


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	18-602	Meeting:	November 19, 2018
	Agenda Item:	28	Roll Call:	18-1915
	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 associated with a product option, and marketing-strategy pricing of popular high-demand amenities and locations. Prices to accommodate lower income individuals/families 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 fees 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 2019 Operating Budget, Cemetery, G001 PK200220, page 149.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- On November 6, 2017, by Roll Call No. 17-1902, 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.
- All price changes will be effective January 1, 2019. Pricing categories/fees recommended for approval are outlined on the current price list.
- The Citizen Cemetery Advisory Committee (CCAC) voted unanimously at the August 1, 2018 meeting to recommend forwarding these fees to the Parks and Recreation Board with a recommendation for adoption.

- The Parks and Recreation Board voted unanimously at the October 18, 2018 meeting to recommend forwarding these fees to the City Council with a recommendation for adoption. Details regarding the recommendations follow:
 - Burial services fees for opening and closing a grave for full internment at all cemeteries
 - Overtime beyond regular operating hours after 4:30 P.M. on Monday to Friday and after 3:00 P.M. on Saturday will increase from \$100 to \$125 on the ½-hour.
 - Miscellaneous fees at all cemeteries:
 - If a customer desires to have cemetery staff scatter cremated remains in the Wildflower Scattering Garden at Glendale or Laurel Hill Cemetery, the new fee is \$50 per cremation.
 - Rental of the Glendale Abbey for burial services is a new fee. The fee is \$200 for a minimum of two (2) hours and \$50 for each additional ½-hour and is restricted to the Cemetery Office operating hours. Reservations are required and space is limited to 50 individuals.
- The level of these prices are suggested and recommended by the 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, 2019, 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: November 6, 2017

Roll Call Number: [17-1902](#)

Action: [Amending](#) the Schedule of Fees for Cemeteries under Chapter 34 of the City Code. ([Council Communication No. 17-770](#)) Moved by Hensley to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Parks and Recreation Board

Date: October 18, 2018

Resolution Number: 18-073

Action: Motion by Boggus to approve cemetery fees as presented. Seconded by Potter. Motion carried.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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