

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date: November 6, 2017
	Agenda Item No. 31 Roll Call No. <u>17-1902</u> Communication No. <u>17-770</u> Submitted by: Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director

AGENDA HEADING:

Approval of proposed amendment of the Schedule of Fees for Municipal Code Chapter 34 Cemeteries.

SYNOPSIS:

Approval of the Parks and Recreation Board, Citizen Cemetery Advisory Committee, and staff's recommended changes to the Schedule of Fees for Municipal Code Chapter 34 Cemeteries.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: New fees include annual rate adjustments for cemetery services and non-select spaces as well as rates associated with a product option, and marketing-strategy pricing of popular high-demand amenities and locations. Prices to accommodate lower income individuals/families and veterans have been adjusted slightly to meet operating expenses. It is not possible to accurately predict the overall increase in revenue given the fact that at-need sales vary by the number of individuals passing away in our community in a given year. Cemetery lot sales are positioned to meet the market demand based on customer needs and are comparable to private cemeteries within Des Moines.

Funding Source: Additional revenue will be deposited into FY 2018 Operating Budget, Cemetery, G001 PK200220, page 149.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

On September 14, 2015, by Roll Call No. 15-1531, City Council approved adopting the Schedule of Cemetery Fees, as is required by Municipal Code Sec. 34-69. The fee changes brought existing pricing up-to-date with the competition and demand in the marketplace, products and services. Fees have not been changed since 2015. Pricing, product, and service options are now assessed on an ongoing basis to make adjustments according to consumer demand, trends, and depletion of inventory in high-sales areas of the cemeteries. Fees have since been established as new areas in the City's cemeteries have opened to sales and all fees are being assessed on a regular basis to determine where adjustments should be made.

All price changes will be effective January 1, 2018. Pricing categories/fees recommended for approval are outlined on the attached current price list and include a new-product offering at Laurel Hill Cemetery scheduled for fall 2018, Saturday time-parameter pricing, and proposed adjustments to the existing fees.

The Park and Recreation Board voted unanimously at the October 24, 2017 meeting to recommend forwarding these fees to the City Council with a recommendation for adoption.

Details regarding some of the recommendations follow:

- Burial Services Fees for Opening and Closing a Grave for full interment at All Cemeteries –
 - Adult services for Monday to Friday will increase from \$1,040 to \$1,070
 - Adult services for Saturday will increase from \$1,675 to \$1,750
 - Infant services for Saturday (allowed only before 1:00 p.m.) will increase from \$465 to \$475

- Burial Service fees for Opening and Closing Cremated Remains (Ashes) at All Cemeteries –
 - Adult services for Saturday between 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. will increase from \$1,185 to \$1,250
 - 2nd interment services will increase from \$450 to \$525

- Fee for Disinterment at All Cemeteries –
Adult disinterment will increase from \$2,000 to \$2,500

- Miscellaneous Fees at All Cemeteries –
 - Foundation fee (per square inch) will increase from \$.69 to \$.75
 - State filing fee will increase from \$5 to \$10
 - A new fee for Cremation Bench service and filing is \$100

- Lot Sales for Elm Grove Cemetery (6501 Indianola Avenue) spaces –
 - Single spaces, allowing planting and an upright monument, in Area A will increase from \$875 to \$900
 - Single spaces, allowing planting and an upright monument, in Area B will increase from \$1,250 to \$1,300
 - All two (2) space companion lots will increase from \$1,300 to \$1,450 since all \$1,300 spaces are sold

- Lot Sales for Glendale Cemetery (4909 University Avenue) –
 - Single spaces, allowing upright monuments and planting, in Block 37 will increase from \$1,700 to \$1,750
 - Single spaces, allowing upright monuments and planting, in Block N will increase from \$1,950 to \$2,150
 - Single-at-need spaces in Block 41 will increase from \$800 to \$900
 - Islamic single spaces in Block 37-B will increase from \$800 to \$900
 - Cremains spaces in Block N will be priced at \$775 since all \$650 spaces are sold
 - Cremains spaces, allowing planting and upright monuments, in Block N will be sold for \$875 since all \$750 spaces are sold
 - Two (2) space lots in Block 36A, allowing upright monuments, will be sold for \$3,200 since all the \$3,000 spaces are sold
 - Two (2) space lots in Block 37 (110 square feet), allowing upright monuments, will increase from \$3,200 to \$3,600
 - Two (2) space lots in Block 37 (88 square feet), allowing upright monuments, will increase from \$3,000 to \$3,400

- Lower Block M, allowing planting and upright monuments, will increase from \$4,250 to \$4,375
- Three (3) space lots in Block 36A, allowing upright monuments (132 square feet), will be sold for \$4,800 since the \$4,500 spaces are sold
- Three (3) space lots in Block 37 (132 square feet), allowing plantings and upright monuments, will increase from \$4,500 to \$4,900
- Glendale Lakeview Columbarium Package Pricing (4909 University Avenue) –
 - The Glendale Lakeview Columbarium pricing currently allows for space and services to be sold separately, which is confusing to the customer. The new price of \$2,990 (south side near the pond) and \$2,550 (for all other columbaria) will bundle the cost of the space, opening/closing, and engraving. The current price does not change with the proposed package price. The new package price is for one (1) or two (2) spaces in the columbarium and opening/closing services Monday through Friday. The package price for a columbarium Saturday service is \$3,540 (near pond) and \$3,100 (away from pond).
- Lot Sales for Laurel Hill Cemetery (3601 East Court Avenue) –
 - Adult space in Blocks W-A and W-B will increase from \$800 to \$900
 - Single upright monuments in Block P will increase from \$1,400 to \$1,600
 - Infant spaces in Block K will increase from \$360 to \$490
 - In-ground cremains spaces in Block N will increase from \$600 to \$750
 - Two (2) space lots in Block L, allowing upright monuments and annual plantings, will increase from \$3,200 to \$3,400
 - Two (2) space lots in Blocks R and T Section 1, both allowing upright monuments, will increase from \$3,400 to \$3,600
- Laurel Hill Cemetery Columbarium Package Pricing (3601 East Court Avenue) –
 - The Laurel Hill Columbarium Niche pricing currently allows for spaces and services to be sold separately which is confusing to the customer. The new price will bundle the cost of the space, opening/closing and engraving, and will be \$2,300. The current price does not change with the bundling and is intended to be sold as a package. The new package price is for one (1) or two (2) spaces and for burial services Monday through Friday. The package price for a columbarium Saturday service is \$2,850.
- Laurel Hill Cemetery Scattering Memorial (3601 East Court Avenue) – OPENING Fall 2018 –
 - An increase in cremation demand has led to the development of the new scattering area at Glendale in the prairie area established a few years ago. Work has begun on a similar area at Laurel Hill Cemetery. This is unique to Iowa and will include walkways with benches and two (2) large granite boulders for engraving names of those whose ashes have been scattered. The price for scattering and engraving is \$595; the price for scattering without engraving is \$450. The price will be the same as the Glendale Cemetery location. There has been high demand for this product at the Laurel Hill Cemetery.

The level of these prices are suggested and recommended by the Citizen Cemetery Advisory Committee (CCAC) of the Park and Recreation Board, which has members associated with the funeral service industry.

Cemetery management is continuing to evaluate the City's municipal cemetery product offerings and services, and will be establishing new price categories or changing existing fees on an ongoing basis to stay in alignment with demand, the marketplace, and ever-changing cultural changes that affect this industry.

Staff recommends these fees to be implemented effective January 1, 2018, following City Council approval. Preliminary conversations with funeral homes and monument companies have occurred about the proposed rate increases. This was necessary since funeral homes offer package prices sold in advance of a customer's passing. Once the new prices are approved by Council, formal communication will prepare the municipal cemetery partners as they work with customers.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: September 14, 2015

Roll Call Number: [15-1531](#)

Action: [Adopting](#) an amended Schedule of Fees for Cemeteries under Chapter 34 of the City Code. ([Council Communication No. 15-485](#)) Moved by Coleman to adopt. Refer to the City Manager to consider discounted cemetery fees for City employees. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Park and Recreation

Date: October 24, 2017

Resolution Number: 17-073

Action: Motion by Nassif to approve cemetery fees as presented, Second by Woodard. Motion carried.

Board: Park and Recreation

Date: September 26, 2017

Resolution Number: 17-063

Action: Motion by Boggus to receive and file cemetery fees with the proposed corrections. Second by Facto. Motion carried.

Board: Park and Recreation

Date: August 25, 2015

Resolution Number: 15-056

Action: Motion by Woodard to approve Cemetery Fees as submitted, seconded by Davis, Motion carried.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

For more information on this and other agenda items, please call the City Clerk's Office at 515-283-4209 or visit the Clerk's Office on the first floor of City Administration Building, 400 E. Court Avenue Ste.116. Council agendas are available to the public at the City Clerk's Office on Thursday afternoon preceding Monday's Council meeting. Citizens can also request to receive meeting notices and agendas by email by calling the Clerk's Office or sending their request via email to cityclerk@dmgov.org.