



INFORMATION ONLY COUNCIL REPORT
Engineering / Public Works
For the November 12, 2019 Council Meeting

DATE: November 7, 2019
TO: Paul Gipps, CAO
FROM: Stacey Harding, Parks & Fleet Operations Manager
RE: Cemetery Theft Update

BACKGROUND:

During the evening hours of September 14/15, 2019, the locks to the entrance of the Westbank Cemetery were cut. Thieves entered the west, cremation plot area where some of the earliest burials are located. On the morning of September 16, RCMP notified staff that approximately 60 markers were stolen over the weekend. Staff's assessment determined that 57 bronze markers were removed from their pillows. Thankfully, two of the 58 were left behind leaving 56 unaccounted for.

Late afternoon of September 23rd, staff received an uplifting call from the local RCMP that many of the markers had been found through their excellent police work and local tips. On the morning of September 24th staff obtained the markers from the RCMP and went to work determining how many of the 56 were returned in good condition and how many were either missing or damaged beyond repair. The condition assessment concluded:

Returned in Good Condition	Damaged and Unrepairable	Total
36	20	56

Based on Council's direction, a trust account was set up to receive donations that would provide financial assistance to the 23 families whose markers were damaged beyond repair. This account would be closed on December 6, 2019 or earlier if the account donation cap (see below) was reached.

The maximum amount a family could receive is \$448. Families would be required to submit receipts for reimbursement from the fund. If the fund does not reach the account donation cap, the funds collected would be divided between those who submitted a receipt to a maximum amount of \$448. Donors are entitled to a tax receipt for donations exceeding \$20.

November 7, 2019 Update:

All the returned plaques were installed by staff within days of their return. Eight people have bought new granite markers which were installed and 3 more are on order for a total of 47 installs near complete. This leaves 9 of the 56 not repaired to date. Of the 9, we haven't been able to contact 4 and the remaining 5 haven't made a decision yet.

The Plaque Fund sits at \$1930 as of October 31 and closes December 6th at which time we'll do our best to contact those applicable and advise them of their rebate cheque opportunity. Plaque theft inquiries have slowed at this point but we continue to prioritise this matter.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY:

Allen Fillion, Director of Engineering and Public Works
Tracey Batten, Deputy CAO/Corporate Officer
Paul Gipps, CAO

Powerpoint: Yes ☐ No X