

Veterans Advisory Committee
Thursday, April 13, 2017, 5:30 P.M.
City of Bonita Springs
9101 Bonita Beach Road, City Council Chambers
Bonita Springs, Florida 34135

MINUTES

I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Present: Bobbi Hunter, Chairman
Paul Canning
Scott Cline
Bill Pace
Kay Pirucki
Kathleen O’Hearn
Adam Prenti III
Bob Gillette
Kendra Gilreath, Staff Liaison
Lora Taylor, Staff Liaison

Public: Kristen Eldridge
Elizabeth Morgan
Luis Cruz (need name of company)
Michael Martin (need name of company)

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Military Recognition Banners:

Mr. Luis Cruz, veteran from the Korean War, and Michael Martin a US Army Veteran started this program about two years ago in the City of Cape Coral. The programs helps raise funds for Veterans organizations in Cape Coral. This program assists local organizations in recognizing their veterans and active duty military as well as raising funds that can be used for veterans programs. The program is all inclusive, in addition to the banners, it includes a dedicated website, marketing materials, and all the digital pieces needed. The banners are weather-proof. It’s a wonderful memorial, and a wonderful way to raise funds as well. This program has been well received in participating communities. The banners can be used by any organization to help honor local veterans and active duty military either deceased or living. The banners are typically displayed for a predetermined period of time and after they are displayed, the organization gives

the banner to the sponsor or family member as a wonderful keepsake. It is a great memorial and an ideal way to honor veterans and active duty military as well.

Committee member, Kay Pirucki, asked how much they cost. Mr. Martin answered that it depends on the size of the banner. A 2 ½ x 5 foot banner costs \$175. A 24 x 48 inch banner costs \$95. As an example, the Cape Coral sponsorship program charges \$275 for a family sponsorship and \$350 for a Business/Corporate sponsorship. There is no out of pocket cost, the sponsorship money comes in, you order the banner, and the excess funds goes to your programs. The banners are made in Cape Coral Florida.

Ms. Taylor advised that the Committee would have to look at the cost and where the banners would be displayed, as well as how the Committee would handle the program. Ms. Taylor explained that currently the City has banners that are put up for different events such as 4th of July, Holiday in the Park, Celebrate Bonita. Typically the banners are put up a month before the event then they come down. In addition to where to display the banners, there is the issue of putting them up and getting them down, which costs a couple hundred dollars depending on how many banners.

The committee discussed the idea of initiating a banner program and associated costs, how to manage the program and when the banners would be displayed, for example Veterans Day and Memorial Day. Committee member, Adam Prenti, suggested possibly representing the different branches of the service rather than individuals.

The committee decided to review the material and table the discussion for next meeting.

V. DISCUSS FINAL PLACEMENT OF THE ARTIST'S NAMEPLATE

Chairman Bobby Hunter introduced Kristen Eldridge, daughter of Michael Morgan, who is speaking before the Committee requesting a name plaque for her step-father, the late Michael Morgan, in recognition of his work on the Veteran's Monument.

Ms. Eldridge introduced her mother, Elizabeth Morgan, Michael was her husband. Ms. Eldridge stated that Mr. Morgan put a lot of effort in this city not only with the monument but with many other projects. The family is saddened to see that his name wasn't on the monument and Mrs. Elizabeth Morgan stated that she has papers at home that state that his name was supposed to go on the monument. The family would like to see a square or a rectangle with his name and a couple lines about Mr. Morgan being a local artist. They would like to see it attached to the monument and be able to withstand time.

Ms. Lora Taylor addressed the committee and reported that she spoke with the City attorney to get some background and read a memo from the City attorney to the Committee. Ms. Taylor brought examples of options of where a plaque could be placed.

Mr. Hunter said the discussion was that we would take care of putting a brick in front of the monument or a plaque beside it. The concern is potential damage during the etching process in the event the monument gets damaged, it would have to be taken apart to get fixed.

The Committee discussed different options and the best way to recognize Mr. Morgan. The Committee decided to continue the discussion at the next meeting. The family was agreeable as long as something is done to recognize Mr. Morgan that is permanent and will withstand time.

VI. MEMORIAL DAY SERVICE PLANNING UPDATE- ADAM

Kendra Gilreath reviewed the planning status of the upcoming Memorial Day Service:

- Welcome - Bobby Hunter
- Opening Prayer - still being worked
- Posting of the colors – Fire Department
- National Anthem – Alex Herron
- Dove release - waiting to confirm with Councilman Slachta
- Pledge of Allegiance – Boy Scout and Cub Scout Troops confirmed
- Opening remarks - Mayor Simmons,
- dedication of POW/MIA – done
- Memorial day message – taken care of Scott Cline
- Musical tribute - taken care of
- Proclamation - Councilman Greg DeWitt
- Guest speaker - David Grossi confirmed
- Dedication of Flag – Kathi O’Hearn – taken care of
- Laying of the wreath - taken care of
- Three camps drum roll – taken care of
- 21 gun salute – Marine Corps
- Taps
- Closing prayer - Jim Murphy
- Concluding remarks

VII. REVIEW AND DISCUSS A RECOMMENDATION OF ADOPTION FOR U.S. MAYORS RESOLUTION

Chairman, Bobbi Hunter, made a motion to approve, Mr. Scott Cline seconded the motion; motion approved unanimously.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 9th, 2017.

The Board reviewed the minutes and made the following changes:

1. Add *Paul Canning* as present
2. Under "Update on Brick Sales" first paragraph, correct the spelling of *Semper Fi*
3. Under Old Business, fifth paragraph, change "*Ms. Pirucki*" to "*Ms. Kathy O'Hearn* will try to find out what POWs we have from this area".

Chairman Hunter asked for a motion to accept the minutes with the changes as above; Mr. Adam Prenti seconded, motion passed unanimously

IX. UPDATE ON BRICK SALES

Chairman Hunter reported he received a new check today. Mr. Hunter has not had a chance to find the paperwork to redo the damaged bricks due to the current activities.

X. NEW BUSINESS

Helping out a Veteran in need:

Ms. Kathy O'Hearn reported that she was called to come to the aid of an 82 year-old veteran who had been living in his car. At that time the car was not functional; the transmission was out and the radiator needed to be repaired. The Veteran needed a place to stay while his car was being repaired. Mr. Hunter called the Bonita Springs Assistance office who helped out and got him a room at the Trianon Hotel in Naples for a discounted rate of \$592.45. Ms. O'Hearn has received \$200 from her Auxiliary and \$200 from her Post. The bill for the repair of the vehicle came to \$1258.22. Ms. O'Hearn will get the tax taken off and she will get \$300 from her Post and \$300 from her Auxiliary. Mr. Hunter stated the outstanding amount of \$600 for the repair of the vehicle has been taken care of and the mechanic at the shop has agreed to take payments from him for any future work needed

Ms. O'Hearn asked if the Veteran's Committee, or any group represented at the meeting, could help with the remainder of the hotel bill of \$192.45.

Chairman Hunter made a motion for the Veterans Advisory Committee to donate the \$192.45 to the Bonita Springs assistance office, Mr. Adam Prenti seconded the motion, motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Hunter commended Ms. O'Hearn for stepping up and taking care of our Veteran. She has picked him up and transported him to get meals. She gets him where he needs to be.

Mr. Bob Gillette said to keep the Bonita Bay group in mind. There is a fair amount of money in their account for situations like this, they would like to put that money to work in our community.

Ms. O'Hearn is on a mission to find him housing. He is on social security and makes less than \$1000 per month. Mr. Gillette said to send him the information and his group will help.

Veteran's Day Schedule:

Mr. Gillette would like to propose a change for the softball game on Veterans Day. Instead of having one game that is 7 innings, he suggests 1 game that is 9 innings so that it will be over in time for players to go home, change and be able to attend the cocktail hour, dinner and the showing of the documentary at night. It would very nice for them to be able to attend.

XI. OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

XII. NEXT MEETING DATE -05/11/2017

Next meeting confirmed for May 11, 2017

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Any person requiring special accommodations at any of the meetings because of a disability or physical impairment should contact Meg Weiss, Director of Administrative Services, at 239-949-6262.

If a person decides to appeal a decision made by the Council in any matter considered at this meeting/hearing, such person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, to include the testimony and evidence upon which such appeal is to be based.