



MEMORANDUM

TO: Ada Township Board
FROM: Jo DeMarco, Clerk
DATE: June 2, 2025
RE: Revised Cemetery Fees

Background:

There has not been administration, management or direction for Ada cemeteries for years, going back to mid 2017. Consequently, they are in desperate need of all three elements in order to bring their repair and upkeep to a standard I believe Ada should be held to. The Clerks office and BFG departments have done extensive research and collaborated to design more strategic cemetery operations, that support and rationalize the increase to fees.

We initially identified snow removal and lawn mowing as the top two elements that need to be contracted out. We are in year three of a three year contract for both. We anticipate no less than a 6% increase to those fees, and closer to 10% if we change contractors. We are also responsible for all utility costs, being water and trash services, which have both increased over time.

While our collaborative efforts have proved fruitful for operational needs being fulfilled, we also identify that increased wages for staff and grounds crew, which impacts our costs as well. Administrative costs from the clerks office for mapping, record keeping, addressing residents needs, burial coordination with contractors and onsite issues that need inspection. As we've pursued greater supervision of our cemeteries, BFG staff time has increased significantly. Repairs for roads, fencing, signage, drains, water have been identified and we continue to address them, but we need to recognize that increased BFG staff time at the cemeteries takes away from their time required in other areas.

Simply put, our research, analysis and development reveal that all operational time and costs (labor, materials, utilities) have increased. If fees remain static while costs rise, quality service will decline. An increase in fees will ensure sustainability. Raising fees after extensive research is not about generating more revenue; it's about aligning

pricing with real-world conditions, ensuring sustainable service delivery, and improving outcomes. Our collaborative research and development plans provide the foundation for making the changes equitable, transparent, and necessary.

New Fee Schedule (Attached): A pricing comparison for cemetery services from 13 neighboring communities was conducted by Deputy McIntosh showing Ada Township at the mid to low end for each of the services provided. The services include grave site and columbarium purchases and permit administration, ground care and a wide range of repair work. We have discussed cemetery management with other clerks from our Kent County Clerks Association, as well as clerks from Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks, comparing notes and practices. Once again, we were found to be at the low end of fee structures. The proposed increased fees will enable the operational progress we've just begun to realize continue and bring our beloved cemeteries to the level of expectation Ada residents possess.

Recommendation: In order to further implement and continue increased cemetery management, I beseech the board to approve Resolution # 060925-3 incorporating the proposed new cemetery fee schedule for Ada Township cemeteries.

PROPOSED CEMETERY PRICING
Ada and Findlay Cemeteries

SALE, RECORD MAINTENANCE, COORDINATION = CLERK'S OFFICE

Grave Site Purchase	\$1000
* 4' x 8' unit	
* Perpetual Care - snow removal, lawn maintenance, water supply, trash removal, gravel fill, ground leveling, Veteran Memorial placements, staff time, record retention, power washing for columbarium units	
* No charge to Veterans	
* Veteran Spouse	\$ 500
Grave Opening/Closing - Adult full casket burial	
* Monday through Friday up to 3:00 pm	
* May 2nd through October 31st	\$ 500
* November 1st through May 1st	\$ 600
* Saturday up to 3:00 pm	\$ 600
* Headstone foundation/placement (headstone must be within gravesite dimensions)	\$ 500
Grave Opening/Closing - Cremation Burial	
* Monday through Friday up to 3:00 pm	
* May 2nd through October 31st	\$ 600
* November 1st through May 1st	\$ 700
* Saturday up to 3:00 pm	\$ 700
* Headstone foundation/placement	\$ 500
COLUMBARIUM (72 Niche unit)	
* Niche - holds two cremains	\$1000
* Engraved name plate	\$ 100
* Flower vase	\$ 50
* Opening/Closing	
Monday through Friday up to 3:00 pm	\$ 500
Saturday up to 3:00 pm	\$ 600
* Veterans	\$ 500

Veteran Niche purchase will include Kent County Veterans Services paperwork and application for \$300 benefit toward any burial expense.

FEES & PAYMENTS: Fees for all services will be designated by Clerk's office and communicated to funeral directors and all contractors. Funeral Directors will collect all fees from family/contractors and pay the township office.