

**VETERANS MEMORIAL ISLAND SANCTUARY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
Wednesday, February 3, 2021 – 9:30 a.m.  
City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida**

**PRESENT:** Chairman, John Michael Matthews, Vice Chairman, Joel Herman, Members: Barbara Fallon, Curtis Paulisin, Don Wickstrand, Alternate Member #1, Sylvester McIntosh, and Alternate Member #2, Peggy Lyon **Also Present:** Assistant City Attorney Jenny Flannigan, Grounds Maintenance Supervisor, Josh Chandler; Recreation Director, Jim O’Connell; and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Matthews called today’s meeting to order at 9:30 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) January 6, 2021**

**Mr. Herman made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2021 Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting. Ms. Fallon seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

None

**6. OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Matthews said at their last meeting they talked about the ball being replaced on top of the flag pole on Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. He asked if anyone heard what happened to the old ball, because it is kind of a historic piece from the Island.

No one responded.

**A) Update on World War I Monument and Donations**

Mr. Matthews announced that they received a \$50 donation from Ms. Barbara Fallon and they thanked her for that. They also received a \$1,000 check from the Military Officers Association of America, and there is another \$1,000 check coming from the Marine Corps League. He stated that

the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee approved the idea of a World War I (WWI) monument to be on the Island now they need to discuss the design of it. He explained that the idea started because of Mr. Alex MacWilliam, who created Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary was a WWI Veteran, but a WWI monument was never created. He stated that there are eight (8) World War I (WWI) Veterans who are recognized with cenotaph markers on the Island. There are monuments for the other conflicts and military associations, but not for WWI. He mentioned that the United States is currently creating a National WWI monument in Washington D.C. He said they are lucky to have the Indian River County Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America (MOA) step forward and take charge of this project.

Colonel Carlos Halcomb, Military Officers Association, said he would like to thank the City and the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee for offering this opportunity. He announced that on Wednesday the MOA Indian River County Chapter voted unanimously to stand up and take the lead for the WWI memorial. They appreciate all of the individuals and other organizations that have made donations to make this happen. It is City property and it will be in a public place, so they need to make sure the monument fits in with the City Ordinances and public pleasure. They are looking at a few different designs similar to the Korean War memorial, but still different. They need to come up with some designs and then get with the experts who design these, so they can get an idea on what it might cost. Second, they need to find out if there are any requirements from the City that would require them to go out for a request for price quotes. The MOA is delighted to take this on and they would like to have an unveiling on November 11, 2021.

Mr. Matthews said he heard some of the ideas that have been discussed, which include making it another shape other than a standard block with a bronze plaque. It was mentioned that it could be a pyramid, a taller rectangle, or even a round granite structure with a flat area where they can engrave information. They need to use this meeting and a couple more to make sure they have hashed through all of the ideas because there are a lot of people who want to be involved with this project. There are probably many people in the community that have had family members who were in WWI. He is not sure if the City requires this type of project to go out for bid because they have never done it this way before.

Mr. Paulisin said he understands that they have a specific date in mind to have the memorial unveiled, but he would like to stress that they take their time to make sure it is done right the first time.

Colonel Halcomb replied that he appreciates that advice because they certainly do not want to present something that is flawed. He said the plot of land that is available at the Sanctuary right now might need to be altered in order to accommodate the monument properly. He said he would love to hear the ideas from the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) as to what history they would like to include on the memorial. If there are any other organizations out there that have ideas of what they would like to incorporate, they welcome them. The MOA will put all the ideas together and come up with three (3) different models to consider.

Mr. Matthews said that the WWI monument should tie in with the existing monuments, but it does not need to be exactly the same. As they talk with the other organizations they will come up with what color, shape, the wording etc. He said that Veterans Day, November 11<sup>th</sup> is the targeted completion date because that was the end of WWI. It would definitely be an appropriate date to dedicate it, but like Mr. Paulisin stated they want to make sure it is done right and not just fast.

Mr. Paulisin suggested that the MOA speak with the Vietnam Veterans because they might be able to help guide them through the process and give them ideas on who to use and how they completed their memorial.

Mr. Matthews suggested that there should be a Red Poppy flower included in the monument somewhere because “In Flanders Field” is probably the most popular poem of the war.

Mr. Herman said that perhaps they could use the Red Poppies and a silhouette of a standing WWI soldier. He is confident that the MOA will come up with some good ideas.

Ms. Jenny Flannigan, Assistant City Attorney, introduced herself and stated that she will check to see if the City will require a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for this project.

Mr. Matthews invited anyone who has suggestions on the color, particular shape, etchings, etc. to let them know. He said their Committee previously talked about utilizing the existing slab where the sundial use to be since it is near several of the other monuments. They can change the shape of the slab, make it brick pavers, or they can place the memorial somewhere else on Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary.

Mrs. Lyon stated that in the past when she used to work with the local Boy Scouts, the local funeral homes were good about donating a marble statue when the Boy Scouts finished a project. She said they might look to the funeral homes for possible donations.

Mr. Matthews stated that this meeting is televised, so if anyone listening wants to help with this project they encourage donations. He thanked all of the organizations and individuals who have already donated to the project.

## **7. CHAIRMAN’S MATTERS**

None

## **8. MEMBER’S MATTERS**

Mr. Herman stated that he would like someone to get back with them on what happened to the ball from the top of the flag pole on Veterans Memorial Island. If the City no longer wants it, he would like to have it to display in the Veterans Service office. He will even put a plaque on it stating that it was donated by the City of Vero Beach.

Mr. Paulisin announced that the annual Mary Snyder/Veterans of Indian River County golf tournament will be held on June 19, 2021. They hope to have Route 60 Hyundai as their main sponsor again this year and all proceeds go to the homeless Veteran’s homes in Indian River County to help maintain them and start new ones if necessary.

## **9. NEXT MEETING DATE**

**A) March 3, 2021**

The next meeting of the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee is scheduled for March 3, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Today's meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

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