

**VETERANS MEMORIAL ISLAND SANCTUARY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, November 2, 2022 – 9:30 a.m.
City Hall, Council Chambers, Vero Beach, Florida**

PRESENT: Chairman, John Michael Matthews; Members: Melissa Arndt (arrived at 9:32 a.m.), Michelle Dale and Carolyn Lange **Also Present:** Assistant Director of Public Works, Richard Mutterback; and Senior Administrative Assistant, Rita Chartier

Excused Absence: Curtis Paulisin

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) October 5, 2022

Mr. Matthews made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2022 Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee meeting. Mrs. Dale seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

5. NEW BUSINESS

None

6. OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Lange reported that she attended a recent City Council meeting to discuss what she has been observing on Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary, such as dogs being walked, boom boxes, and people riding bicycles. Those are the main things that she repeatedly sees. The Island is a sanctuary and they need to curtail these activities the best they can with additional signage. She hopes they can get a sign approved with these items listed, because the other sign on the Island has so much information on it that people do not read it. She said that Councilmember Honey Minuse stated that she will follow through with trying to get a sign.

Mr. Matthews said it was mentioned that they could start enforcing the rules with a City Ordinance. However, it might be hard to do unless an officer is stationed out there 24 hours a day.

Mr. Richard Mutterback, Assistant Director of Public Works, said that Councilmember Minuse did ask about getting a sign made. If that is the will of City Council he will discuss it with City staff. He explained that the City makes street signs, so they cannot produce a nice decorative sign like they discussed. He can get some price quotes if they want to request to use funds from the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary account to purchase it.

Mr. Mutterback announced that the bid opening for the bridge replacement will be on December 6, 2022 and a contractor will be selected. He said the contract stipulates that the contractor must procure all of the materials needed for the project prior to starting the work. They are estimating that it will take three (3) to five (5) months for the contractor to obtain all of the materials.

Mr. Matthews asked if the Veterans Council should plan on holding the Memorial Day ceremony in May, 2023 at an alternate location.

Mr. Mutterback replied that would be a safe plan, unless the contractor is still acquiring materials.

Mr. Mutterback announced that they received the permit for the mangrove trimming and now they are getting price quotes.

Mr. Matthews asked after they secure all the materials for the bridge replacement project, how long will it take to build it.

Mr. Mutterback stated that the construction period is four (4) to five (5) month.

A) Update on the Stage and World War II Tribute

Mr. Mutterback announced that the Engineering Department just approved the site plan for the World War II (WWII) tribute and stage and they sent it back to the Planning Department. He does not believe the Planning Department had any additional comments, so it should be submitted as approved in the next couple of days.

Mrs. Barbara Ruddy mentioned that if they get a new sign, it needs to look different from the current sign. She suggested that it have bigger letters, fewer words, and some added color.

Mr. Matthews stated that they are moving ahead with the WWII tribute and stage and they still need more donations.

B) Veterans Day Ceremony – November 11, 2022

Mr. Matthews said because there is no stage on the Island, Next Level Productions is lending them a stage to use for Veterans Day. He handed out a draft copy of the Veterans Day program for the Committee members to look over (on file in the City Clerk's office). He continued by giving a brief overview of the events and the participants listed on the program.

7. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mr. Matthews announced that on November 6, 2022 at 11:30 a.m. there will be a memorial service for Mr. Rip Wieler at the Living Lord Lutheran Church on 58th Avenue. Mr. Wieler was a member of the Veterans Memorial Island Sanctuary Advisory Committee and a member of the Veterans Council. He said he contacted the Marine Corps headquarters and they will have a group at the service to perform a rifle volley, present the flag, and play taps.

8. MEMBER'S MATTERS

Mrs. Dale reported that on November 6th, the Veterans Military Suicide Awareness walk-a-thon will take place at Riverside Park. Registration starts at 9:00 a.m. and the walk begins at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Chris English, a former combat soldier who experienced trauma and went through his own Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) recovery will be this year's guest speaker. She announced that the Indian River County Sheriff's Office just unveiled their new PTSD awareness truck, which is unique for Indian River County. The Gold Star Moms and the Next Generation Veterans sponsored the detailing on the truck and it will be present on Sunday for everyone to see. They are still accepting donations and advanced registrations for walkers up until the day of the event. They will also have tables set up on the day of the walk to accept registrations. It costs \$35 to preregister online, or it will be \$40 on the day of the walk. All the proceeds go to the sessions that are helping the Veterans who suffer from PTSD.

Mr. Matthews said he noticed that the circle on Veterans Memorial Island is covered with branches and debris and one (1) of the benches has a broken corner on it.

Mr. Mutterback replied that the City will do a special cleaning on the Island just prior to the event, so it will be cleaned up.

Mr. Rob Medina, Representative for Congressman Bill Posey, reported that the Department of the Navy has discharged several sailors without providing them with their DD214. He cannot imagine retiring or being discharged from the military without a DD214, because that form is an essential document for receiving Veteran benefits. He said several Congressional members signed a letter that was sent to the Navy and they are working on making sure these sailors receive their DD214 just like every other military personnel. Congressional members are also working with retirees and active duty personnel who are having issues getting prescriptions filled or covered. They have sent a letter to the Secretary of Defense requesting they look into these issues.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

Their December and January meetings will be canceled because of renovations to the Council Chambers.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Today's meeting adjourned at 9:56 a.m.

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