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STATE OF NEVADA

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Southern Nevada
Veterans Memorial Cemetery
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Boulder City, Nevada 89005
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**NORTHERN NEVADA VETERANS
MEMORIAL CEMETERY COMMITTEE (NNVMC)
MEETING MINUTES
11-20-14**

**Call to Order and
Pledge of Allegiance:**

Chairman Chuck Harton
Jerry Finley

**Roll Call
Present:**

Finley, Jerry – Co-Chairman
Grady, Assemblyman Tom
Gustavson, Senator Don
Warden, John
Willson, Wayne

Not Present:

Smith, Sharlee "Charley"
Wilson, Wayne

NDVS Attendees:

Miller, Katherine- Executive Director, NDVS
Gerald, Willette – Deputy Director, NDVS
Garland, Amy – Chief Financial Officer, NDVS
Velazquez, Gabe – Acting Cemetery Superintendent, NNVMC
Lopez - Hawley, Jenniffer– AAll, NNVMC

Guests:

Palmer, Brett – President, N. NV Veterans Coalition
Dave Marlow-State Public Lands

Introduction of Guests and Representatives:

Public Comment:

NDVS Director Miller requested Chairman Harton move the Water Rights study with Dave Marlow, State Public Land, forward to the first item of discussion. Request was granted.

Approval of the 5-8-14 Minutes:

Jerry Finley - made a motion to accept the minutes. Assemblyman Tom Grady –motion was seconded. Decision: Unanimous - will stand as written

Approval of 8-14-14 Agenda:

Assemblyman Tom Grady – Made a motion to accept the agenda with moving the New Business item- Water Right- up to the top of the agenda. Jerry Finley –motion was seconded.

Decision: Unanimous consent with changes

New Business:

Item 2 on agenda- Water Rights Study- Dave Marlow- State Public Lands Department/Division of State Lands briefed the committee on a previous meeting with Director Miller and her staff regarding NDVS's land holdings. NNVMC was a major concern due to it costing the NDVS a significant amount of money for water supplied by the City of Fernley's water system. A possible option is using surface water to replace the City potable water that's currently being used for irrigations. In speaking with Walter Winder, TCID, he seemed very optimistic that we could work something out with TCID. He stated there is a lot of support in the community for the cemetery, maintaining it lush, keeping it green and beautiful. Currently there are currently three ditches across from Vine Street which is nearby. Any one of those ditches could deliver water to Vine Street. From that point it would be the states responsibility to pick up the water from whichever one of the three ditches water is drawn from, transporting the water to the cemetery, and figuring out a system to plug it into the landscaping irrigation system. The state would need to construct some type of water retention basin or pond of some sort up to 1 - 1 ½ acre in size that you can pump out of. The water would have to be pumped from the point of delivery on the ditch. Also if chosen to move forward with this option, there would have to be some improvements made to the proposed ditch, such as installing a 24" pipeline. In efforts to help reduce the cost of improving the ditch, Walter Winder, TCID, offered to help by enabling us to purchase the supplies through their discounted supplier. The estimated cost to putting in the infrastructure is \$400,000 – 600,000 depending on:

1. Where the delivery point is
2. How much improvements are needed to the delivery point –ditch system

TCID will deliver the water today at the rate of just under \$45 per irrigated acre. Currently still trying to get confirmation from TCID as to whether we can lease the water from them or if we have to buy water rights. If water rights need to be purchased, that will add additional costs. In estimation, we would need about 60,000 acre feet of water rights with the water rights costing between \$2,000 - \$4,000 acre feet. With TCID delivering the water it will take the cemetery off of the Fernley potable water system which drives the long term cost down. Average year cost for water is \$47,000 per year with an increase expected in the next year or so to approximately \$50,000. Assemblyman Grady asked Dave Marlow how optimistic he was that he could buy the water rights and if anyone had looked into the possibilities of using Greywater like they do in the subdivisions/golf course. Dave Marlow stated he was fairly optimistic that we can find them. One of his staff, that he considers an expert on water rights, has been talking with a water right consultant and there is water out there to be bought. We would also have the option of leasing some of the City of Fernley's water. Also TCID delivers water from April-November. In harsh winter months the cemetery will still need to have the ability to use the city potable water. Dave Marlow stated they have looked into the Greywater system however the city of Fernley is still addressing that. The Greywater system has to be separate from any other systems. There cannot be any connections. If we were to go that route with the Greywater for irrigation, that then preclude the opportunity for winter time irrigations in the event that you need it unless you put in a separate system.

NNVMC
11-20-14 MINUTES

Director Miller asked if Greywater can be used during the winter. Dave Marlow stated it could be used depending on storage ability it but in his experience, the reclaimed water is shut off during the winter. Gabe Velazquez stated we need to ensure whatever water we are using does not affect the appearance of the headstones. Testing of the water may be necessary before we make a costly decision. Dave Marlow stated if the cemetery board wants to pull the trigger and move forward, he would get with Director Miller to work on:

1. Where do we start to divert the water
2. Figuring out the cost to get the water from where it diverts off into ditch to Vine street
3. What the cost will be to pump it from the ditch to the cemetery
4. Once we get it to cemetery, where is going to be stored, distributed.

With future acreage growth at some point in the cemetery, increase of water rates along with damage the current water supply does to our gravesite makers Director Miller feels if the price is reasonable, it is worth looking into this more.

Senator Gustavson -made a motion to pursue the exploration of surface water options discussed.

Jerry Finley- Seconded the motion

Decision - Unanimous

Reports

- Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery Report- Acting Cemetery Director Gabe Velazquez
 1. Sept 3, 20104 George Webster, Vietnam Veteran's whose remains were found in a Virginia City septic tank in August of 2013, was interred with full honors.
 2. Sept 10th - NNVMC's first same sex Domestic Partner dependent interment.
 3. NNVMC Monthly burial report handout distributed
 4. Expansion project, waiting to hear start date
 5. Paver walkway handout
 - a. Suggested \$19,000 paid out of donation to cover cost of walkway
 - b. sell pavers at \$75 each-3 lines can be inscribed up to 14 characters
 - c. Estimated \$37,000 revenue from walkway when all pavers sold
 6. Xeriscape project currently have 2 bids & waiting on a few other.

Director Miller provided an update on VA marker research -VA will provide at no cost to state; standing tombstones or flat in ground markers. Another option is to contract out for an angled polished concrete gravesite marker which will cost the state approximately \$100 per marker. The cemetery is working with a contractor and the VA to get all three to display in sample Xeriscape area to see what we looks best, has minimal settling as well as ease of maintenance.

7. Gabe Velazquez stated he was denied the position of Cemetery Superintendent. He will go back to being the grounds cemetery supervisor once a new superintendent is hired.

Director Miller stated they do not have a list yet for the position. The challenges are it is a Program Manager II. It's not possible to get to a Program Manager II Position unless you have had Program Manager I experience, not as an intern. Director Miller strongly believes that

Program Manager II is the right level. She stated the Grounds Supervisor is different from this position, a position built as a blue collar supervisor to a white collar manager is not a normal career path. Assemblyman Grady asked Director Miller if the requirements could be lowered and what are the current requirements for the position? Director Miller offered to give her understandings of it as well as send the requirements out board members later on. Assemblyman Grady stated that he was bothered that an HR person would hire someone off of a resume, with a college education but never a shovel in their hand, and then send them to Gabe Velazquez to be trained. Chairman Harton, Jerry Finley, Senator Gustafson and Gabe Velazquez all agreed. Director Miller stated she needs someone to write grants, arbitrate with the City, and testify in front of legislature. She stated that this position only is required to have knowledge of operating equipment, but she absolutely does not want them out on the cemetery grounds operating equipment. Assemblyman Grady stated that we are adding another level of bureaucracy by putting a supervisor who is just going to supervise. They're not a shovel man, but a pencil pusher.

** See Public Comments below

- **Nevada Department Veterans Services - (NDVS)** Director Miller
 1. Budget has gone in for legislative and included the Northern Nevada Home.
 - a. NDVS is the only agency that came in below what was requested from last fiscal year- approximately \$700,000 less while adding 8 new staff through cost allocation.
 2. Nevada Veterans Advocate Program - handouts provided
 - a. Going live with program in 2 weeks. Advocates become informed and eligible to help veterans fill out paperwork and find benefits.
- **Veterans Service Commission (VSC) - (NDVS)** Director Miller

Commissions and councils in the state provide an annual report to the Governor and legislature highlighting their priorities and concerns. Moving forward with the VSC's recommendation, the business of the next VSC will be finalizing the report to send to legislature. Director Miller suggested this may be something the Cemetery Advisory Board may also want to consider doing.

Unfinished business:

Item 1 - Water Bill Discussion- Amy Garland

According to the City of Fernley their test results from the suspected faulty meter came back stating the meter was recording accurately, therefore the agency is required to pay the outstanding balance of \$22,000. When asked we could have an outside agency test the meter due to the astronomical readings that did not coincide with previous years usage in the same periods, we were told the meter has since been re-calibrated. Legislature also questioned us on it when we submitted our budget as we paid out \$92,000 in the fiscal year in compared to last year's \$52,000. Director Miller stated the department is going to send a letter to the City of Fernley to ask them to cut the July bill in half to historical levels as they did for this month of August. If the City of Fernley does not agree to this, there is a possibility the water will be shut off again without notice as they did most recently. When the water was previously shut off, coincidentally and shortly after, OSHA showed up at the cemetery and

issued a citation. The water was already turned back on by the time OSHA arrived but we were cited for being in violation of not having drinking water and portable restrooms available for the employees. The cemetery has a system in place to ensure the staff has potable water and portable restrooms should this occur again.

Director Miller has been in contact with the Attorney General's Office regarding this matter and was instructed if this occurred again to immediately contact the Attorney General's Office so they can file an injunction on the City of Fernley until the water is turned back on.

New Business:

Northern Nevada Veterans Home - Director Miller

December 10, 2014, Director Miller will brief the final plan at the VA. The VA pays two-thirds of the new home while the state pays one-third. Director Miller stated the governor has pledged this is his number one capital improvement project.

Wreaths Across America- Jerry Finley

Jerry Finley is no longer the coordinator for the Wreaths Across America. To date the NNVC has approximately 2,600 wreaths. They are hoping to at a minimum catch up to last year wreath count at 3673. Director Miller offered to assist with marketing by funding ads in the Carson and Reno papers as it supports veteran's service programs.

**** Public Comments –**

Jenniffer Lopez- Hawley, AAll -Northern Nevada Veteran's Cemetery, voiced concerns and inquired as to what kind of back -up plan the department has in place for the employees to help with emergencies, deaths, and departures. We are extremely short handed with only 2 Grounds Equipment operators who work on the grounds. According to our cemetery policies/procedures & safety guidelines 2 Grounds Equipment operators must be present and available for all casket burials. Recently the father of one of the Grounds Equipment Operator's died, but he not able to take any bereavement leave because burials were scheduled and the other equipment operator's wife had to go to the hospital. I also a family emergency, but due to Gabe Velazquez being out on leave, had to open up the cemetery to do business otherwise funerals would need to be cancelled. It is unethical to expect the employees not to be human and take time off or be able to tend to their families in emergencies and even death. Who would come to the cemetery and know the daily operations, how to answer questions, policies and procedures and facilitate funerals? One of the Equipment Operators, Steven Howard is leaving in January, which only leaves 1 out there. We barely have the personnel to function on a daily basis and that is on a perfect day. Director Miller stated if there is a need for additional personnel such as a Grounds Equipment Operator, the program manager would need to provide a staff study and present a recommendation for additional manpower. Assemblyman Grady stated he thought one had already been done in the past. Jerry Finley mentioned if the department knows they are losing staff, we should set something up now. Senator Gustavson stated Jenniffer Lopez-Hawley brought up some good points as far as being short handed. We obviously need to start looking for someone to fill these positions. Regarding Gabe Velazquez's position, can he go from Superintendent to Program I and if so how long before he can do that? Director Miller stated she doesn't think your average Grounds Supervisor

can be a Program Manager because their work experience does just not commence with doing that kind of management. Director Miller stated she could have done the study if she had more time but doesn't. Gabe Velazquez announced he was unaware the case studies were not done. To his knowledge Wes has submitted them previously on a few occasions. Jerry Finley confirmed Wes Block had told him in the past we were in need of more staffing, were working under-staffed and were going forward with trying to justify more positions. Director Miller stated she hasn't seen any evidence that more people are needed. It doesn't mean that additional staffing isn't needed but that the case study and analysis paperwork was never completed and submitted for this cemetery. Director Miller stated is not sure if we need more staffing but does know we need to make it a priority to fill the Program manager II position and immediately stop asking Gabe to do two jobs.

Trooper Memorial – Brett Palmer

Brett Palmer submitted a supplemental application to the previously submitted Trooper Memorial Application as requested by Director Miller at the last meeting. A brief discussion took place regarding additional concerns. Director Miller accepted the completed application and asked the Advisory board if they were endorsing the submitted application with recommendations for approval. Assemblyman Tom Grady – Made a motion to forward the grant to Director Miller with the Cemetery Advisory Board's recommendation for approval. Senator –motion was seconded. Decision: Unanimous consent

Director Miller stated with the recommendation, she will forward the application to public works to see if it meets the requirements. If it doesn't Director Miller will get back in touch with Brett Palmer and his group to pass on any modification that need to be made. We will work directly with them on modifications. If those modifications substantially change, Director Miller will bring it back to the committee for further discussion and decisions.

Next Meeting Date:

- January 29, 2015 at 10:00 am at the Northern Nevada Veterans Cemetery

Adjournment:

Jerry Finley– Made a motion to adjourn. Senator Don Gustafson – motion seconded; Decision: Unanimous consent