

**VETERANS MEMORIAL ISLAND SANCTUARY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
Wednesday, June 2, 2021 – 9:30 a.m.  
City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida**

**PRESENT:** Chairman, John Michael Matthews; Members: Barbara Fallon, Curtis Paulisin, and Alternate Member, Peggy Lyon **Also Present:** Assistant City Attorney, Jenny Flanigan; Assistant Public Work's Director, Richard Mutterback; Recreation Director, Jim O'Connell; and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Hawkins

**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.

Mr. Matthews announced that Mr. Don Wickstrand resigned from his position on the Veterans Memorial Island Committee. He said that Mr. Wickstrand is a retired Navy Captain and they wish him well.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A) May 5, 2021**

**Mrs. Lyon made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2021 Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting. Ms. Fallon seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**A) Request for use of the Island - Promotion Ceremony for Christie Lamond  
June 25, 2021**

Mr. Matthews announced that they received two (2) applications today requesting to use Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary.

Mr. Matthews said the first one (1) is from Christi Lamond for her promotion ceremony from Captain to Major. She is requesting to use the Island on Friday, June 25, 2021 from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. and is expecting approximately 60 people. On her application she is requesting the use of a podium and speaker system and chairs for 60 people. They do not handle that part, but they

can certainly help her by letting her know who to speak with. He asked the Committee members if there are any questions or issues with Ms. Lamond using the Island.

Mr. Paulisin said his only concern was her request for the use of the equipment and chairs and who would handle that.

Mr. Matthews said that there are benches on the Island that could accommodate 60 people, so he is not sure if they would need chairs. He said he will ask the Veterans Council about having the Color Guard or Honor Guard available for the ceremony.

Mr. Jim O'Connell, Recreation Director, asked to have Ms. Lamond contact the Recreation Department regarding the chairs and the sound system. He is not sure what costs are involved with those items.

Mr. Matthews asked if this type of request comes up in the future, should they direct them to the Recreation Department.

Mr. O'Connell replied yes.

**Mrs. Lyon made a motion to approve the request to use the Island for the promotion ceremony. Ms. Fallon seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

Mr. Matthews stated that the second request is for a memorial service for Mr. Charles Tierney on June 5, 2021 and they are expecting 15 people.

Mrs. Carrie Eble said that Mr. Charles Tierney is her father and he was a Veteran of the Korean War conflict and they would like to honor him on Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary with a memorial service.

Mr. Matthews explained that the form is properly filled out and his DD Form 214 shows he was honorably discharged.

Mrs. Eble said they originally stated there would be 15 people in attendance, but now it might be up to 30 people.

Mr. Matthews asked what her plans are for the ceremony and do they need anything special.

Mrs. Eble said they will speak loudly so everyone can hear and they will bring their own speaker to play a song, so all they need is permission to use the Island. She stated that they have also been in touch with the Honor Guard and the funeral home is trying to arrange that.

Mr. Matthews stated that this will also be discussed at the Veterans Council meeting today at 1:30 p.m. He said the Sebastian Honor Guard presents a folded flag, they do a rifle volley, and taps, so they do a great job.

Mr. Paulisin explained that the Honor Guard gets utilized quite a bit, so he said she should stay on top of it with the funeral home. He said if she has any problem to contact the Veterans Council or himself, so they can make sure an Honor Guard is there.

**Ms. Fallon made a motion to allow the use of the Island for the memorial service for Mr. Tierney. Mr. Paulisin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**6. OLD BUSINESS**

**A) Proposal for Holiday Lights for Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary – Mr. Bill Baysura**

Mr. Matthews explained that Mr. Bill Baysura attended their last meeting and discussed the possibility of adding Christmas lights to Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. They asked him to provide the Committee with a written proposal, but he is not in attendance today. Christmas is a ways off, so hopefully he will be back at a future meeting to present that, because they would need to see the details.

**B) Words From War Monument Dedication – Mr. Bruce Cady, Next Generation Veterans**

Mr. Matthews said they were expecting Mr. Bruce Cady, Next Generation Veterans, to be at today's meeting to provide them with an update on the Words From War monument. He stated that the walls of the monument are up and he believes the dedication is scheduled for June 26<sup>th</sup>.

**C) Update on World War I Monument**

Mr. Matthews reported that the proposal for the World War I (WWI) monument was presented to City Council and it was approved to be placed on the Island. He said that the Committee discussed using the old site of the sundial for the WWI monument, but that area is really covered with trees and they are only going to get larger. They decided that was not the appropriate spot, so the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Monument Committee met with the Public Work's Department about finding another location.

Mr. Richard Mutterback, Assistant Public Work's Director, stated that they met with City staff a couple of times to pinpoint a location. They came up with a location just north of the flag where there is an open spot. He explained that the landscaping there is in an arc formation around the flagpole and the monument will continue that arc shape further. At that location, the soldier will look like he is charging towards the flag. The next step is for the City staff to stake out the area they selected, so they can get figures for the cost of the materials. The goal is to have the base ready by the end of July, because the statue will be ready to be installed at the end of August or early September.

Mr. Matthews said that the Committee from MOAA has put a lot of time into this project.

Mr. Paulisin said that there was a very nice article in the Sunday paper where they interviewed the MacWilliam family and it mentioned the doughboy statue.

**D) Recap of Memorial Day Ceremony – May 31, 2021**

Mr. Matthews stated that they had a good turnout for the Memorial Day ceremony. The keynote speaker was Mrs. Michelle Dale, Gold Star Mother, and her theme was remembering May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 100 years ago when 44,000 bodies were returned from Europe.

Mr. Matthews explained that a couple of Sundays ago, Mr. Tony Young and Mrs. Michelle Dale organized a trip around Indian County to visit the graves of the eight (8) World War I Veterans that are memorialized on the Island. At the cemetery they announced the Veteran's name and talked about their history and their service and then with a Sheriff's escort they went to the next cemetery.

Mr. Matthews said that people around the outside areas of the Island mentioned that they have a hard time hearing the speakers at the ceremony. The great-grandson of Mr. Alex MacWilliam Sr. read the most famous poem from WWI titled "In Flanders' Fields".

### **E) Update on a Stage for Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary**

This item was discussed prior to item 6-D).

Mr. Matthews said that they have not really made any progress on a stage, but they are still looking for ideas. They discussed a trailer type stage that could be taken on and off the Island, but they are expensive. The other idea would be a permanent raised stage or platform with a ramp for access. It could have aluminum poles that could be inserted at the corners for a covering to provide shade. The cover would be temporary and only put up when they need it for an event. He said it will be expensive to do either one, but anyone can make a donation towards it. The Island will always be there and they want to make sure it is done right.

Mr. Matthews stated that he has been asked if the Committee would consider attaching QR (quick response) codes to the monuments on the Island. He is not sure how everyone feels about that, but it would provide details about each monument for people who are not familiar with them or want more information. Maybe this is something they could look at in the future.

Mr. Tony Young said that they are extremely blessed to have people in the community who care about the Veterans and to have the opportunity to have the ceremonies on the Island. He said the Veterans from WWI are almost forgotten in their community. He explained that this year in Washington D.C., they also dedicated a WWI monument. The magnitude of that war and the impact on the Country was enormous. There are eight (8) men dedicated on the Island from WWI and he provided a brief background on each of them. He thanked the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee and the Public Work's department for all they do for the Island.

## **7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS**

Mr. Matthews announced that Mr. Rob Medina, Palm Bay, Florida Mayor, is in the audience. He asked him if there was anything he would like to discuss.

Mr. Rob Medina, Representative for Congressman Bill Posey, said that he wears many hats, but he is here today to support the Veterans of Indian River County, because Indian River County is a huge part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. He said he truly appreciates everything their Committee does for the Island and it is such a tribute to the entire County. Over the years he has

traveled throughout Florida and the City of Vero Beach and Indian River County has so much to be proud with Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary. There is no place like Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary in Florida that he has witnessed. He said the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery has a very good platform or stage that Vero Beach could look at to emulate. He thanked all of the Committee members for everything they do in the community. He said the Island is a wonderful place and is hallowed ground, so it is important to share this history with our children and grandchildren.

## **8. MEMBER'S MATTERS**

Mrs. Lyon said the Memorial Day ceremony and the weather could not have been better and she was glad to have been there.

Ms. Fallon asked if it is appropriate for anyone to do a fishing tournament fundraiser to raise money for a stage.

Mr. Matthews stated that fundraising cannot be done on the Island, but it is okay to ask individuals or organizations for donations to be made to the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary fund.

Mr. Paulisin announced that they have about 240 golfers for the annual golf tournament and their maximum will be 260 participants. That is the largest number that Sandridge Golf Club has ever had. He said the guest speakers will be Mr. Joe Fletcher, County Commissioner, Mr. Tony Young, and Mrs. Donna Katen-Bahensky, retired Director of the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center. The date of the tournament is June 19<sup>th</sup> and all the proceeds will go to the homeless Veterans homes in Indian River County.

Ms. Jenny Flanigan, Assistant City Attorney, explained that it is not a Sunshine Law violation for one (1) member of the Committee to speak with anyone from the public. The only time they should be on guard is if there are other members from their Committee present.

## **9. NEXT MEETING DATE**

### **A) July 7, 2021**

The next meeting of the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee is scheduled for July 7, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

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