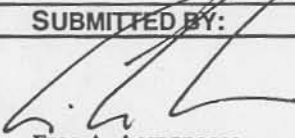


OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
DES MOINES, IOWA

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATION 96-024
JANUARY 15, 1996 AGENDA

SUBJECT:	TYPE:	PREPARED BY:	SUBMITTED BY:
CEMETERY FEES AND CHARGES REVISION	◆ RESOLUTION ORDINANCE RECEIVE/FILE	DONALD TRIPP PARK & RECREATION DEPARTMENT	 ERIC A. ANDERSON CITY MANAGER

SYNOPSIS —

The Park and Recreation Board has proposed increases in the fees and charges policy for the City's cemeteries.

FISCAL IMPACT —

Fees and charges are generally proposed to increase about six percent, which will generate additional revenues in FY 95/96 of approximately \$75,000, and \$150,000 in FY 96/97.

RECOMMENDATION —

Approve the revised fees and charges.

BACKGROUND —

An annual review of cemetery fees and charges was conducted by the Park and Recreation Board's Cemetery Committee.

For several years, many categories of the City's cemetery fees and charges have been significantly lower than their private sector competitors. It has been staff's observation that private sector cemetery fees change proportionately each time the City approves a new fees and charges schedule. Thus, the Committee surveyed the Des Moines area cemeteries and analyzed their most recent fee structure.

Members of the Committee recommended keeping the sale of cemetery spaces relatively low in price, while burial and foundation charges should be increased. Part of the justification for the increase was due also to the recognition that a number of related burial service activities have not been fully charged back in the past to the customer. These services include but are not limited to: clerical work, annual printing costs of the ordinance and rules/regulations booklets, deed transfers, grave opening applications, research, and records maintenance and storage. In addition, there are recent improvements and new programs which significantly add to the overall expense budget. These include new office facilities and increased utilities at Glendale and Laurel Hill, computers, transfer of records to computer storage, and advertising/marketing/sales services.

While most fees have been increased about six percent, an additional fee of \$100 has been added to interment and disinterment charges.

If the Cemetery Evaluation Committee study is approved, the proposed phase-in of further increases in fees and charges, coupled with other recommended changes and improvements, will result in a City subsidy of the cemeteries well within the suggested five to 15 percent range, or even result in a self-sufficient system.

On December 12, 1995, by Resolution No. 11645, the Park and Recreation Board approved the recommended fees and charges increases.