



Council Communication

Office of the City Manager

Date

November 19, 2007

Agenda Item No. 63
Roll Call No. 07-
Communication No. 07-701
Submitted by: Donald M. Tripp,
Park and Recreation Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Accepting Transfer of Ownership of Elm Grove Cemetery.

SYNOPSIS:

Acceptance of the transfer of ownership and control of Elm Grove Cemetery, located at 6505 Indianola Avenue, from Bloomfield Board of Township Trustees to the City of Des Moines. All outstanding costs and expenses will be paid, and then all remaining funds in the operating account will be transferred to the City of Des Moines. Transfer of books and records will be to the Park and Recreation Department which will assume the responsibility of the operation of the cemetery.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: Operating subsidy of approximately \$3,500 annually. Cemetery management estimates expenses to be between \$13,000 and \$18,000 and revenue between \$9,000 and \$15,000 annually.

Responsibility for the maintenance, operations, snow removal, burials, space sales, and record keeping at this five-acre cemetery will be assigned to the Laurel Hill cemetery office and field crew. Mowing and trimming will be added to the existing contract with Mario's Lawn Service, which is now at \$750 per cycle with an expected ten cycles each season; this, however, can fluctuate with the length of growing seasons. Cemetery management expects higher costs for fuel and equipment maintenance as Elm Grove is nearly ten miles from our Laurel Hill facility. Elm Grove is a non-perpetual care cemetery yet, once under the auspices of the City of Des Moines it will become a perpetual care cemetery subject to our current fees and charges. Elm Grove infrastructure and site needs will be addressed and added to our CIP requests.

Funding Source: Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Operating Budget, Park and Recreation Department - Municipal Cemeteries, PKS010400 – page 223.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

On July 1, 1989, 7,169 acres of Bloomfield Township was annexed into the City of Des Moines, which included the Elm Grove Cemetery.

On October 23, 2007, the Park and Recreation Board approved acceptance of the Elm Grove Cemetery which later received final approval of transfer from the Bloomfield Board of Township Trustees.

On November 1, 2007, the Bloomfield Board of Township Trustees passed a resolution to transfer ownership and control of the Elm Grove Cemetery and all remaining records and funds in the Elm Grove Cemetery operating account, after payment of outstanding costs and expenses. Bloomfield Township had previously contacted the Park and Recreation department to indicate that they intended to cease care and operation of this cemetery and were interested to work out an orderly transfer of the cemetery operations to the City. Under Iowa Code section 523I.316, the City is required to restore or maintain the physical integrity of a cemetery within its borders if the cemetery is abandoned.

There is a balance of \$9,337.56 in the Elm Grove Cemetery operating account. After outstanding costs and expenses are paid, the remaining funds will be transferred to the City of Des Moines

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE