

**VETERANS MEMORIAL ISLAND SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, May 6, 2020 – 10:00 a.m.
City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida**

PRESENT: Chairman, John Michael Matthews, Vice Chairman, Joel Herman; Members: Barbara Fallon, Curtis Paulisin, and Alternate Member, Sylvester McIntosh, **Also Present:** City Attorney, John Turner; Recreation Director, Jim O’Connell, Assistant Recreation Director, Patty Howard; Assistant Public Works Director, Don Dexter; and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

Excused Absences: Peggy Lyon and Don Wickstrand

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Matthews called today’s meeting 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) March 4, 2020

Mr. Herman stated that in the first paragraph of item 3-A) the word *form* should be *from*.

Mr. Herman made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2020 Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting with the one (1) correction made. Ms. Fallon seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

5. NEW BUSINESS

A) Request to use Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary for the Memorial Day Ceremony – Veterans Council of Indian River County

Mr. Matthews explained that the Veterans Council had a meeting yesterday with members of the Police Department and the Sheriff’s Department and they were asked not to have the Memorial Day Ceremony on Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary, so the Veterans Council has canceled their original plans. Their alternate plan was to have a car parade and wave flags as they passed by Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary, but they were informed that might still create an opportunity for people to gather. There will probably be people visiting the Island even though they will not be holding a ceremony. It is a difficult decision because part of the ceremony was to honor the Gold Star Families along with all those who died while serving the Country. He said that Mr. Jim Romanek, Executive Director of the Veterans Council, informed him that there will

be Memorial Day events that will be broadcast. The Vero Beach Police Department, the Indian River County Sheriff's Office and others will videotape what is taking place and then broadcast it on Memorial Day for the public to see. He said he will make sure that the flag on the Island is lowered at 8:00 a.m. and raised back up at noon.

Mr. Paulisin asked if there is a website that people can go to, or are they going to do something live through zoom or skype.

Mr. Matthews said he believes their plan is to have a remembrance, a moment of silence, the playing of taps, etc. in a somewhat private gathering that they will make a video of and put it on social media.

B) Discussion of an Additional Plaque on the Korean War Veterans Monument – Mr. Joe Gomez

Mr. Matthews stated that Mr. Joe Gomez, Korean War Veterans, could not make it to the meeting today. He explained that Mr. Gomez is asking if it would be possible to add a plaque to the front of the Korean War monument that would list the names of all the current members of the Korean War Veterans organization. Mr. Matthews said they love and support the Korean War Veterans, but based on the City Resolution and authorized uses under E-3) it states that “No other individual memorials shall be allowed” and under section F-2) it says, “Only veteran organizations sponsoring a monument may be recognized as part of the monument”. He asked if the other Committee members had any thoughts on this.

Mr. Paulisin replied that he agrees that the Korean War Veterans organization can be recognized on the monument, but not the individual names.

Mr. Matthews said there is a monument on the Island with some names on it, but that was done before the existence of the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee and their rules and regulations, so it was grandfathered in. He said they will not be making a recommendation to the City Council on this request.

Mr. Herman said he agrees that the individual names would not be appropriate, but it would be fine if they want to add a plaque recognizing the anniversary of the end of the Korean War.

Mr. Matthews said the plaque on the top of the monument is for the National Korean War organization.

Mr. Herman said they could add a plaque for the local Korean War Veterans organization to the front of the monument and honor them that way.

Mr. Matthews said he will let Mr. Gomez know if the Korean War Veterans have another idea or thought then they can bring it before the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee again.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A) Update on the Gold Star Grove Marker Installation

Mr. Matthews stated that the unveiling of the newest Gold Star Grove marker was supposed to be tied in with the Memorial Day Ceremony, but now it might be dedicated during the Veterans Day ceremony or some other appropriate time.

Mr. Don Dexter, Assistant Public Works Director, stated that they have the marker and it is ready to be installed. He said he was instructed to install it the week before Memorial Day.

Mr. Tony Young, Mayor, said that since the Memorial Day Ceremony will not take place, he would recommend having the Gold Star Mothers speak with the family that is receiving the plaque. They might want to have a private ceremony and make a video of it to share with the public.

Mr. Matthews stated that he will follow up with Mrs. Michelle Dale, President of the Gold Star Mothers, and share that suggestion. They can install it and dedicate it at their discretion.

Mayor Young said they would need to coordinate that with the Public Works Department to make sure the pedestal and the plaque are in place. He said Flag Day is June 15th and that is the celebration of the Army's birthday. That day might be appropriate, since he was a soldier and if not, there are other opportunities available.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

A) Honor the Memory of Ms. Alma Lee Loy

Mr. Matthews said he thought it would be appropriate to take a few minutes to remember Ms. Alma Lee Loy. Ms. Loy was the Chairman of the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee for many years and was one of the founding members along with Mrs. Helen Glen. They both knew so much about the Island. The 17th Street Bridge and the Chamber of Commerce building were both named after her. She was a wonderful person and was thought of fondly.

Ms. Fallon added that many people and groups referred to Ms. Loy as "The First Lady of Indian River County".

Mr. Matthews welcomed Mr. Jim O'Connell, Recreation Director, to the meeting.

Mr. Jim O'Connell, Recreation Director, said that he is glad to be here. He started with the City on March 16, 2020 and he is still feeling his way through and learning the lay of the land. He said the Recreation Department wants to be a good partner with this Committee. He said his door is always open and he can usually be reached on the phone. He and the Recreation Department will provide as much help as they can.

Mr. Matthews announced that Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary is open and people should take the advice of the Center of Disease Control (CDC) on keeping six (6) feet apart from others, wearing a facemask, and washing their hands often.

Mr. Matthews reported that six (6) students from the Vero Beach High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) are joining the military. He said he received an email from Mr. Christian Maddox, Public Information Officer for the Indian River County School District. He was inquiring if it would be possible to utilize the Island to have a brief ceremony for the six (6)

students before they leave for the military. He said he advised him that they should not have more than 10 people at the gathering. He said he does not think that they would need the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee's approval for six (6) or eight (8) people to use the Island.

Mr. Herman asked if they are going to take the oath on the Island.

Mr. Matthews replied that they invited Colonel Oates to be there, so he is not sure if that is their plan. They want to make a video of it so they can show it to upcoming cadets.

Mr. Herman said that as long as it is done tastefully he does not have a problem with their request. He thinks it is appropriate for those young men and women to be recognized.

Ms. Fallon replied that she does not have a problem with them using Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary for this event. It might be inspiring to those young cadets.

Mayor Young said that the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee has supported retirements on the Island, so what better way to acknowledge the start of a potential commitment that can entail their lives. It would be very special to acknowledge the commitment of these young folks who have the dedication to serve the Country.

Mr. Matthews said they mentioned a flag raising, but he is not sure if it is their organizational flag or the flag on the Island.

Mayor Young requested that they contact the Police Chief and the Recreation Director so they are aware of what will be taking place.

Mr. Matthews said this event would be sometime the week of May 11 – 15, 2020 and there will be no more than 10 people with the group.

Mr. Matthews said at a previous meeting they briefly spoke about a World War I (WWI) monument for Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. Normally a monument would be recommended by a Veterans organization. He is not aware of any WWI Veterans who are still alive in this community and there is not a WWI organization. He said one (1) of the individuals who helped create Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary served in WWI and there are eight (8) or nine (9) cenotaph markers for WWI Veterans on the Island. He said they also talked about utilizing the small cement slab where the sundial used to be, which could hold a small monument. He just wanted to bring this back up for discussion and keep this idea alive. He is not sure if they should leave it up to a Veteran to come up with a design, or keep it a simple plaque. He brought this up at the Veterans Council meeting and he found out that there is already some money set aside by the Marine Corps League for this project and there are families in the community that want to be involved.

Ms. Fallon said it is very overdue and it should be a *when* and not *if* they should have a WWI monument.

Ms. Fallon made a motion that the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee consider what kind of memorial they should have on the Island to honor the WWI Veterans. Mr. Herman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

8. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Ms. Fallon asked if the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee should do something on the Island to recognize Ms. Alma Lee Loy when they can all get together again.

Mr. Herman asked if they might consider adding the names to the large map of the three (3) of four (4) Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee members who have passed away and served before them. It would give recognition to them without having a plaque on the Island.

Mr. Matthews said they would have to look at the City Ordinance or Resolution and research that. He said to keep that and these other ideas in mind.

Mr. Paulisin said that in regards to remembering Ms. Loy, he said he was asked to give a speech in January, so he contacted Ms. Loy to get her thoughts and help. Ms. Loy called him back and told him he could use her speech that she gave many years ago at Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. He said she told him that she would be honored to have any Veteran give her speech.

Mr. Paulisin announced that the Vietnam Veterans Golf tournament has been rescheduled from June 13, 2020 to August 1, 2020. They will not have any paperwork, programs, or flyers printed until May 15th just in case they experience a second wave of the coronavirus. They already printed and spent money on the programs for June, so they want to wait until it gets closer to make sure. If everything goes as planned, the tournament will still be at Sandridge Golf Club and they will have the luncheon at the Indian River County Fairgrounds. This year they will have an expo along with the tournament and because of the virus circumstances, they are waiving the \$25 fee for the vendors if they want to donate a gift certificate or an in-kind gift.

Mayor Young stated that May is Memorial Day and Mrs. Michelle Dale brought to his attention that there is a virtual Memorial Day marathon going on. People can google runforthe fallen.org and they can register to participate. It consists of selecting a date in May and signing up for a half hour block of time. During the 30 minutes, the participants walk or run their neighborhoods with a flag, military attire, etc. He said he would help spread the word. What better way to take advantage of Memorial Day than to honor all those who have lost their lives.

Mayor Young announced that Mr. Bob Greco is retiring from the City and his last day will be next week. He does not believe that Mr. Greco has ever missed a Memorial Day or Veterans Day, and he thought that maybe the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee would like to recognize him with a letter of appreciation.

Mayor Young said in thinking how to recognize Ms. Loy on the Island, they might want to see if it is possible to dedicate a tree to her.

Mayor Young stated that he wants to send out invitations or announcements for Memorial Day and Veterans Day to all the people that are tied to Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. This would include the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee members, so unless

they object, he will get their mailing addresses and include them on the roster. He also included Mr. Greco, and Ms. Nanette Haynes. Grounds Maintenance Manager, because of all the work they do on the Island.

Mr. Matthews said that is a wonderful idea.

Mayor Young reported that Mrs. Peggy Lyon's father passed away this past Sunday. He was such an icon in the City of Vero Beach.

Ms. Fallon made a motion that the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee present a certificate of appreciation to Mr. Greco. Mr. Herman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) June 3, 2020

The next meeting of the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee is scheduled for June 3, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

/rh