

Cemeteries Bylaw, 2023 Updates

ISSUE

This report requests approval to begin the process of removing the term ‘indigent’ from the Cemeteries Bylaw, 2023 (Bylaw). Other minor Bylaw housekeeping amendments will also be completed in conjunction with this change.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development, and Community Services recommend to City Council that:

1. The proposed amendments to remove the term ‘indigent’, and other amendments to Bylaw No. 9950, The Cemeteries Bylaw, 2023 as outlined in this report be approved; and
2. That City Council instruct the City Solicitor to prepare the necessary amendments to Bylaw No. 9950, The Cemeteries Bylaw, 2023.

BACKGROUND

The term ‘indigent’ has been used throughout Canada in Cemetery-related Acts and Bylaws, including in Saskatoon, for many decades. Indigent is a Latin-rooted word defined as “poor/needy” and is used when referring to persons that require financial aid from the City and Province after an individual has passed away.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The term ‘indigent’ has negative connotations, perpetuates racism and stereotypes, and is no longer considered appropriate, especially when discussing memorialization and the passing of a loved one.

In line with the City’s 2022-2025 Strategic Plan and City Council’s Reconciliation, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion priority area, it is recommended that ‘indigent’ be removed from the Bylaw No. 9950, The Cemeteries Bylaw, 2023, and any other related documents. Alternate wording will be brought forward in the amendment bylaw.

The City of Saskatoon must continually evolve to meet the needs of the public it serves. Accordingly, this change also aligns with City objectives to be a leader in providing an equitable and quality customer experience for all residents.

Other proposed amendments to be concurrently addressed with this update include:

- Addition of cremation certification permits to align with requirements set out in the *Vital Statistics Act, 2009*;
- Amendments to allow pictures or photographs on flat markers, while clarifying that the owner accepts all risks for damage and/or displacement; and
- Revisions to Schedule “B” Woodlawn Cemetery Fees to remove the Tent Rental and Lowering Device Rental Charges and add the words “over 1.22 m in height” beside the word “Upright.”

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications to this change.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no privacy, legal, social, or environmental implications identified.

NEXT STEPS

If approved, the office of the City Solicitor will begin the process of updating the Bylaw with further reporting to follow.

Report Approval

Written by: Konrad Andre, Parks Operations Manager

Reviewed by: Melissa Cote, Director of Indigenous Initiatives
Thai Hoang, Director of Parks
Cindy Yelland, City Solicitor

Approved by: Matt Grazier, Acting General Manager, Community Services