

December 20, 2012

Dear Cemetery Advocates,

As you know, the Austin Parks and Recreation Board (PARB) was scheduled to hear and take action on the final draft *Cemetery Scope of Work* (SOW) on December 18, 2012. On Monday afternoon, it became evident to our staff liaison that a majority of the members of the Board would not be able to attend. The PARB Bylaws require that a quorum (or majority) of the PARB members are present in order to convene a meeting. We want to be sure you know that the cancellation of the PARB meeting was done in compliance with the PARB Bylaws, and therefore was not a decision of City staff. And while the PARB meeting cancellation was certainly untimely, we as board members also recognize the need to move forward with getting the Scope of Work out to possible bidders. Therefore, we recommend that the Parks and Recreation Department move forward with submitting the Scope of Work to the Purchasing Office as originally planned.

We also recognize that the cancellation of the PARB meeting removed an opportunity for community members to make public comments. The Parks and Recreation Department will submit the draft Cemetery SOW to the Purchasing Office today for the next phase of the Request for Proposal (RFP) preparation. But, if at any point, you discover significant work-related components that may have been omitted from the SOW document that directly impact what and how future contractor(s) should perform the work, please don't hesitate to contact Gilbert Hernandez, PARB Contract Compliance at (512) 974-6742 or by email to cemeteries@austintexas.gov on or before December 31, 2012. Staff will review your submittal in coordination with the Purchasing Office. Once the RFP is published, normal procurement protocols apply and any necessary change(s) will be communicated through the issuance of an addendum to the RFP.

We also want to take a moment to recognize how strong the current SOW is. We believe the combined work of the community and staff has resulted in an exceptionally thorough document – one that we know will reset the standards and work for future management and operations of our City cemeteries. This has been a tremendous collective effort and we honor the work that everyone has put in – community members and staff alike.

As the process moves forward, we will continue to work with everyone to make sure that Austin has the quality cemeteries that it deserves.

Jane Rivera
Chair, Parks and Recreation Board

Lynn Osgood
Member, Parks and Recreation Board