

Murrieta Valley Cemetery District

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

June 11, 2026 Meeting at 1:00PM

Meeting called to order at 1:00PPM by Chair Barton

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

- Trustees present: Chair Barton, Vice-chair Pham, Trustee McConnell, Trustee Penko
- Staff present: General Manager Sauer

Approval of Agenda

- Motion for approval: Trustee Penko, Second: Vice-Chair Pham

Trustee Onboarding / Oath of Office

- Glenn Gerber was officially sworn in as a Trustee of the Murrieta Valley Cemetery District Board of Trustees and completed the oath of office process. The Board welcomed Trustee Gerber to the District.

Trustee Reports

- Trustee Jennifer Mejares-Pham requested that the presentation of a recognition award from Catie Rudolph and her Family, representing Children of the American Revolution, for MVCD's respectful presentation of the US Flag be entered into the official minutes.
- Trustees discussed the success of the 2026 Memorial Day Ceremony and expressed appreciation to General Manager, volunteers, community organizations, and participants who contributed to the event.

Memorial Day Ceremony Recap

- Board members agreed the Memorial Day Ceremony was successful and organized.
- Positive feedback was received regarding:
 - Improved event flow and timing.
 - Relocation of refreshments away from the ceremony area.
 - Participation by DAR, CAR, American Legion members, Scouts, and community volunteers.
 - Performances by the National Anthem soloist Ericka Hernandez and bugler Cole Orndoff.

- Discussion occurred regarding opportunities to:
 - Increase public attendance.
 - Coordinate future Memorial Day observances with the City of Murrieta.
 - Explore a joint community event format in future years.
- Trustees discussed the importance of ensuring all veterans interred at the cemetery are properly recognized during annual ceremonies.

Financial Report

General Manager Michael Sauer presented the financial report through April 2026.

Key highlights:

- Unrestricted funds totaled approximately \$2.07 million.
- Fee revenue remains ahead of the prior year.
- Property tax revenue and investment income exceeded prior-year levels.
- Overall income is higher than the same period last year.
- Expenses remain below prior-year levels.
- Payroll restructuring savings for April totaled approximately \$6,177.
- District funds were transferred from lower-yield accounts into California CLASS investments to improve interest earnings.

Burial Activity Report

- May 2026 interments: 13
- May 2025 interments: 7
- Eight-year May average: 8.3
- Year-to-date interments through May 2026: 59
- Year-to-date interments through May 2025: 46
- General Manager reported burial activity continues to exceed historical averages.

Operations Report

- General Manager provided an update regarding a groundskeeping employee, who remains on workers' compensation leave due to a knee injury.
- Trustees expressed appreciation for Chucho's efforts and increased workload during staffing shortages.

Property Tax Revenue Discussion

- General Manager reviewed property tax allocation information and the impact of welfare, charity, and religious tax exemptions on multi-family housing developments.
- Discussion included:
 - Reduced tax revenue generated from certain apartment complexes.
 - Comparison of Murrieta Valley Cemetery District's tax allocation percentage to neighboring cemetery districts.

- Information suggesting that Murrieta Valley Cemetery District receives a lower share of property tax revenue than several neighboring public cemetery districts.
- General Manager was encouraged to continue researching possible avenues for discussing allocation adjustments with county officials.

ICCFA University

- General Manager reported receiving an ICCFA University scholarship.
- He will attend the Administration and Leadership program.
- Trustees congratulated Mr. Sauer and discussed the value of the professional development opportunity.

Remembrance Wall Project

- General Manager presented conceptual plans for a Remembrance Wall Project.
- Partial grant funding has been secured through Riverside County.
- Estimated District contribution after grant funding is approximately \$4,000.00
- Potential installation locations were reviewed, including:
 - Near the office area.
 - Near the flagpole and ceremonial gathering area.
 - Top of section E.
- Trustees provided preliminary feedback regarding preferred placement options, though no placement site was selected. Vice-Chair Pham suggested a soil study should be performed as part of the site selection process.

Social Media Policy

General Manager presented draft of a social media policy for the board to review. Vice-chair Pham suggested to update it after review of other agency policies and have a first read at next meeting.

Action Items

Minutes from 05/05/2026 and 05/12/2026 meetings, April 2026 disbursements and financial statements were approved. Motion by Trustee McConnell, seconded by Chair Barton. Remainder of 2026 board meetings scheduled. 4 ayes and 1 abstain (Trustee Gerber not present for previous meetings).

Close session entered at 02:13PM – Employee evaluation.

Return to open session at 3:04PM with no reportable action. Direction given to General Manager

Meeting adjourned at 3:04PM
