


COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

 CITY OF DES MOINES OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER	Number:	23-487	Meeting:	November 6, 2023
	Agenda Item:	34	Roll Call:	23-1549
	Submitted by:	Benjamin R. Page, Park and Recreation Director		

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving and adopting an amended Schedule of Fees for Cemeteries under Chapter 34 of the City Code.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend approval of the Parks and Recreation Board, Cemetery Advisory Committee, and staff recommended changes to the Schedule of Fees for Municipal Code Chapter 34 Cemeteries.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: Updated fees include annual rate adjustments for cemetery services associated with a product option, and marketing-strategy pricing of popular high-demand amenities and locations. Accurately predicting the overall increase in revenue is not possible given the fact that at-need sales vary by the number of individuals passing away in our 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) 2024 Operating Budget, Cemetery, G001, PK200220, Page 162.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- On October 24, 2023, the Parks and Recreation Board unanimously approved the proposed changes to the schedule of fees and rules.
- On September 6, 2023, 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. 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.

- All price changes will be effective January 1, 2024. Pricing categories/fees recommended for approval are outlined on the current price list (attached to the roll call).
- The Cemetery Advisory Committee voted at the September 6, 2023, meeting to recommend forwarding these fees to the Parks and Recreation Board with a recommendation for adoption. Details 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 be increased from \$1,150 to \$1,200.
 - Overtime charge for burial services Monday to Saturday (per half hour) will increase from \$125 to \$150. Overtime applies beginning at 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, Saturday 3:00 p.m., regardless of the public's departure time from a burial site; overtime applies at the rate of \$150 per ½ hour on the ½ hour and ends when staff leaves a burial site.
 - **Miscellaneous Cemetery Fees for All Cemeteries–**
 - Disinterment for casket remains will be increased from \$2,700 to \$2,900.
 - Disinterment of cremated remains will increase from \$850 to \$1,000.
 - Foundation footing setting fees (charged by square inch) will increase from \$.80 to \$.83.
 - The setting of flush marker fee will increase from \$50 to \$75.
 - Cremation Benches placement or remains will increase from \$100 to \$150.
 - A new charge for monument receiving fee of flush markers only will be \$25.
 - **Lot Sales for Glendale Cemetery (4909 University Avenue)**
 - Lakeview Columbarium – Facing the pond space will increase from \$2,990 to \$3,000.
 - Lakeview Columbarium – Away from the pond space will increase from \$2,550 to \$2,600.
 - Wildflower Scattering Garden with engraving will increase from \$595 to \$650.
 - Block 30-B: Two (2)-space companion spaces, upright markers, planting allowed space will be increased from \$3,900 to \$3,950.
 - Block 36-A: Two (2)-space companion select spaces, upright markers, no planting space will be increased from \$3,700 to \$3,750.
 - Block 37: Two (2)-space companion select spaces, upright markers, annual & perennial plantings allowed space will be increased from \$3,900 to \$3,950.
 - Block 41: Single, non-select at-need space, flush marker and no planting space will be increased from \$950 to \$1,050.
 - Block H-D: Two (2)-space companion, upright markers, no planting space will be increased from \$3,800 to \$3,850.
 - Block J: Two (2)-space companion, upright markers will be increased from \$3,500 to \$3,850.
 - Block K: Two (2)-space companion spaces, upright marker, annual & perennial plantings allowed space will be increased from \$3,900 to \$3,950.

- Block N: Single select, upright markers, annual & perennial plantings allowed space will be increased from \$2,250 to \$2,300.
- Block N: Single cremation space, flush marker and no plantings will increase from \$800 to \$850.
- Block O: Two (2)-space companion spaces, upright markers, annual & perennial plantings allowed space will be increased from \$3,900 to \$3,950.
- **Lot Sales for Laurel Hill Cemetery (3601 East Court Avenue)**
 - Wildflower Scattering Garden with engraving will increase from \$595 to \$650.
 - Block J: Two (2)-space companion select spaces, upright markers, annual plantings allowed space will be increased from \$3,300 to \$3,350.
 - Block L: Two (2)-space companion select spaces, upright markers, annual & perennial plantings allowed space will be increased from \$3,600 to \$3,800.
 - Block N: Single cremation space, flush marker and no planting space will increase from \$800 to \$850.
 - Block N: Single cremation, select space, upright marker and no planting space increase from \$900 to \$1,000.
 - Block P: Single select space, upright markers, no plantings allowed space will be increased from \$1,700 to \$1,900.
 - Block T-1: Two (2)-space companion spaces, upright marker, with annual plantings space will be increased from \$3,700 to \$3,800.
- Staff recommends these fees to become effective January 1, 2024, subject to 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. If approved by City Council, formal communication will be sent to partners as they work with customers.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: November 7, 2022

Roll Call Number: [22-1736](#)

Action: [Chapter 34](#) of the Municipal Code regarding Schedule of Fees for Chapter 34 ([Council Communication No. 22-505](#)) Moved by Gatto to adopt. Second by Boesen. Motion Carried 6-1.
Absent: Cownie

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S):

Board: Parks and Recreation

Date: October 24, 2023

Resolution Number: 23-069

Action: Motion by Davis to approve the proposed cemetery fees. Second by Vilmain. Motion carried.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS: NONE

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