


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

	Number:	21-433	Meeting:	October 18, 2021
	Agenda Item:	59/35	Roll Call:	21-433
	Submitted by:	Benjamin R. Page, Parks and Recreation Director		

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving and adopting an amended schedule of fees for Cemeteries under Chapter 34 of the City Code and Sec. 34-69 regarding various changes to cemetery fees and Sec. 34-203 regarding feeding and disturbing wildlife.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of the Parks and Recreation Board, 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 the community each 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 Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Operating Budget, Cemetery, G001 PK200220, Page 149.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- On September 28, 2012, the Parks and Recreation Board unanimously approved the proposed changes to the schedule of fees and rules.
- On July 7, 2021, the Cemetery Advisory Committee 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, services, and increased maintenance costs. Fees have not been changed since January 2020. Pricing, product and service options are now assessed on an ongoing basis to adjust 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.

- The Cemetery Advisory Committee reviewed the draft Goose Management Plan and recommended a change in the wording of Sec. 34-203. Disturbing flowers, trees and animal life. Currently the section reads: No person shall feed, disturb, or remove the birds, fish or other animals in the cemetery. The recommended change is: No person, except persons authorized, shall feed, disturb, or remove birds, waterfowl, fish or other animals in the cemetery. This will allow staff to conduct hazing efforts and persons certified by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) as Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators to manipulate nests and conduct round-ups related to the management of resident Canadian geese.
- All price changes will be effective January 1, 2022. Pricing categories/fees recommended for approval are outlined on the attached current price list.
- The Cemetery Advisory Committee voted unanimously at the July 7, 2021, meeting to recommend forwarding these fees to the Parks and Recreation Board with a recommendation for adoption. Details regarding some of the recommendations follow:
 - Burial services fees for opening and closing a grave for full internment at all cemeteries:
 - Adult services for Monday to Friday will increase from \$1,100 to \$1,150.
 - Adult services for Saturday will increase from \$1,825 to \$1,875.
 - Miscellaneous cemetery fees for all cemeteries:
 - Foundation footing setting fees (charged by square inch) will increase from \$.75 to \$.78.
 - Guided tours at Woodland/St. Ambrose and Glendale Cemetery is a new fee of \$10 per person.
 - Guided tours group rate at Woodland/St. Ambrose and Glendale Cemetery is a new fee for organized groups to receive a discount and pay \$7 per person with a minimum number of 10 individuals as part of a regular scheduled tour.
 - Lot sales for Glendale Cemetery (4909 University Avenue):
 - Block 30-B: Single select spaces, upright markers, planting allowed will be increased from \$1,800 to \$2,000.
 - Block 30-B: 2-space companion spaces, upright markers, planting allowed will be increased from \$3,600 to \$3,900.
 - Block 36-A: Single select spaces, upright markers, no planting will be increased from \$1,600 to \$1,800.
 - Block 36-A: 2-space companion select spaces, upright markers, no planting will be increased from \$3,300 to \$3,500.
 - Block 36-C: Single select spaces, flush markers, no planting is a new option and will be priced at \$1,250.
 - Block 36-C: Single select spaces, upright markers, annual planting is a new option and will be priced at \$1,900.
 - Block 37: 2-space companion select spaces, upright markers, annual and perennial planting allowed will be increased from \$3,700 to \$3,900.
 - Block 41: Single non-select at-need space, flush marker, no planting will be increased from \$925 to \$950.
 - Block H: Single select space, flush marker, no planting will be increased from \$1,225 to \$1,250.

- Block H-D: 2-space companion select spaces, upright markers, no planting is a new option priced at \$3,800.
 - Block J: Single select space, flush marker, no planting will be increased from \$1,225 to \$1,250.
 - Block M (lower half): 2-space companion spaces, upright monument, planting allowed will be increased from \$4,500 to \$4,600.
 - Block N: Single select space. Upright markers, annual and perennial planting allowed will be increased from \$2,200 to \$2,250.
- Staff recommends these fees to be implemented effective January 1, 2022, following anticipated City Council approval. Preliminary conversations with funeral homes and monument companies have occurred regarding the proposed rate increases. This is necessary because funeral homes offer package prices sold in advance of a customer's passing. Once the new prices are approved by City Council, formal communication will prepare the municipal cemetery partners as they work with customers.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: November 4, 2019

Roll Call Number: [19-1740](#)

Action: Chapter 34 of the Municipal Code regarding Schedule of Fees for Chapter 34 ([Council Communication No. 19-482](#)) Moved by Gatto to adopt. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Parks and Recreation Board

Date: September 28, 2021

Resolution Number: 21-064

Action: Motion by Avila to approve the proposed cemetery fees. Second by Bremner. Motion carried.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Second and third reading.

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