

**VETERANS MEMORIAL ISLAND SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, August 2, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.
City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida**

PRESENT: Chairman, John Matthews; Vice Chairman, Michelle Dale; Members: Curtis Paulisin, Melissa Arndt, and Carolyn Lange **Also Present:** Assistant City Engineer, Danessa Chambers; Civil Engineer II, Austin Linville; City Attorney, John Turner and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Chartier

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. 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) July 5, 2023

Mr. Matthews made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 5, 2023 Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting. Mrs. Dale seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Tony Young said that there are four (4) World War II (WWII) Veterans honored on Veterans Memorial Island who gave their lives in August. He said on August 10th, Charles Harlock, who was a Navy Sailor was killed in an accident in 1943 in London. On August 11th Troy Moody Jr., passed away. He was a survivor of WWII and came back home, but then he joined the Army and was overcome while fighting off the North Koreans in Japan in 1950. Albert Helseth, Jr. survived most of WWII as an artilleryman in Frankfurt, Germany, and was killed when a detonation went off after Germany surrendered. The last Veteran is Raymond Knight who was in the Army and the bomber he was on was shot down in August 1944.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A) Recount of the Memorial Service for Colonel Marty Zickert

Mr. Matthews stated that Mr. Young did a wonderful job putting together the memorial service for Marty Zickert. They printed 250 programs and they were all handed out. He said Marty was a great guy who did so much as a leader of the Veteran community and for many other people. It was one (1) of the most appropriate ceremonies they have had on the Island.

Mrs. Lange said it was a beautiful tribute to Marty and it was wonderful to hear his son speak. It added a very personal touch. She said she worked with Marty on the first Star Spangled Gala fundraiser in 2019 at Grand Harbor and he was delightful to work with.

Mr. Paulisin said unfortunately he was not able to attend the memorial because he was attending a family funeral. He said he worked with Marty for many years on large functions and programs for the Veterans Council and he will say that Marty knew how to delegate.

Mrs. Dale stated that she worked with Marty on the first Veteran Suicide Awareness Walk-a-Thon as well as many other Veteran events. She said Marty also indoctrinated her into doing many interviews with him, which she enjoyed. He was always helpful and involved with many functions. If they needed someone from the military to speak at the Red, White, and Blue Concerts, he was always there.

Mr. Matthews stated that Mr. Rob Medina, Mayor of Palm Bay, gave the eulogy and he shared some words from Congressman Bill Posey.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A) Discussion on moving the Alex MacWilliam Monument or Trimming Vegetation

Mr. Matthews said the plaque for the Alex MacWilliam monument has been recast and mounted back on the base. He asked if they will try to move it forward or trim the vegetation back some.

Mrs. Danessa Chambers, Assistant City Engineer, replied that they are exploring the idea of moving the monument forward, but not until the bridge is reopened. She believes they will have to remove the plaque and reconstruct a new pedestal.

Mr. Young said the plaque was reinstalled on the existing base for the recent ceremonies, but it was removed again until they rebuild a new base for it in its new location.

B) Update on the Bridge Replacement

Mrs. Chambers reported that they did directional drilling for the water main and the reuse line so they can keep the water for the drinking fountain and the irrigation in service while the work is ongoing. She said Florida Power and Light was on site yesterday to cut the power, but they had some challenges. They removed the flag from the Island because it will not be able to be lit at night. She stated they are hoping to fully close the bridge this Monday, August 7, 2023, and start the 120-day clock of full closure. With this new schedule, they should have it completed in December 2023.

C) Update on the Stage and World War II Tribute

Mr. Young stated that City Council is currently going through its annual budget and there is one (1) consideration he would like to bring to the Veterans Memorial Sanctuary Advisory Committee's attention. It would be helpful if the Committee would support a request for assistance from the City to fund the cost of the foundation of the stage. There is a proposal for the foundation, which is

\$35,000 to \$37,000 to put helical piles down into the ground to support the foundation. He said whenever there is work or projects on the Island, City Council normally expects a recommendation from this Committee. He reported that the WWII Tribute Committee has raised over \$263,000 in cash and another \$37,000 from in-kind services over the past year and they expect that to double over the coming year. They would like to ask the City to fund about 10% of the cost. The proposal they received had three (3) options, but they agreed that the helical piles were the best option for the Island. They had multiple Engineering firms and two (2) Architects look at the design of the tribute and it is designed in a way to withstand the elements at that location. He said he is looking for a recommendation to City Council that they support the budget request.

Mrs. Lange asked what was their original target for the amount of money they needed to raise.

Mr. Young replied that their estimate was between \$200,000 and \$400,000. He said with what has been raised so far, they should be on schedule. They will not know the exact final cost until the building contractor reaches out to all the entities involved in the project. He explained that they know the costs of the tile work, the Structural Engineering, the Civil Engineering, the surveying, and the cost of the foundation. He reported that he also met with Mrs. Ruth Stanbridge, a member of the Historical Society, and they volunteered to make a video at their expense. He said he is confident that they are where they should be at this point.

Mr. Matthews asked how many helical piles were recommended to be used.

Mr. Young replied that there will be 26 helical piles. He knows that sounds like a lot of money, but the gentleman who submitted the proposal is very knowledgeable and he did the foundation for the Words From War monument and foundations for many homes on the Barrier Island, so he is comfortable with this work and knows the area.

Mr. Matthews stated that when the WWII Tribute Committee is done with the project they will donate it back to the City.

Mr. Young said he would encourage the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee to make a motion stating they are in favor of the City allocating no more than \$40,000 from the City's budget to support the cost of the foundation.

Mr. Matthews made a motion that the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee ask City Council to approve allocating up to \$40,000 from the City's budget to be used for the foundation of the WWII monument. Mr. Paulisin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mr. Matthews announced that Veterans Day is on November 10th and the Marine Corps Birthday Ball will be on November 11, 2023, at Oak Harbor Club. It is a Military Ball and they honor all of the military forces.

Mr. John Turner, City Attorney, suggested they open the meeting for public comment on the motion they made.

Mr. Matthews opened the meeting for public comment. With no one wishing to speak, public comment was closed.

8. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mrs. Dale announced that the Military Veteran Suicide Awareness Walk-a-Thon will be on November 5, 2023, at Riverside Park. She explained that the route will be a little different because the Island will be closed, but it will still be a 2.2-mile walk. She said anyone can help by sponsoring, participating, or donating and Ircgoldstarmoms.org is where people can go to make donations.

Mr. Matthews asked to be excused from their October meeting.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) September 6, 2023

The next meeting of the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee is scheduled for September 6, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:04 a.m.

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