

**VETERANS MEMORIAL ISLAND SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, November 4, 2020 – 9:30 a.m.
City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida**

PRESENT: Chairman, John Michael Matthews, Members: Barbara Fallon, Curtis Paulisin (arrived at 9:49), Don Wickstrand, and Alternate Member, Peggy Lyon **Also Present:** City Attorney, John Turner; Assistant Public Works Director, Don Dexter; Recreation Director, Jim O’Connell; and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

Excused Absence: Joel Herman

Unexcused absence: Sylvester McIntosh

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) October 7, 2020

Mr. Matthews reported that on page 2 of the October minutes, the Veterans Day ceremony guest speaker’s title should be Lieutenant *Colonel* Curtis Holden, not just Lieutenant.

Ms. Fallon made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 7, 2020 Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting with the one (1) notation made. Mr. Wickstrand seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

This item was discussed after item 7.

Mrs. Patricia Ryan, Treasurer of the Next Generation Veterans and on the Board of Directors for the Veterans Council, said that Mr. Bruce Caddy, Next Generation Veterans, sends his condolences for not being able to attend today. She will bring them up to date on the Words From War monument. She explained that they are having some drainage issues at the site of the monument so they have started drainage mitigation and the permit was approved yesterday by City Council. Once the drainage issue has been mitigated, they will start creating the foundation. The City has assured them that the drainage work they are doing will not affect the parking or the Veterans Day Ceremony.

Mr. Matthews said this was an ambitious project as far as fundraising goes.

Mrs. Ryan stated that they have collected over two-thirds of what they planned to have at this point. The artist has been paid in full, which was a big expense. She knows that their Committee

is mostly interested in phase II of their project, which is a monument for Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. She explain that they do not have any ideas for the monument yet, so they are looking for recommendations. They are hoping that Mr. Ross Powers, Artist, who did the Words From War monument will be able to complete the monument for the Island.

Mr. Matthews stated that there was an idea proposed a while back of it being a garden of remembrance. As long as the monuments tie in with the other monuments on the Island, the thought was to have three (3) smaller monuments in different colors, one (1) for Iraqi, one (1) for Afghanistan, and one (1) for the War on Terrorism.

Mrs. Ryan said that is an excellent idea, but what it will come down to is the funding.

Mrs. Ryan explained that they originally planned on pouring the concrete forms for the Words From War monument at the studio and then transporting them to the site. They decided that it made more sense to transport the constructed forms and pour the concrete at the monument location.

Mr. Paulisin asked if they plan to keep the monument(s) uniform with the others that are on the Island.

Mrs. Ryan replied yes, they know that is the Committee's primary concern.

Mrs. Ryan announced that they are planning to hold the unveiling of the Words From War monument mid to late January, 2021. They will have a donor appreciation virtual event on December 19, 2020, which is primarily for the larger donors. She reported that they had one (1) \$50,000 donor, two (2) \$ 25,000 donors, and about 35 \$1,000 donors. She said they could not have done this project without those donations and they are so thankful.

Mr. Matthews asked if this monument is for the Veterans from Iraqi, Afghanistan, and the War on Terrorism.

Mrs. Ryan replied yes, it is for the conflicts from 1990 and forward. She said the money they raise that goes back to the Veterans Council for mental health programs serves all Veterans from all wars.

Mr. Matthews said he does not believe that there is another monument anywhere like this. It might be a regional monument or even of interest to people statewide.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A) Veterans Day Ceremony – November 11, 2020

Mr. Matthews said that he invited Mr. Jim Romanek, Executive Director of the Veterans Council of Indian River County, to come speak about the Veterans Day event, but he is not in attendance. He stated that the programs have been printed and they will have the classic sights and sounds on this day of celebration for all those individuals who have served in the military. He briefly read from the program the names of some of the participants (on file in the City Clerk's office). He believes the band will be much smaller this year and the programs will not be handed out, but

instead they will be in boxes or on a table for people take. The Boy Scouts will be handing out water bottles, they will have disinfecting wipes, and they are asking everyone to wear masks.

Mr. Don Dexter, Assistant Public Works Director, reminded everyone that there is a good chance a tropical system will be coming over this area on Sunday. They are predicting a 60 percent chance of rain and if that happens the Island will be very wet. They might not be able to transport the stage onto the Island and there might not be enough dry ground for people to set their chairs on. There has been a lot of rain over the past month and as you move away from ceremonial circle, the water tends to stand in the grass. He suggested they might want to think about a contingency plan.

Mr. Matthews said the Veterans Council conducts this ceremony, so he will let them know if they have not thought about the weather.

Mr. Dexter announced that he is retiring next year, so Mr. Josh Chandler, Public Works Superintendent, will be taking over his job of attending the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meetings.

Ms. Nanette Haynes, Grounds Maintenance Manager, stated that she would attend their meetings if Mr. Chandler cannot be there.

Mr. Dexter stated that Ms. Haynes and her crews are the ones who maintain the Island and they have been struggling to mow the grass because of all the rain.

Mr. Matthews said they always do a great job. The dry run for the Veterans Day ceremony is scheduled for Tuesday, November 10th at 9:00 a.m., so there might be a new plan for that as well.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A) Status of Proposed Plaque for the Korean War Veterans Monument – Mr. Joe Gomez, Korean War Veterans Association

Mr. Matthews stated that Mr. Joe Gomez, Korean War Veterans Association, is not at today's meeting to speak on this item. He believes the Korean War Veterans are working on getting a price to have the bronze plaque cast.

B) Further Discussion on a World War I Monument

Mr. Matthews explained that they have been discussing a World War I (WWI) monument. Normally a Veterans organization would present a request for a monument to the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee, but there are no WWI organizations. His thought was to form a committee, if their Committee and the City approved it. The new Committee could hear ideas of what the WWI monument should look like. He stated that he invited Mr. Jeff Ray, Architect, to sketch up some drawings based on their ideas. He said that Mr. Rob Rayner, Sheriff's Office, said he would like to be a part of this project. This would also be of interest to the American Legion and the Marine Corps League. Perhaps they could get a few individuals from these organizations together to create a small Committee and report the information back to the Veterans Memorial Island Committee.

Mr. Dexter recommended that the Veterans Council form the new Committee so that it is not a subcommittee of the Veterans Memorial Island Committee. That way they can have open discussions without violating any Sunshine Laws.

Mr. Matthews said that is a great suggestion.

Mr. John Turner, City Attorney, said he would need to know what he had in mind.

Mr. Matthews replied he was thinking that the Veterans Council could form a Committee of three (3) or four (4) people so they could discuss it openly and report to the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee with their ideas and progress.

Mr. Turner reminded them that their function is to advise City Council regarding the Island. He does not know if they have the ability ask other members to report back to their Committee as a fact-finding Committee. It is fine if someone wants to bring information to present to their Committee that is helpful to what their purpose is, but he is not sure they have the authority to appoint a separate Committee or organization to do that.

Mr. Matthews replied that maybe he should have said invite people not appoint them. He said that WWI Veterans started the Island, so their Committee agreed that WWI Veterans should be honored with a monument on the Island.

Mr. Turner asked if they have followed these procedures before, or have they appointed specific individuals to make recommendations to their Committee.

Mr. Matthews replied no they have not. He said he may have misspoke, but his intention was to invite individuals not appoint them.

Mr. Turner said if they appoint other people who would make recommendations that might eventually go before City Council, then the Sunshine Law comes into play. However, if they are just doing fact-finding then that is a different subject. He does not want City Council to think that City Committees can form other Committees and Boards.

Mr. Matthews said he will put this on hold for now until they look into it further.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mr. Matthews said at their last meeting the Rotary Club approached them about putting a plaque on Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary thanking the Veterans. They are not a Veterans organization and per the City's Ordinance they would not be allowed to do that, so he is open for any other ideas for the Rotary Club. He said there have been discussions in the past about having a tent to provide shade on the Island.

Ms. Fallon said it would not be appropriate and personally, she would not want to see a tent on the Island. She said they would have to check the bylaws to see if that would be allowed.

Mr. Dexter explained that several years ago, they looked into installing a shade sail over the seating area, but because of the engineering that was required, it would have cost \$40,000 to \$50,000. He suggested that a long-term project the Committee might want to consider would be to construct a

permanent stage with a covering, because the cement slab is already there. That would eliminate them having to transport the portable stage over there and back for each event.

Mr. Matthews reminded them that they will have the Parkinson and Alzheimer Association using the Island for part of their walk on November 14.

8. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mr. Paulisin apologized for arriving late. He explained that he was in Michigan for his father's funeral and he did not have a chance to read his email about the time change.

Mr. Wickstrand said happy 245th birthday to the Marine Corps.

Mr. Matthew replied yes, but they will not be having the Marine Corps Ball this year.

Mr. Paulisin said he just found out that a person who helps him not only with the annual golf tournaments, but with everything he does for Veterans, has terminal cancer. He will be setting up a fundraiser for her and he will update the Committee when he has more information. She has done many great things for the community.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

A) December 2, 2020

The next meeting of the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee is scheduled for December 2, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:01a.m.

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