

 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Council Communication</b> Office of the City Manager</p>	<b>Date:</b> July 10, 2017
	<b>Agenda Item No.</b> 29 <b>Roll Call No.</b> <u>17-1169</u> <b>Communication No.</b> <u>17-523</u> <b>Submitted by:</b> Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director

**AGENDA HEADING:**

Approval of donation agreement with the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines regarding resetting of monuments at Woodland Cemetery.

**SYNOPSIS:**

The Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines (with the support of several donors) proposes an agreement to provide a sum of \$25,000 to pay for the leveling and resetting of between 50-100 monuments in Woodland Cemetery, Blocks 10 and 11 with the work to be completed by November 30, 2017, as a pilot project.

The Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines desires to make a charitable contribution to the pilot project providing the City provide funds for this work matching the \$25,000 donation during FY 2018.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Amount: \$50,000; Revenue \$25,000 from Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines

Funding Source: 2017-2018 CIP, Page Park – 4, Cemetery Infrastructure Improvements. PK138, \$25,000 G.O. Bonds Issued, with a \$25,000 donation from the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

- As a perpetual care cemetery, memorials (sometimes called headstones or footstones) adhere to specific requirements specified by the City. However, since most of the monuments are from the 1800 and early 1900s, there are no known living individuals caring for the monuments. At the time the monuments were installed, few regulations were in place regarding the type and the installation methods. This has led to monuments that are leaning or fallen. Recognizing this is an obligation of the heirs and relatives of the deceased, the monuments have been left untouched. The disrepair negatively impacts the marketability of all City of Des Moines cemeteries.
- The donors of the pilot project felt Blocks 10 and 11 needed attention because they were close to the front entrance of the cemetery. The scope of work does not include monuments that have damage (chips, cracks, broken pieces, or faded lettering) or mausoleums.

- Most monuments in the Woodland Cemetery are usually two (2) pieces (the base and the headstone). The pieces are joined together by a setting compound similar to window glazing putty. The compound is not designed to structurally support the monument but is meant to prevent moisture entry. The two (2) pieces for larger stones are set on top of a cement foundation. Gravity keeps the pieces together; however, various factors may contribute to the pieces coming apart. This results in the stone becoming unlevelled or tipping over. Most burials at the cemetery did not contain a burial vault and the result has impacted the foundation, base and headstone. Monuments set on a hilly terrain tend to be pushed downhill, slowly through the forces of soil erosion. Depending on their orientation to the hill, monuments tend to lean forward or backward, or side to side.
- Although it may appear simple to reset a monument, it's a difficult process due to not knowing what is underground until you begin the excavation process. Larger monuments need to be raised with proper tools and techniques. The work will also include cleaning the selected monuments.
- The pilot plan is a small scale preliminary project conducted to evaluate the feasibility, time, cost and adverse events in an attempt to predict and perform a full-scale project. The City and donors will evaluate the project by December 31, 2017, and determine the next steps.
- The Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines donation requires a dollar for dollar match between Foundation and City funds in order for the City to receive the full \$25,000.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE**

**BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE**

**ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE**

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