



City of Moose Jaw

LETTER OF COMMUNICATION

TITLE: 2020 Cemetery Rates

TO: Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee

FROM: Department of Parks and Recreation

DATE: September 18, 2019

PUBLIC: This is a Public Document

IN-CAMERA: Not applicable to this Report

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the 2020 Cemetery Rates be approved substantially in the form attached to this report as Schedule "A"

THAT the rates be made effective January 1, 2020

TOPIC AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to allow the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to provide input and feedback on the recommended 2020 Cemetery Rates prior to forwarding to City Council for final approval.

BACKGROUND

The City of Moose Jaw Parks and Recreation Department conducts a review of the cemetery rates on an annual basis and provides a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee on possible rate changes and how it affects the budget.

The recommendations are based on a review of several factors including:

- A review and assessment of burial trends – full casket burials vs cremation burials
- Cemetery rates comparison with similar sized communities
- Cemetery recovery rates over the last five (5) years

The cemetery rates in the City of Moose Jaw have seen a steady increase over the past decade to better align with the rates in other Saskatchewan communities and to help off-set the costs of maintaining and operating our cemeteries.

As a result, the City's recovery rate has started to see small improvements while avoiding overcharging for cemetery services.

2019	2% increase across all fees Plus, an additional 8% increase for cremation burials opening and closing
2018	0% fee increase; added the afterhours surcharge
2017	0% fee increase
2016	10% increase across all fees Plus, an additional 10% for cremation burials opening and closing
2015	10% increase across all fees Plus, an additional 10% for cremation burials opening and closing
2014	10% increase across all fees
2013	10% increase across all fees
2012	10% increase across all fees
2011	10% increase across all fees
2010	10% increase across all fees

DISCUSSION

The City of Moose Jaw is responsible for the operations and maintenance of the Rosedale and the Moose Jaw Cemeteries. The operation and maintenance of these two Cemeteries is based on achieving the highest rate of recovery on a year to year basis while maintaining a cost- effective approach for the residents of Moose Jaw.

Burial Trends

The following table shows a comparison of full burials vs cremation burials over the past 5 years. Cremation burials average 71% of total burials.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 (YTD)	5-year Average
Total full burials	67	53	53	37	40	50
Total cremations	126	137	120	142	83	122
% of total burials that are cremation	65%	72%	69%	79%	67%	71%

In reviewing the percentage of cremation vs full burials, there has been a steady shift to majority of burials being cremations. The cost for opening and closing of cremation burials is considerably less than for a full casket burial. As cremation burials become the more popular burial option, less revenue is being received for the operation of the cemetery. With this trend, it has been necessary to specifically increase the fees for completing cremation interments.

Cemetery Rate Comparisons

For comparison purposes only, a summary of fees and charges from other Saskatchewan communities is attached as Attachment 2. – Schedule B.

This comparison is used as a guideline to see where Moose Jaw's fees rank within the province. It is difficult to use this comparison as the only basis for establishing fees because

cemeteries in other cities have different components, features and overall cemetery expenses vary from community to community based on staffing models, and other expenses. In addition, the cemetery fee structure varies from community to community.

Proposed Rate Changes

As previously indicated, the Rosedale Cemetery burial trends have seen cremations rise to 71% in comparison to only 29% full burials over the past 5 years.

The direct result of this trend is a decrease in general revenue and contributions to the Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund as cremations are a much lower cost. There is also an increasing trend towards supplementary burials which occur in existing graves and in these situations, no revenue is provided to the Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund.

In order to address these trends and maintain a proper level of recovery while ensuring appropriate contributions are being made to the Cemetery Perpetual Care fund, The Parks and Recreation Department is recommending:

- 10% increase to adult traditional grave licenses and opening and closing for cremation burials.
- 5% increase to non-adult graves and columbarium niche opening and closing.
- Market adjustments to memorialization fees.

The following table provides a summary of the proposed rate changes:

	2019 Fees	2020 fees	Increase
Adult Traditional Grave License	\$1,446.00	\$1,590.00	10%
Veteran Traditional Grave License	\$680.00	\$714.00	5%
Child Grave License (6 years or younger in Child's section)	\$620.00	\$651.00	5%
Opening & Closing - Cremation Burial	\$301.00	\$331.00	10%
Niche Opening & Closing	\$132.00	\$139.00	5%
Columbarium Disinterment Fee	\$132.00	\$139.00	5%
Niche <u>Single</u> Memorialization (1 name)	\$533.50+GST&PST	\$555.00+GST&PST	4%
Niche <u>Double</u> Memorialization (2 names)	\$594.00+GST&PST	\$595.00+GST&PST	.1%
Adding Year of Death - 4 digits only (cannot be prepaid)	\$302.50+GST&PST	\$315.00+GST&PST	4%

The entire list of the proposed 2020 Cemetery rates is included as Attachment 1. – Schedule A.

Cemetery Recovery Rates

The following table shows the actual revenue, expenses and recovery rates for the cemetery from 2016 to 2018 and the budgeted amounts for 2019 and 2020.

Note: The 2020 revenue budget includes the proposed rate increases and the increase in general maintenance reflects a new 2-year project to fill in sunken grave sites.

Revenue	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Budget	4 Year Average	2020 Budget
Burials	\$167,191	\$155,886	\$165,618	\$158,958	\$161,913	\$165,316
Perpetual Care	\$63,407	\$62,871	\$70,058	\$66,277	\$65,653	\$75,000
Monuments & Permits	\$9,900	\$8,680	\$11,020	\$12,436	\$10,509	\$9,694
TOTALS	\$240,498	\$227,437	\$246,696	\$237,671	\$238,076	\$250,010
Expenses	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Budget	4 Year Average	2020 Budget
Office/Admin	\$68,493	\$61,638	\$52,633	\$58,695	\$60,365	\$58,456
Burial	\$46,202	\$46,104	\$36,950	\$46,134	\$43,848	\$40,533
General Maintenance	\$198,848	\$213,597	\$206,004	\$215,001	\$208,363	\$224,795
Indigent Perpetual Care	\$9,910	\$9,910	\$2,569	\$9,910	\$8,075	\$9,910
TOTALS	\$323,453	\$331,249	\$298,156	\$329,740	\$320,650	\$333,694
ANNUAL COST	\$82,995	\$103,812	\$51,560	\$92,069	\$82,574	\$83,684
COST RECOVERY %	74.4%	68.7%	82.7%	72.1%	74.3%	75%

PUBLIC AND/OR STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The proposed 2020 Cemetery Rates allows for feedback from the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee prior to being forwarded to City Council for approval.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

The 2020 Cemetery rates will be posted on the City Website and provided to the local funeral homes once approved.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The annual cemetery rates review aligns with the strategic goal of "Sustainable Community Growth" as City remains focused on attaining a sustainable cost recovery rate while providing an important service to the community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed rate increases will have the following effect on the 2020 budget:

- The annual budgeted cost to maintain and operate the cemeteries will be reduced by \$8,385
- Cost recovery rate will increase from 72.1% to 75%

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

There are no other options to the recommendations, no privacy or Bylaw/Policy implications and no Official Community Plan considerations associated with the report.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice pursuant to the Public Notice Policy as incorporated into the City Administration Bylaw No. 5175 of 2016 is not required.

PRESENTATION

VERBAL: **X**

Representatives of the Parks and Recreation Department will present the report and be available to answer any questions.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Schedule A - Proposed 2020 Cemetery Rates
2. Schedule B - Cemetery Rates Comparison

Respectfully Submitted By,

Cory Oakes, Operations Manager

APPROVAL OF REPORT RECEIVED

COMMENTS RECEIVED

Derek Blais, Director of Parks & Recreation

Jim Puffalt, City Manager

To be completed by the Clerk's Department only.

Presented to Regular Council or Executive Committee on _____.

No. _____ Resolution No. _____

<https://citymj.sharepoint.com/sites/Depts/parks/Shared Documents/1. Administration/A-AdminGen/City Council Reports/P&R Advisory Committee/2019/2020 Cemetery Rates/2020 Cemetery Rates REPORT to Advisory.docx>