



**County Administrative Office
COUNTY OF TULARE
AGENDA ITEM**

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ALLEN ISHIDA
District One

PETE VANDER POEL
District Two

PHILLIP A. COX
District Three

J. STEVEN WORTHLEY
District Four

MIKE ENNIS
District Five

AGENDA DATE: September 24, 2013 – **REVISED**

Public Hearing Required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scheduled Public Hearing w/Clerk	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Published Notice Required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advertised Published Notice	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meet & Confer Required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Electronic file(s) has been sent	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Transfer (Aud 308) attached	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personnel Resolution attached	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agreements are attached and signature line for Chairman is marked with tab(s)/flag(s)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
CONTACT PERSON: Jed Chernabaeff PHONE: 559/636-5005		

SUBJECT: Maintenance and Landscape Plan for Potter’s Field at Traver Pioneer Cemetery

REQUEST(S):
That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve Maintenance and Landcape Plan Option A, B, C, or D for Potter’s Field at Traver Pioneer Cememtery.
2. Provide direction to County staff regarding financing approved Maintenance and Landscape Option for Potter’s Field at Traver Pioneer Cemetery.

SUMMARY:
The 2012/2013 Grand Jury Final Report requested responses from your Board for a variety of reports. On August 13, 2013, your Board approved sending a response letter to the Grand Jury report titled “Indigent Burial Progam,” which criticized the appearance and maintenance of the landscape of Potter’s Field at Traver Pioneer Cemetery. Your Board’s response found partial agreement with the Grand Jury’s findings and agreed to comply with two of the three recommendations. The recommendations your Board agreed to comply with are:

- That the County landscape and maintain the cemetery grounds.
- That the County ensure visiting hours, dates, and contact information are always available to visitors, and to monitor and maintain the cemetery signage.

In agreeing to comply with the recommendations, your Board responded to the Grand Jury stating a 60-day time period would be necessary in order to facilitate a discussion with County departments to determine a landscape and maintenance

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plan for the cemetery. The purpose of the presentation is to discuss maintenance and landscape plans for Potter's Field at Traver Pioneer Cemetery.

Background

Traver Pioneer Cemetery was previously owned by the Dinuba Odd Fellow Lodge. In 1950 the Lodge deeded it to Tulare County, who currently owns and maintains it. In 1963 Potter's Field was opened for indigent burials. The first recorded burial at Traver Pioneer Cemetery was in 1890. The cemetery is surrounded by fencing with padlocked gates. The parcel, Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) 043-010-014-000, is divided into two parts: the Pioneer side established in 1880 and the Potter's Field side established in 1963. A fence down the middle of the parcel divides both sides.

As part of its Indigent Burial Program, the Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA) works with local funeral homes, the Coroner's Office, and the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District to cremate and bury the deceased indigent at Potter's Field. Once the indigent deceases he or she is transported to a local funeral home for cremation. The funeral home is reimbursed by Tulare County HHSA for its services. After cremation, the funeral home delivers the cremains to the Coroner's Office, where the cremains are held for up to 18 months to allow family or next of kin to claim the deceased. If the cremains are not claimed at the Coroner's Office, they are then transported to the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District, who holds the cremains in a crypt until burial at Potter's Field. According to the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District, the last time indigent cremains were buried at Potter's Field was 2006. In addition, the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District is currently holding 213 Tulare County indigent cremains, with plans for a burial in December 2013 or January 2014.

Existing Maintenance & Landscaping

The maintenance and landscaping of Potter's Field at Traver Pioneer Cemetery has been performed by the Tulare County Probation Juvenile Work Program. Each month, the youth pick up trash, pull weeds, clear out tumble weeds, and mow the remaining weeds.

Several visits to Potter's Field showed that the weeds were mowed and trash was sparse. However, there was a fair amount of tumbleweeds that clung to the fences. There is currently no landscaping – planted foliage, structures, benches, etc. – at the site.

Short and Long Term Maintenance & Landscaping Plans

In August 2013 a site visit was conducted by two members of the Board of Supervisors and staff with the County Administrative Office, General Services, and the Probation Department. It was determined that the maintenance efforts by the Tulare County Probation Juvenile Work Program was adequate. However, direction to create landscaping options for the Board's consideration was given.

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Staff with the County Administrative Office, Probation Department, and General Services met several times since the site visit in August. Four draft options have been put together for your consideration.

The four plans range from basic to extensive landscaping. All labor would be conducted by the Tulare County Probation Juvenile Work Program, free of charge. Costs range from \$200 to \$26,000, depending on your Board's direction.

The proposed options are:

Option A: Create a sign that lists hours, dates, and contact information. Since it is unknown how many people visit the site, it is recommended that hours and visitation be made by appointment only. In addition, eliminate a portion of the fence – 40 feet on front end and 20 feet on back end – that divides the parcel. Eliminating the fence in this manner would allow workers easier access when maintaining the grounds. Estimated cost: \$200.

Option B: In addition to Option A, constructing a memorial at the entrance of the cemetery. Materials would include tools for implementation, decomposed granite, benches, spraypaint to paint the surrounding fence black, a flagpole, and a headstone that provides a brief history of Potter's Field at Traver Pioneer Cemetery. Estimated cost: \$8,400

Option C: In addition to items mentioned in Options A & B, the fence dividing the property would be fully removed and replaced with a decomposed granite path. Estimated cost: \$13,100

Option D: In addition to items mentioned in Options A – C, an arbor would be constructed at the entrance to provide shade. Estimated cost: \$26,000

Funding for Maintenance & Landscaping Plans

Currently, there are no permanent sources of revenue to provide for the maintenance or improvement of Potter's Field. All maintenance is provided by the Probation Department as part of their Juvenile Work Program at no additional cost to the County. As stated previously, HHSA pays Funeral Homes \$700 for each cremain, after which the cremains are transported to the Coroner's Office. The Coroner's Office retains the cremains for 18 months to allow for family or next of kin to claim the cremains.

During the prior five years (2008-2013), HHSA paid funeral homes for approximately 567 indigent cremains (annual average of 113), 417 (74%) of those were claimed by next of kin and the remaining 150 (26%) were transported to the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District for storage until burial. The County has an annual contract in the amount of \$2,500 with the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District to conduct one annual mass burial and store 112 cremains annually in a garden

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vault (crypt). The most recent mass burial at Potter's Field was held in 2006 by the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District. Since 2006, the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District has compiled and is currently storing 213 cremains.

The County provides approximately 30 cremains to the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District annually, but is paying for 112 cremains. Furthermore, the County is paying the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District for an annual burial; however, burials are conducted once every 7-8 years. Additionally, there are parcels in Tulare County that are included within the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District taxing area. On average, the owners of these parcels contribute \$50,000 annually to the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District through their property taxes. These funds go towards offsetting the costs of the burial of eligible residents at the Kingsburg Cemetery. Staff did not identify if these funds are fully utilized to cover these costs.

Based on the analysis of cremains paid for by HHS to funeral homes and cremains received by the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District, it is estimated that the County may have overpaid the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District as much as \$10,000 between 2008-13 for indigent burial and cremain storage. Therefore, Staff proposes that the County request financial assistance from the Kingsburg Public Cemetery District for a portion of the costs of improvements to Potter's Field and/or reduce the amount of the annual contract with the District. The annual savings could be utilized for future improvements, mass burial markers, or increased maintenance.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

As stated previously, there is no source of funding identified to pay for the proposed improvements. The range of improvements costs between \$200 and \$26,000.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:

The County's Strategic Plan includes the Organizational Performance Initiative which provides for the objective evaluation and measurement of County program performance. The Board's approval of the Grand Jury responses helps fulfill this initiative by ensuring accurate information is available to all residents.

ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:

Jed Chernabaeff
Administrative Analyst – Media Relations

Cc: Auditor-Controller
County Counsel
County Administrative Office (2)

Attachment: A – Potter's Field Landscaping Cost Estimates

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF TULARE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE MATTER OF MAINTENANCE AND) Resolution No. _____
LANDSCAPE PLAN FOR POTTER'S FIELD) Agreement No. _____
AT TRAVER PIONEER CEMETERY)

UPON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR _____, SECONDED BY
SUPERVISOR _____, THE FOLLOWING WAS ADOPTED BY THE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, AT AN OFFICIAL MEETING HELD _____
_____, BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:

ATTEST: JEAN M. ROUSSEAU
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/
CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BY: _____
Deputy Clerk

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1. Approved Maintenance and Landcape Plan Option A, B, C, or D for Potter's Field at Traver Pioneer Cememtery.
2. Provided direction to County staff regarding financing approved Maintenance and Landscape Option for Potter's Field at Traver Pioneer Cemetery.

Potter's Field Project Est.

	Quantity	Amount Per Unit	Cost
Option B			
Materials			
Edger stones	378	\$ 1.50	\$ 567.00
Landscape fabric	3	\$ 250.00	\$ 750.00
Mortar	40	\$ 6.00	\$ 240.00
Twine	3	\$ 5.00	\$ 15.00
Marker Spray Paint	3	\$ 33.00	\$ 99.00
Decomposed Granite	35	\$ 45.00	\$ 1,575.00
Lumber for bench	4	\$ 10.00	\$ 40.00
Concrete for bench	10	\$ 4.00	\$ 40.00
Finish Concrete for Headstone	20	\$ 8.00	\$ 160.00
Framing for headstone	1	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Headstone Sign	1	\$ 70.00	\$ 70.00
25' Flagpole	1	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Spray Paint	550	\$ 3.00	\$ 1,650.00
Tools			
Landscape Rakes	6	\$ 40.00	\$ 240.00
Levels	6	\$ 40.00	\$ 240.00
Compactor	1	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Skill Saw	1	\$ 170.00	\$ 170.00
Drill	1	\$ 170.00	\$ 170.00
Concrete mixer	1	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00
Option B Total			\$ 8,376.00
Option C			
Additional Pathway			
Edger stones	1100	\$ 1.50	\$ 1,650.00
Mortar	100	\$ 6.00	\$ 600.00
Landscape fabric	3	\$ 250.00	\$ 750.00
Decomposed Granite	38	\$ 45.00	\$ 1,710.00
Additional Pathway Total			\$ 4,710.00
Option C Total:			\$ 13,086.00
Arbor	1	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,500
Option D Total			\$ 20,586