

**VETERANS MEMORIAL ISLAND SANCTUARY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
Wednesday, January 6, 2016 – 10:00 a.m.  
Council Chambers, City Hall, Vero Beach, Florida**

**PRESENT:** Chairman, Anthony Young, Vice Chairman, Alma Lee Loy; Members: John Matthews, Joel Herman, and Alternate Member Curtis Paulisin **Also Present:** Public Works Manager, Don Dexter; Recreation Director, Rob Slezak, and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

**Excused Absence:** Barbara Fallon

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Today's meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Committee members and the audience joined together in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A) December 2, 2015**

**Ms. Loy made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2015 Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting. Mr. Herman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**4. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Charlie Wilson, Vero Beach Chamber of Commerce, said that for the next couple of months he would like to be on the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee agenda to discuss the planning of the Vero Beach Veterans parade. Last year's parade was very successful and people loved it. A suggestion was made to move the parade from July 4<sup>th</sup> to either Memorial Day or Veterans Day. The reason for this suggestion is that the Vero Beach High School band is not in session over the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday and they really want to participate. He said the Vero Beach Chamber of Commerce will coordinate with the Veterans Memorial Island Committee to select an appropriate date. The idea was to possibly have the parade immediately following one of the events on the Island. He will also be attending the Veterans Council meeting this afternoon to discuss this event. The Vero Beach Chamber of Commerce wants to continue sponsoring the parade, because it is an honor to the veterans. He will get input from the Veterans Council, Mr. Sammons with the high school band, and the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee.

Mr. Matthews explained that Memorial Day is a solemn ceremony to honor those who died serving our country and Veterans Day is a celebration of those who made it back. He feels that between the two (2), Veterans Day or around Veterans Day would be more appropriate.

Mr. Wilson stated that they will take whatever guidance and suggestions this Committee provides.

Mr. Paulisin stated that a problem with having the parade after the Vero Beach Veterans Day ceremony is that a lot of people also like to attend the Sebastian ceremony, which takes place afterwards.

Mr. Young stated that the Veterans Memorial Island Committee's priority is to make sure that the activities on Veterans Memorial Island reflect, honor, and pay respect to the Island. They will look at the input they receive from the Veterans Council and the City.

Mr. Matthews said that his suggestion would be to have the parade on Saturday, since the Marine Corp's birthday is on Thursday and Veterans Day is on Friday. It would make it a Veterans weekend.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A) Joseph Kenneth Bartley Memorial - January 8, 2016**

Mr. Rob Slezak, Recreation Director, stated that they received an application to use the Island for a memorial service for Mr. Joseph Kenneth Bartley. It will be a very small and short memorial.

Mr. Young announced that the Veterans Council will be contributing a wreath for the service. It will be a very small family event with no more than 20 people in attendance. Mr. Bartley was a Veteran of both the Navy and the Air Force.

**Ms. Loy made a motion to approve the application. Mr. Herman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

### **B) Silver Star Military Award Ceremony – January 30, 2016**

Mr. Doy Demsick, Veterans Council, said that the Veterans Council is extremely honored to be a part of this ceremony in which Cpl. Sylvester McIntosh will be receiving the Silver Star Medal. He explained that the ceremony will be on January 30<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. The support from the Veterans Council will be very similar to Veterans Day and Memorial Day. They have requested to use the stage and the audio equipment from the Recreation Department and they will have golf carts to help transport those who are in need of assistance. He continued by sharing the story and the actions of Cpl. McIntosh which earned him the Silver Star Medal. He said this ceremony will give Cpl. McIntosh the long delayed recognition he deserves.

Mr. Matthews commented that this will make Cpl. McIntosh one of the highest decorated Veterans in Indian River County. It is a great honor to be awarded the Silver Star for valor and heroism. It is unusual that it is being awarded so long after the action.

Mr. Young asked who will present the award to Cpl. McIntosh.

Mr. Demsick replied that Lt. Al Slater and Master Sergeant Dennis Lee will be presenting the award to Cpl. McIntosh. They both served above Cpl. McIntosh during the time of his engagement in the service. He stated that he requested an active duty Marine Corps Color Guard from the Marine Headquarters. Both the Barefoot Bay and the Vero Beach Marine Corp leagues will be heavily involved. He believes this might be the largest gathering of Marines in their dress blues to take place in Indian River County.

Mr. Young asked who can they expect to be in attendance for this ceremony.

Mr. Demsick replied that right now they have seven (7) Marines from his unit attending and Colonel Martin Zickert is inviting all government officials and the Governor.

Mr. Matthews reported that Cpl. McIntosh has also received the Purple Heart, the Combat Action Ribbon, the Presidential Unit Citation, Vietnam Campaign ribbon with a couple of stars, along with several others.

Mr. Demsick said the Marines that will be on stage with Cpl. McIntosh will be highly decorated as well.

Mr. Slezak reported that the EMT's are on standby, the stage and audio equipment are reserved, and they have arranged for water and golf carts. He asked Mr. Demsick how many people do they expect to attend. Mr. Demsick said he believes there will be about 500 people in attendance.

Mr. Don Dexter, Public Works Manager, asked if they would like the first couple of parking areas reserved for handicap parking as they do for other large events. Mr. Demsick replied yes.

Mr. Young asked what is anticipated for media coverage. Mr. Demsick stated that they sent out a press release and have given information to people in the local media. He said they also contacted some of the media in West Palm Beach, so the coverage might be more regional.

**Mr. Matthews made a motion to accept the application. Mr. Paulisin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

### **C) Military March – February 13, 2016**

Mr. Jim Moran and Mr. Bruce Caddy, Cross Fit Gym, introduced themselves. Mr. Moran said that he was never in the service, but Mr. Caddy served in the Marines. He said they discussed options on how the gym could give back to the community. Mr. Demsick and Mr. Caddy shared accounts and stories of being in the service, so they came up with the idea of holding an event that will benefit the local veterans. They talked about the correlation between the military and the gym. Cross Fit has a work out regimen very similar to what is used in basic training, so that is why he believes they attract a lot of ex military members. The Cross Fit gyms nationwide work closely with organizations that have a heavy military influence, so this is where they came up with idea of a military march.

Mr. Caddy said that they put together this march called "Hump for our Vets". He explained that it is a forced march under weight, which is what the Marines call a "hump". The participants

will gather on February 13, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. at the Orchid Island Cross Fit gym on Aviation Boulevard. They are planning on about 20-25 participants. Male participant will be carrying a minimum of 25 pound in their packs and the female participants will have a minimum of 15 pounds in their hiking packs. They will also have other items to carry to simulate a combat load like the military. They will travel a route through Vero Beach, across the Barber Bridge, and hit their midway point at Riverside Park. They are asking for permission to suspend their hike at Riverside Park, drop their gear, and have a 20-minute gathering at Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. The participants will have the opportunity to learn from the Veterans that are part of the exercise and Mr. Demsick will inform them on what the Veterans Council does for this community. They will finish the hike back to Cross Fit gym and end the event with a barbeque for the Veterans of Indian River County. The participants are being asked to make a donation to the Veterans Council for the privilege of participating in this fundraising event.

Mr. Matthews asked where do they plan on dropping their gear as they arrive at the bridge to Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. Mr. Caddy said there will only be about 20-25 participants, so they envision placing the packs in the grassy area off to the side of the entrance to the bridge.

Mr. Young said he feels this is an opportunity to educate the group and share the meaning of the Island. He just asks that in their planning they highlight to the participants that Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary is not a park or exercise area, but a place to remember those who made sacrifices for others.

Mr. Herman asked if they will have flyers made up. Mr. Demsick replied that they have flyers and he will make sure the Veterans Council receives some.

Mr. Moran said that this event is not specific to just the gym members, so everyone is welcome to participate.

Mr. Matthews stated that the local agencies have been reaching out to the younger veterans, so perhaps this event will bring them out and bring them together.

Mr. Moran said this is just the beginning and they have so many great ideas and plans for the future.

Ms. Loy asked what will be the age range of the participants. Mr. Caddy stated that their guidelines are that participants must be 16 years or older to ensure their physical capability of handling the exercise.

Ms. Loy said that she appreciates what they are doing, but she would like to stress her concern that the participants respect the Island and act accordingly. Entering the Island as part of this march will be an entirely different situation than what they just went through and how they will finish the event.

Mr. Caddy assured her that they will honor all those who served before them. Their endeavor is to create a sense of pride and carry forward the importance of what the Island represents.

**Mr. Paulisin made a motion to accept the application for the Military March event. Mr. Matthews seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**6. OLD BUSINESS**

None

**7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS**

**A) Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Veterans Highlight: Charles Tyson, Mark Jackson, Larry Aronhalt, William Roller, and William Clark**

Mr. Young stated that the Committee members each received a list of the five (5) Veterans that were recognized on the Bob Soos show in December (on file in the City Clerk's office). Mr. Matthews, Ms. Loy, Mr. Young, Mr. Paulisin, and Mr. Herman each read one of the biographies from the list of Veterans.

Mr. Young spoke about his visit to the 911 Memorial during the Christmas holidays.

**8. MEMBER'S MATTERS**

Mr. Matthews shared the accounts of a couple of Gold Star families he came in contact with recently. He handed out a flyer with information regarding a Gold Star Families monument that is being constructed in Port St. Lucie (on file in the City Clerk's office). He said that when he saw it he immediately thought of Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. The groundbreaking will be February 8, 2016 at the Port St. Lucie Veterans Memorial Park. The target date for completion and the dedication date is set for September 25, 2016, which is Gold Star Family Day. He said this is a regional effort and they all want to honor those who have fallen and help comfort the mothers and fathers and the Gold Star families of those veterans.

Mr. Paulisin announced that there have been some changes to the Veterans Transportation Program. He suggested that the veterans view the website for these changes, but if they have any problems they can contact the Transportation Office at the Veterans Service Office.

**A) Next Meeting Date – February 3, 2016**

The next meeting of the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee is scheduled for February 3, 2016.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

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