

From: "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL" <CCDTMACDL@vancouver.ca>

Date: 3/24/2017 2:47:19 PM

Subject: Removal of Items from grave at Mountain View Cemetery

Attachments: CS - Memo to Mayor Council - 2017 - removal of items from grave at Mountain View Cemetery.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see attached memo from Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas, General Manager, Community Services regarding the removal of Lego Figures from a gravesite at Mountain View Cemetery.

A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- On Friday, March 17, 2017, City Staff became aware through a Global News story that a member of the public was upset about the removal of Lego figures from the grave of her son in the City owned and operated Mountain View Cemetery;
- The grave has been there since November 2015;
- On investigation staff have confirmed the figures were removed as part of the regular cemetery clean up.
- The memo describes current Mountain View policy and practices with respect to Cemetery clean-up and describes the policy and practice review we are undertaking as a result of this complaint;
- As a result of this incident staff will consider re-constituting a lost items system, likely with differing hold periods for compostable vs non-compostable items;
- In addition the following steps are being taken:
 - Complete review of the MVC Bylaw and Rules with a detailed review of the portions relating to lot adornment
 - Document review of other lower mainland cemeteries to compare and contrast similar rules and regulations
 - Staff will document their investigation into this particular complaint for review by the General Manager Community Services

Please contact Glen Hodges at glen.hodges@vancouver.ca if you have any questions or concerns.

Best
Sadhu

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6/22/2017



COMMUNITY SERVICES
General Manager's Office

MEMORANDUM

March 24, 2017

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager
Janice MacKenzie, City Clerk
Lynda Graves, Manager, Administration Services, City Manager's Office
Rena Kendall-Craden, Director, Communications
Kevin Quinlan, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Katie Robb, Director, Communications, Mayor's Office
Naveen Girn, Director of Community Relations, Mayor's Office
Jim De Hoop Managing Director, Housing Delivery and Operations
Glen Hodges, Manager - Mountain View Cemetery

FROM: Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas, General Manager, Community Services

SUBJECT: Removal of Lego figures from a Gravesite at Mountain View Cemetery

On Friday, March 17, 2017, City Staff became aware through a Global News story that a member of the public was upset about the removal of Lego figures from the grave of her son in the City owned and operated Mountain View Cemetery.

The grave has been there since November 2015. On investigation staff have confirmed the figures were removed as part of the regular cemetery clean up.

This memo describes current Mountain View policy and practices with respect to Cemetery clean-up and describes the policy and practice review we are undertaking as a result of this complaint.

Background:

Mountain View Cemetery has established regular and defined periods for cleanup of the cemetery help guide visitors and staff to maintain the overall state of the 106 acre cemetery that contains more than 145,000 people interred in more than 100,000 graves. Cemetery staff respond to questions every week from people seeking clarification or information on

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what is allowed and when. Signs are also placed throughout the cemetery at every vehicle entrance and exit to inform visitors of the primary rules for adornment.

Cemetery field staff confirms that there were some commemorative pieces (adornments) left under the hedge very close to the grave site. These items were left undisturbed by cemetery staff during their routine clean up and mowing maintenance throughout 2016.

Cemetery policy and practices:

The pertinent policies and practices that apply in this instance are:

- The cemetery rules identify two distinct operational seasons for the cemetery. The active grounds maintenance period is defined as March 1 through October 15 of each year. During this grounds maintenance period the cemetery restricts items left at graves to fresh cut flowers in MVC approved and installed flower containers and a maximum of 2 small potted plants. These items can be easily moved and replaced by cemetery staff during their regular mowing and trimming functions.
- Outside of the typical grounds maintenance period - October 16 to February 28 of each year - the cemetery typically does not retrieve items from a grave. Items are permitted to be left at a grave as there are no regular grounds maintenance activities to which they could become a hindrance or hazard. These rules are very similar to other cemeteries - both public and private - within the Vancouver region and beyond.
- The Cemetery Bylaw 8719 includes several references to placing items in the cemetery and the responsibility associated with those items. It specifically indicates that the cemetery is not responsible for any items placed in the cemetery, that no one can place any item in the cemetery unless the Bylaw or rules permit such item, that the cemetery may remove any item that does not comply, that there is no obligation to notify anyone and that the items may be disposed of.

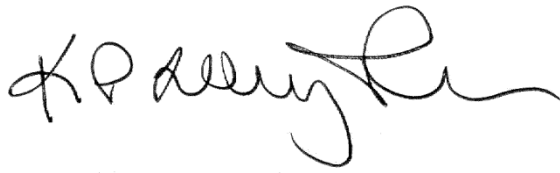
Policy and practice review/ changes

A number of different practices have been used over the years to deal with the variety of adornments or items found throughout the cemetery. As a result of this incident staff are will consider re-constituting a lost items system, likely with differing hold periods for compostable vs non-compostable items.

In addition the following steps are being taken:

- Complete review of the MVC Bylaw and Rules with a detailed review of the portions relating to lot adornment
- Document review of other lower mainland cemeteries to compare and contrast similar rules and regulations
- Staff will document their investigation into this particular complain for review by the General Manager Community Services

Should you have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to contact the Mountain View Cemetery Manager, Glen Hodges.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Llewellyn-Thomas'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas, P. Eng.
General Manager, Community Services

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