has the potential for fraud, and removing it from the financial report. Motion was made by Alicia Santiago and seconded by Pearl Rivera to close the Wells Fargo account and approve the financial report. Motion passed. No nays.

Approve Profit and Loss Report for May 2025. Motion was made by Susanna Valenzuela and seconded by Alicia Santiago to approve the profit and loss report. Motion passed. No nays.

Approve May 08, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes. Motion was made by Pearl Rivera and seconded by Alicia Santiago to approve the Board Minutes for May 08, 2025, with corrections to Daniela's name. Motion passed. No nays.

Regular Agenda:

Discussion About Possible Change in Flower Pick Up (Monthly to Weekly)

The District Manager notified the public about why the possible change from monthly to weekly flower pick-up discussion is on the agenda. About two months ago, four individuals attended the meeting. They brought to the board's attention that the staff was not maintaining the graves, and they wanted to go back to weekly pick-up. The four individuals did not mind picking up weekly, so their headstones would get trimmed, as long as the staff trimmed them. Board member, Alicia Santiago, addressed the public, notifying them that it is not the board or the District Manager who mentioned the issue; it is the public that requested the agenda item. The District Manager notified the public that if their headstone does not get trimmed, they should ask an employee, and they will trim it for them. A member of the public asks why there is no water this week. The District Manager informed her that currently the water is off because the security forgot to close the gates, and someone drove in with their vehicle, cut the corner, and broke a valve. Sandra Espinoza asks for clarification, "So anytime we have an issue, we can approach the employees." The District Manager stated, "Yes, the public can approach any of the employees, and they will help." A member of the public inquired about the restroom hours. The District Manager notified the public that restrooms are only open during funeral services. He mentioned the fact that Alicia Santiago, the district's new board member, was on the public committee, which fought to open the restrooms. Unfortunately, the public vandalized them, and now the restrooms are kept closed. Regarding theft in the cemetery, families are highly discouraged from leaving any high-dollar items, due to public theft. Also, the public can call the police if their items are stolen. A member of the public asks about the flooding near her loved one's grave. The District Manager notified her that they are trying to eliminate that one row on West Side V because it is too clayey. The public was informed that the district is in the early stages of engineering expansion to the cemetery, and soon the district will need the community to help the district to obtain water from the city because it seems like the public does not want desert landscaping. The board decided that the flower pick-up stays as is, there are no changes, and it stays as a monthly flower pick-up.

GSRMA Invoice #INV-004358 in the Amount of \$147,448.28

The District Manager presents the board with the General Liability invoice from Golden State Risk Management Authority for \$147,448.28. He asks the board which fund they would like to reimburse the district from. The board discussed, and a motion was made by Susanna Valenzuela and seconded by Pearl Rivera to pay the GSRMA invoice from the General Fund. Motion passed. No Nays.

Annual Vacation and Sick Cash Out

The District Manager presents the board with the total amount of employee vacation and sick cash out totals due before July 1st. Motion made by Pearl Rivera and seconded by Alicia Santiago to approve the annual vacation and sick cash out. Motion passed. No Nays.

REPORTS

Manager's/Trustee's Reports: Burials: May Casketed: 21 Cremations: 6 Infants: 1 Disinterment: 0 Monthly Total: 28

YTD: 149 YTD Casketed: 104 YTD Cremations: 41 Infant YTD: 3 Disinterment YTD: 1

The District Manager presented the board with an invoice from LAV/Pinnacle in the amount of \$18,484.60 for the expansion, for which reimbursement will be from the General Fund. The District Manager informed the board that currently, they are making twenty copies of the plans and presenting those copies to the City of Delano for approval. Also, the board was informed that there were two major water line breaks. One was from the service done on Thursday; a vehicle ran over a valve. The other water line break occurred during the weekend. The security personnel left the gate open, and a vehicle ran over a valve at the corner of Autumn Royal Drive and Muscat Road. The District Manager is considering installing a pole in the corner to prevent water line breaks in that area, as they occur regularly in that particular spot. The District Manager notified the board that he spoke with security regarding leaving the gate open. Alicia Santiago addressed the board and the public, stating she is happy to be on the North Kern Cemetery District board. She stated she was one of the public members who would complain. Do not fall for solicitors' report to the office, and it will be taken care of. Also, gophers are a big issue, but little by little, they will be taken care of. She addressed the public, stating, instead of attacking, let us work together. She also thanked the public for showing up. The District Manager commented on tree donations, explaining that families should understand they are donating a tree, and with that donation, the district has the discretion on how to use it. The trees are intended as replacements.

Pearl Rivera excused herself from the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Adjournment: Motion was made by Susanna Valenzuela and seconded by Alicia Santiago that the meeting be closed at 5:00 p.m. Motion passed. No Nays.

Minutes recorded by Connie Sandoval, Executive Assistant