

**VETERANS MEMORIAL ISLAND SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, July 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, Barbara Fallon, and Alternate Member Curtis Paulisin **Also Present:** Public Works Manager, Don Dexter; Recreation Director, Rob Slezak, and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

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) June 1, 2016

Mr. Paulisin asked to have "Pay" Geyer changed to "Pat" Geyer on the last page of the June 1, 2016 minutes.

Ms. Loy made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2016 Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting with the one correction made. Mr. Herman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None

5. NEW BUSINESS

A) Request for Use of the Island – Alzheimer & Parkinson Association of Indian River County – Mrs. Margaret (Peggy) Cunningham, Executive Director and Mrs. Judith F. Lemoncelli, Director of Development

Mrs. Peggy Cunningham, Executive Director of the Alzheimer & Parkinson Association, stated that they are here today to request use of Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary as part of their 13th annual Walk to Remember fundraising event on November 12, 2016. They have the understanding that when they enter the Island it is the quiet and meditative part of their walk. It makes a nice impression on the participants, because right before the walk they recognize the veterans by bringing them up on the stage. Their event at Riverside Park usually attracts 500 to 800 people and their goal is to raise \$65,000. With Mrs. Judith Lemoncelli as their new Director of Development they are reaching out more to the community about the programs they offer and

trying to form more teams. The Alzheimer & Parkinson Association is the local provider of support for families dealing with memory and movement issues.

Mr. Matthews asked how many years have they been utilizing Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary.

Mrs. Cunningham replied that this will be their 3rd year using the Island as part of their walk.

Ms. Loy said that the first time this organization requested to use the Island they were well scrutinized because of it being a fundraising event. She is happy to say that they have been respectful, they abide by the rules, and using the Island has nothing to do with their fundraising.

Mr. Paulisin asked if the walk also includes any of their patients.

Mrs. Cunningham replied yes. They have small children being pulled in wagons, people in wheelchairs, families, businesses, teams, etc.

Mr. Young explained that the application states they are requesting to use Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., but their actual ceremony in Riverside Park starts at 9:00 a.m. He asked Mrs. Cunningham if they have asked for a Color Guard to assist with their event.

Mrs. Cunningham replied that they have it on their agenda for their next group meeting.

Mr. Young said the Veterans Council has their meeting today, so he will suggest that one of the Veteran organizations support this event. He mentioned to Mrs. Cunningham that it might be nice to share some of the history and stories of the Island before their walk so that the participants have a better understanding what Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary is all about. It is more than just the service memorials, because there are also 78 local men honored on the Island who died in service to the Country.

Mr. Matthews made a motion to accept the application to use Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary for the Alzheimer & Parkinson walk. Ms. Fallon seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B) Request for Use of the Island - Mr. Jeff Matthews – Matthews Family Promotion Service

Mr. Rob Slezak, Recreation Director, explained that on June 21st he received a request to use Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary on July 5, 2016 for a service promotion recognition of a local hero, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Matthews. His father wanted to perform a small ceremony among family members to recognize his son's promotion to Colonel.

Mr. Young stated that he enjoys seeing veterans and their families taking advantage of the Island and using it for military recognition, promotions, or memorials.

Mr. Slezak reported that they had a huge crowd for the July 4th event and it went well.

Mr. Young asked what was the head count for the 4th of July.

Mr. Slezak replied that including Riverside Park and all the surrounding areas he estimates there were 20,000 to 25,000 people who enjoyed the fireworks. Riverside Park was filled and the vendors were running out of food and beverages.

C) Flag Storm Procedures

Mr. Young stated that he handed out copies of a flag protocol recommendation that is coming from the Veterans Council for consideration by the City (on file in the City Clerk's office). He read the flag protocol handout for the benefit of the viewing audience.

Mr. Don Dexter, Public Works Manager, explained that when winds get up to 25 miles per hour (mph) the flag starts to get damaged, so to honor the flag code they take it down to help preserve and protect the flag. They have also experienced damage to the cable and if that happens they have to get a crane to remove it and purchase a new cable, which will take a couple of weeks. The large flag costs about \$500. If the flags gets any small tears they can usually be stitched up once, but after that they need replaced. The smaller flags cost about \$225 and even with the 25 mph winds they get damaged. They can try flying a smaller flag, but they don't have funds in the budget to replace that many flags every year.

Mr. Matthews said he noticed that the City takes precautions by taking the flag down when there are high winds or hurricanes. It would be nice to see the flag up all the time, but he understands why if it destroys the cables.

Mr. Young commented that taking the flag down would be deferred to the City if there is a serious concern about damage to the cable. If there is going to be inclement weather, most places fly a smaller flag and he feels that would meet their expectations for the Island. If the City runs into a cost situation for replacing the flags he believes the Veterans Council would be glad to contribute. Unless there is something that would cause extreme damage to the mechanism he believes the flag should be flown.

Mr. Dexter replied that he will look over the information that Mr. Young provided. He suggested that if there is a tropical storm or more severe weather approaching he would recommend taking the flag down. If there is just a storm with 25 to 40 mph winds they will try flying the smaller flag.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A) Recap of Buck McTee Retirement Ceremony

Mr. Matthews reported that Chief Buck McTee had a great retirement ceremony. There were about 100 to 150 people present including his commanding officer. There were about 40 Senior and Master Chiefs all in uniform, which made up a good portion of the attendees. Chief McTee had citations from the last four (4) presidents, but they only read one (1).

Mr. Slezak commented that everything went well from the Recreation Department side.

Mr. Matthews asked if Chief McTee was from this area.

Mr. Young replied that while he was here training with the Navy he visited Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary and fell in love with it. It was his wish to come back here and have his retirement ceremony performed on the Island.

B) Status of Joel Keen Cenotaph Marker

Mr. Dexter reported that the cenotaph marker for Joel Keen came in last week and it is scheduled to be installed.

Mr. Young asked to be contacted before they install the marker because he would like to be there if possible. He may also contact Joel Keen's son and daughter-in-law to see if they would like to be present.

C) Recap of Veterans Outreach Golf Tournament

Mr. Paulisin announced that the Veterans Outreach golf tournament was very successful and it was sold out. They cleared about \$11,000 that they will be able to spend on local veterans. They plan on using some of the proceeds to host a picnic again in Gifford Park to thank everyone.

Mr. Young thanked Mr. Randy Old, City Council member, for participating and playing in a foursome.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

A) Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Restrictions on Golf Carts and Traffic Circle

Mr. Young said they noticed that a golf cart was parked on Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary during the Memorial Day Ceremony. The policies and procedures for Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary already have a policy in place restricting golf carts except during approved events.

Ms. Loy commented that in case someone had to leave the Island in a hurry during a ceremony, it might not be a bad idea to have a golf cart available.

Mr. Slezak stated that since they have volunteers who operate the golf carts for the events and other carts would be restricted, maybe they should provide something that identifies the approved group of carts. He does not want to turn anyone away that comes to the event who may have a handicap and needs a powered vehicle to get there.

Mr. Matthews suggested they make some placards for the carts that state it is in use for official business. If anyone comes with their own cart and it is verified that it is required for their personal needs then a placard can be given to them as well.

Mr. Young explained that the traffic circle is part of Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary and the rules and procedures apply to that area as well.

B) Mystery Veterans: Robert E. Palmer, Fred D. Coleman, Edward G. Courtney and Jim Williams

Mr. Young explained that there are 78 veterans recognized on the Island and in the past few years they have done a lot of research on them. They still have limited information on four (4) of these veterans. He handed out a list of the names, which includes the background information they currently have (on file in the City Clerk's office). He said that they need assistance and more information to confirm they have the correct individuals identified on the Island.

C) Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Veterans Highlight: Donald S. Humphrey and Nicholas W. Jennings

Mr. Young stated that he handed out the information on two (2) veterans that were recognized on the Bob Soos show in June (on file in the City Clerk's office). Ms. Fallon and Mr. Paulisin each read one (1) of the biographies.

8. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mr. Matthews asked to be excused from the August Veterans Memorial Island Committee meeting. He announced that the Marine Corp birthday is on November 10th, Veterans Day is November 11th, and on November 12th they will hold the Marine Corp birthday ball. The ball will be held at Pointe West and tickets are \$40. The dedication of the Gold Star Family monument will take place on September 25, 2016 at the Veterans Park in Port St. Lucie.

Mr. Paulisin asked to be excused from the Veterans Memorial Island Committee meeting in October.

A) Next Meeting Date – August 3, 2016

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

9. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:51 a.m.

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