



SHIRE OF DENMARK CEMETERY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE DENMARK CEMETERY,
854 SOUTH COAST HIGHWAY, DENMARK,
WEDNESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2013.

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Council Committee Meeting

6 February 2013

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1. DECLARATION OF OPENING/ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISITORS

10.05am – *The Presiding Person, Mrs McGuinness, declared the meeting open.*

2. RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/APOLOGIES/APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCEMEMBERS:

Mrs Bev McGuinness, Denmark Historical Society (Presiding Person)
 Cr Belinda Rowland, Council Delegate
 Mr Chris Parr, Community Member
 Mr Colin Cayless, Community Member

STAFF:

Ms Claire Thompson, Executive Assistant

APOLOGIES:

Mr Fred Scott, Denmark Historical Society
 Mrs Judith Ross, Community Member

ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Nil

ABSENT:

Nil

VISITORS:

Chris Cafferata, Consultant

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Nil

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PERSON PRESIDING

Nil

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Nil

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**5.1 COMMITTEE MEETING**

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION & OFFICER RECOMMENDATION	ITEM 5.1
MOVED: Bev McGuinness	SECONDED: Chris Parr
That the minutes of the Cemetery Advisory Committee Meeting held on the 7 November 2012, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings.	
CARRIED	

5.1.1 BUSINESS ARISING

Nil

6. REPORTS

6.1 Development Plan for the Denmark Cemetery (Reserve 11655) – 854 South Coast Highway, Denmark

At the last meeting the Committee discussed a development plan for the Denmark Cemetery and came up with the following ‘wish list’ of things they would like to see incorporation and/or considered in the plan.

- *New Niche Wall (when required) – in the middle of the new burial ground area;*
- *Natural Earth Burial area (ideally north west corner of reserve) – with a seat for plaques to go on;*
- *Bridge between ‘old’ and ‘new’ sections (with provision for plaques);*
- *Ash interment along paths & kerbs;*
- *Landscaping of garden link between ‘old’ and ‘new’ sections – memorial gardens;*
- *New Burial Ground (practical layout – best use of land) – kerb plaques;*
- *Sealing & linemarking of overflow car park;*
- *Improvements to lower sandy row (eastern side of reserve) – currently soft sandy and wet;*
- *Eco Toilet or other environmental alternative;*
- *Memorial seating;*
- *Landscaping & pathways – Kingia Australis / Memorial Tree area;*
- *Expose Jacksonii & Ficifolia Niche Walls;*
- *Signage – internal for niche walls, gardens & sections;*
- *Other memorialisation options – non ash interment;*
- *Other memorialisation options – ash interment;*
- *Sealing of loop road to encourage one way exit.*

The Committee then resolved as follows;

“That the Cemetery Advisory Committee (CAC) request the Chief Executive Officer to approach the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board (MCB) Planning Department and request their assistance with a draft Development Concept Plan for the Denmark Cemetery which incorporates as many of the ideas / desires / needs expressed by the CAC Members and plan an onsite meeting between the planner and the Committee.”

Mr Chris Cafferata, a former planning & development manager for the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board (MCB), was on site to discuss a development concept plan.

Mr Cafferata noted the Committee’s needs and desires for the future of the Denmark Cemetery and will do some draft concept plans for the Committee to consider at their next meeting.

Outcomes

The Executive Assistant agreed to undertake the following;

- *Send Mr Cafferata*
 - *A contour survey of the reserve;*
 - *Description of the soil type*
 - *Sectioned plan of the Denmark Cemetery*
- *Request the Shire’s Works Department to do a test dig in the north west section of the Cemetery to determine the viability of the area for Natural Earth Burials.*
- *Amend the Application for Monumental Works Form to include a reference to the inscription of the grave site number on the headstone or plinth – to make it easier for people to find graves.*
- *Check with Council’s Community Emergency Services Manager about the prescribed burn and why it didn’t take place when it was scheduled.*

6.2 Funeral Etiquette

Letters were sent to the two local Funeral Directors requesting their advice in relation to funeral etiquette, which was raised at the April 2012 meeting.

Vince Calleja from Bethany Funeral Home provided the following response:

"Thanks for the info regarding funeral Etiquette.

We do not have a specific problem as such as we have come to accept that some motorists are just plain ignorant. We have had situations of vehicles mounting foot paths to pass the hearse, to being abused by passing drivers. There is nothing that can be done as people have lost their basic manners. An education programme in schools would be the only method that I can see to overcome this as most parents have not been taught common manners themselves.

As to what we do? I have a very definite approach to traffic control where I feel it is necessary. For instance at busy intersections or crossing and right turns on busy roads. I will stop the oncoming traffic to allow the cortège to pass. As to closing roads I do not feel this is necessary unless the vehicle numbers are overwhelming. The assistance of the Police is sufficient however in the past we have been able to manage this situation ourselves."

No response has been received from Albany Funeral Directors.

Noted.

6.3 Illegible Headstones

At the April 2012 meeting Mrs Ross stated that during a recent visit to the Cemetery she had noticed that most of the headstones, which were installed as a Council 'grave identification' project, were now illegible and asked what could be done about it.

Mrs McGuinness suggested that perhaps the Committee could organise a Busy Bee at some time in the future to refurbish the headstones, which could be more cost effective for Council.

At the November 2012 meeting, members discussed suggestions as to ways to refurbish the headstones noting that Albany Monumental Masons had quoted \$90 (plus GST) per headstone. It was suggested that perhaps a letter could be sent to the families (owners) of those which had illegible headstones.

The following outcomes were derived from that meeting;

- Ms Thompson will search for the contact list used when the headstones for unmarked graves were purchased.
- Mrs McGuinness will visit the Cemetery to see how many are illegible & report back to the next meeting.

Mrs McGuinness advised that the Denmark Historical Society had discussed this issue and were thinking that if the Shire could provide them with paint, tools and equipment (including a pressure cleaner) they might be able to take on the project themselves.

The Executive Assistant noted that if they wish to undertake the task as a community project then Council could assist in some way.

6.4 Funds Allocation for the Denmark Cemetery

At the meeting held on November 2012 the following recommendation to Council was made;

“That the fees received for reservations and Grants of Rights of Burial at the Denmark Cemetery be transferred to a Council Reserve annually to be used for Cemetery purposes such as improvement and development.”

Officer comment: Whilst preparing the report to Council to accompany this recommendation the Executive Assistant had a detailed look at the annual Cemetery Budget for the last two years.

Financial Year	Expenditure		Income (Actual)
	Grave Digging	General Maintenance	
2011 – 2012	\$11,191.13	\$12,225.41	\$8,280.59
2012 – 2013	\$7,216.95	\$11,184.87	\$6,677.30

- General Maintenance includes – wages, filling of sunken graves, cost of sand, drainage, other ad hoc maintenance issues etc...
- Grave Digging includes – wages, hire of machinery and sand etc...
- Income includes – administration fees for plaque arrangements, grants of right of burial, reservation fees, payments for plaques (Council pays for plaques out of the General Maintenance Account and families reimburse Council which is then recorded as income) etc...

Council has a Policy (No. P100706) titled “Cemetery Income” which reads as follows;

“Objective

To ensure that all surplus income over expenditure inclusive of depreciation in relation to the Denmark Cemetery are transferred to the Cemetery Reserve Fund.

Policy

Council annually include in its Budget the following principle; That any surplus income over expenditure (including depreciation) at the Denmark Cemetery at the conclusion of a financial year is to be transferred to a Cemetery Reserve Fund to then be utilised for future upgrading, expansion, refurbishment of facilities and/or additional facilities.

Responsibility for implementation

The Director of Finance & Administration is responsible for implementing this policy.”

The Executive Assistant discussed the Committee’s recommendation with the Chief Executive Officer who advised that Council’s existing Policy already provides for the transfer of any funds which exceed expenditure to be transferred to a reserve fund.

As seen from the figures above, expenditure for the Cemetery at least doubles the income received. This is true of previous years looked at, since at least 2006.

In addition, Council has contributed the following capital funds in the last few years;

Entrance Statement	\$7,720.00
Internal Road Sealing & Kerbing	\$19,600.00
Memorial Tree	\$25,000.00
New Niche Wall (excluding donation)	\$7,000.00
Total	\$59,320.00

** purchase of positions, leaves and the like for the Memorial Tree and Niche Wall should cover the capital cost of these facilities, over the term of their life.*

It is intended that the Development / Landscape Concept Plan, once completed, be put to Council by the Committee with recommendations concerning stages (needs verses

desires) and funds required and over what period. This could add up to quite a substantial sum over the next 5 to 10 years.

The Executive Assistant recommends that the Committee reconsider its recommendation of November 2012, noting that Policy P100706 already exists, and consider budget requirements/requests (future capital and ongoing) at the time of referring the draft Development Concept Plan to Council in the next few months.

Noted.

Outcome

The Executive Assistant to send members a copy of the Fees and Charges with proposed amendments for perusal and feedback prior to submission to Council's Director of Finance & Administration and Council.

6.5 Natural Earth Burials – Rules and Guidelines

At the November 2012 members were given a couple of examples of Rules & Guidelines for Natural Earth Burials from other Cemeteries and asked to peruse them with a view to developing some for the Shire of Denmark. For discussion noting that no determination needs to be made prior to Council agreeing to designate a portion of the existing Cemetery to be used for Natural Earth Burials.

This item was not dealt with and will be carried over to the next Agenda.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS

Nil

8. NEXT MEETING

The Cemetery Advisory Committee Charter states that meetings are held as determined by the Committee (approximately every 2 months).

The next meeting of the Cemetery Advisory Committee will be held on Wednesday, 3 April 2013 at 1.00pm.

9. CLOSURE OF MEETING

2.20pm – There being no further business to discuss the Presiding Person, Mrs McGuinness, declared the meeting closed.

The Chief Executive Officer recommends the endorsement of these minutes at the next meeting.

Signed: _____

Dale Stewart – Chief Executive Officer

Date: _____

These minutes were confirmed at the meeting of the _____

Signed: _____

(Presiding Person at the meeting at which the minutes were confirmed.)