

Municipality of Anchorage



P.O. Box 390
Girdwood, Alaska 99587
<http://www.muni.org/gbos>

Dave Bronson, Mayor

GIRDWOOD VALLEY SERVICE AREA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Mike Edgington & Briana Sullivan, Co-Chairs
Jennifer Wingard, Amanda Sassi, Guy Wade

Resolution 2023-10 Of the Girdwood Board of Supervisors

Resolution of Support for AO No. 2023-58

Establishing the provision of municipal cemeteries as a power exercised on an areawide basis

Whereas, a cemetery is a sign of an established community, and prior to incorporation with the Municipality, Girdwood had a cemetery located in the area now transected by the Alyeska Highway near the railroad crossing; and

Whereas, the concept of building a cemetery in Girdwood received widespread approval from the people in Girdwood, who formed a Cemetery Committee, followed a process to identify and secure suitable land in a process with the Heritage Land Bank, and voted to fund a schematic study for a cemetery to be built; and

Whereas, upon receiving "Cemetery Power" to pay for design and engineering of a cemetery, the schematic design study for the Girdwood Cemetery was completed in 2019; and

Whereas, recently, community councils in Chugiak and Eagle River have engaged in a similar process of establishing a cemetery in the northern part of the MOA and have been pursuing that goal; and

Whereas, the Anchorage Memorial Park is in need of facility renovations and is likely to run out of space for burials in the next 5 years; and

Whereas, cemeteries are essential public infrastructure and provision of an equitable final resting place into perpetuity is our duty and responsibility, and

Whereas, finding synergy in their causes and need, in 2022 the Girdwood Board of Supervisors, Chugiak Community Council and Eagle River Community Council resolved their support for an areawide bond to include a Chugiak-Eagle River area public cemetery, Girdwood Cemetery, and Anchorage Memorial Park improvements and renovation, however the bonding effort was halted when Assembly legal counsel determined that Cemeteries are not an established areawide service of the MOA; and

Whereas, according to Article X, section 11 of the Alaska Constitution and AS 29.35 the Municipality may exercise any power on an areawide basis;

THEREFORE, the GBOS supports the Assembly's ordinance (AO 2023-58) to permit the municipality to levy an areawide tax to fund the operations and maintenance of existing and future municipal cemeteries in the near future.

Passed by a vote of 3 in favor, 0 opposed, on this 2nd day of May, 2023.

Briana Sullivan
GBOS Parks and Rec/Cemetery Chair

Attest