

**VETERANS MEMORIAL ISLAND SANCTUARY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
Wednesday, September 1, 2021 – 9:30 a.m.  
City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida**

**PRESENT:** Chairman, John Michael Matthews; Members: Melissa Arndt, Barbara Fallon and Curtis Paulisin **Also Present:** Recreation Director, Jim O’Connell; Assistant City Attorney, Jenny Flanigan and Deputy City Clerk, Sherri Philo

**Excused Absence:** Sylvester McIntosh

**Unexcused Absence:** Peggy Lyon

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chairman called today’s meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chairman led the Committee members and the audience present for today’s meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A) August 4, 2021**

Mr. Matthews referred to page four (4) of the August 4, 2021, Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee minutes. He said the minutes state that Mr. Sylvester McIntosh was awarded the Silver Star for his heroism during the Korean War, but it was actually the Vietnam War.

**Mr. Fallon made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2021, Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting as amended. Mr. Paulisin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Matthews reported that Ms. Tara Giovannone was supposed to be at today’s meeting to request permission to hold a candlelight vigil on the Island on September 7, 2021, for the ones (1) who recently died in Kabul. He said they would go ahead and continue with the agenda and if she appears they would invite her to come up to the dais to make her request.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**A) Request to use the Island – Wreaths Across America – Mr. Richard Lewis**

Mr. Richard Lewis, of Wreaths across America, reported that December 18, 2021, is National Wreath Day and they would be laying wreaths at Crestlawn Cemetery that morning and they would like to hold a Ceremony on the Island at 12:00 p.m. Prior to the Ceremony they would be laying wreaths at each of the cenotaphs and each of the monuments.

**Mr. Paulisin moved to approve the request of Wreaths Across America to hold a Ceremony on the Island on December 18, 2021. Mrs. Fallon seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

Ms. Tara Giovannone, President of the Professional Republican Woman's and Mother's Club, approached the dais. She stated that they would like to hold a candlelight vigil on the Island in honor of the service members who were killed last week in Kabul on Tuesday, September 7, 2021, at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Matthews asked would they have a speaker or master of ceremonies.

Ms. Giovannone explained that they will all meet at the flagpole where they will be handing out candles, they will say a little prayer for the service members and then they will walk around the Island with the candles. She said the entire community is invited to attend.

**Mrs. Fallon moved to approve the request to hold a candlelight vigil. Mr. Paulisin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

**B) Honor Guard Ceremony for Alfred Griffin on August 24, 2021 – Requested by Mrs. Suzanne Chesser**

Mr. Matthews reported that the Service for Mr. Alfred Griffin, who was an Army Veteran, was held on August 24, 2021.

Mr. Matthews reported that the Indian River County Sherriff's Department cancelled the September 11<sup>th</sup> ceremony because of COVID, as well as because it was on the same day as the Tunnel to Towers Run.

**C) Cannon Donated by Mr. Bob Bouclas – Mr. Matthew Mitts, Director of Public Works**

Mr. Matthew Mitts, Public Works Director, reported that a cannon was donated to the City by Mr. Bob Bouclas, a Korean War Veteran, who would like to have the cannon placed on the Island. He said that he is before the Committee today to get their thoughts on placing the cannon on the Island. He handed out to the Board a photograph of the cannon and possible other areas for the cannon in Jaycee Park (attached to the original minutes).

Mr. Matthews said most everyone agrees that the Island should not be a place for tanks, aircraft, etc., because the Island is a Sanctuary rather than a Park. He said another area where the cannon could be displayed would be the Three Corners property.

Mr. Paulisin said it is a nice artifact, but he didn't know if it was appropriate to have it on the Island because the Island is a Sanctuary. He said it is his opinion that it does not belong on the Island.

Mr. Mitts said if it is not the desire of the Committee to place the cannon on the Island, staff would recommend that it be placed at Jaycee Park where they have other outdoor history items.

Mrs. Fallon felt that would be the ideal place for the cannon. She agreed that it should not be placed on the Island.

Mr. Matthews said the Sanctuary is there to honor those who died serving our Country. He asked if this could wait to their next meeting before they make a decision.

Mr. Mitts answered yes.

Mr. Paulisin felt that they should look at the bylaws of the Island before making a decision. His personal opinion is that it does not belong on the Island. He suggested putting it at Humiston Park or Jaycee Park.

Mrs. Fallon agreed.

Ms. Jenny Flanigan, Assistant City Attorney, suggested that the Committee make a motion to continue this item to their October 6, 2021, meeting.

**Mr. Paulisin made a motion asking that Mr. Mitts attend their meeting of October 6, 2021, so that they can further investigate the rules. Mrs. Fallon seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

Mr. Matthews noted that this will also give them a chance to find out how the Veterans Council feels about it.

## **6. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A) Update on the Bridge Repairs**

Mr. Matthews gave a brief update on the repairs to the bridge on the Island.

### **B) Update on World War I Monument**

Mr. Matthews reported that he was in Kansas City and had the opportunity to visit the National World War I Museum. He then showed the Committee a brochure showing the layout of the Museum.

Mr. Matthews gave a brief update on the status of the World War I Monument. He reported that the Monument would be dedicated on Veterans Day.

Mr. Matthews said they received donations for the monument and asked Ms. Flanigan if she found out how they could get the money out of the City funds to pay for the concrete, etc.

Ms. Flanigan reported that staff has been working with the Finance Department to facilitate the request to the City Council.

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

At this time, Ms. Barbara Ruddy approached the dais. She reported that she was recently visiting a friend in Aspen and told her about her family's donation in honor of their father and a very dear friend that was to go towards the construction of a World War II Memorial. Her friend was very touched and wrote out a check in the amount of \$1,000 to go towards the Memorial. She then handed the check to the Chairman.

Mr. Matthews said they have been discussing a stage for the Island and there also has been discussions on having a platform where they could have a plaque honoring the World War II Veterans. He said they are still flushing out ideas.

Mrs. Fallon felt that they should have a permanent raised structure and dedicate it to World War II.

Mr. Matthews reported that Mr. Scott Johnson, who is an Architect, has offered to donate some of his time to draft something.

Mrs. Barbara Ruddy suggested that they apply for a grant from Impact100.

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

Mr. Matthews reported that POW/MIA Day is September 17, 2021 and Gold Star Mother's Day is September 28, 2021.

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

Mr. Paulisin reported that the Italian American Club is having a "Salute to Veterans" event on October 26, 2021, and all the funds raised would be going to the Veterans of Indian River County.

Mrs. Fallon reported that she recently spoke with a gentleman of the Next Generation Veterans who made the statement that during the dedication if he had one (1) wish it would have been that Ms. Alma Lee Loy was there.

**9. NEXT MEETING DATE**

**A) October 6, 2021**

The next Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 6, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. in the City Hall, Council Chambers.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Today's meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

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