

MINUTES

Veteran's Memorial Garden Advisory Council Meeting

Parks & Recreation Large Conference Room

Special Meeting: Friday, August 19, 2016 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Members Present:

Diane Bartels Ron Lechner Brendan Moore Mark Orr
Dan Petersen Melissa Wilkerson

Members Absent:

Bill Bowman Dr. William Jackson Melissa Marsh Garry Morgan

Staff Members Present:

Lynn Johnson Jerry Shorney JJ Yost Christie Dionisopoulos
Jocelyn Golden Angela Chesnut (for Janet Ball)

Others in Attendance:

Karen Watson, American Veterans Auxiliary Commander
Gailen Young

Recognition of 'Open Meetings Act': As per law, Chairperson Ron Lechner announced that the Council follows the regulations of the Open Meetings Act, and called the meeting to order.

Finance – Parks Foundation Accounts:

Christie Dionisopoulos provided members with explanations of the two different accounts held by the Lincoln Parks Foundation for the Veterans Memorial Garden – Operating Funds and Endowment Funds. Operating funds are considered as “cash” fund, or checking account fund. Money is deposited into this account from brick orders and non-specified donations. This fund then pays for bricks, engravings, events, and other expenses at the Garden. As of June 30, 2016, the account balance was \$45,434.04. When bricks are sold, any remaining funds after purchase and installation expense are directed to be moved to the endowment account. Endowment funds are invested long term as minimal risk. The account balance of Endowment funds was \$82,479.89 as of June 30, 2016. The Foundation sets aside 4% of this fund as spendable each year, which for the current year is \$25,339.78. A recent donation of \$885 from a memorial was specified to be placed in the Endowment fund, and money donated from the annual Give to Lincoln Day is placed in the Operating fund account.

Board Training – Jocelyn Golden:

Procedures and guidelines (copy attached to official minutes on record) were provided to the Council members regarding how to conduct meetings by a governmental entity in accordance with Open Meeting laws. Meeting agendas with discussion topics must be posted with the City Clerk no less than twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting for public notice, with no changes to the agenda after that posting deadline. Lynn Johnson added that an Executive Committee of the VMGAC will be established in order to meet prior to the regular meetings to establish the meeting agendas. It is also being suggested that Fact Sheets be prepared in advance which would introduce an agenda item and provide any additional pertinent information. Voting procedures were also discussed which will be done by roll call from the recording secretary, with attending members verbally voting in favor, opposed, or abstaining on the item being voted on.

Overview of By-Laws:

A copy of the VMGAC By-Laws (copy attached to official minutes on record) was distributed to members present. The document represents both amendments to the by-laws, which were originally adopted in 2002, then amended in 2008 and again in 2014. It was noted that a nominating committee is to be appointed by the Chair for annual election of officers, which has not previously been done. In addition, Chair Ron Lechner asked two members with nearing term expirations if they would consider reappointment, both indicating they would do so: Dan Petersen and Brendan Moore. The Chair also noted a section of the by-laws regarding Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson not serving as an officer for more than two consecutive terms. Lynn Johnson and Jocelyn Golden suggested that this be placed on the agenda for the next VMGAC meeting for discussion of potential amendments.

Discussion was held regarding various working committees meeting with more than five Council members present, being in violation of the Open Meetings Act. Various scenarios were presented and questions asked, with the ultimate suggestion for Committee members to be cognizant of quorum requirements when meeting and refrain from other Council members attending every Committee meeting. Jocelyn Golden assisted in answering questions and clarifying various points, and added that if there were any other questions that arise, she could be available to assist. Jocelyn will also plan to attend the January meeting of the Council for any follow-up.

Working Committees:

Members reviewed current members who are assigned to the various working committees: Finance Committee, Landscape Committee, Bricks Committee, Events & Publicity Committee, and the Executive Committee. Discussion also revolved around the possibility of combining the Bricks Committee and Landscape Committee, while keeping with the quorum requirements of no more than five Council members. Following additional discussion it was suggested that working committees and members be considered as listed:

- Events & Publicity – Ron Lechner, Melissa Marsh, Diane Bartels, Dr. William Jackson, *Melissa Wilkerson;
- Bricks Committee – Ron Lechner, Mark Orr, Brendan Moore, Melissa Wilkerson;
- Finance Committee – Ron Lechner, *Garry Morgan;
- Landscape Committee – Ron Lechner, Mark Orr, Brendan Moore, Dan Petersen.

Bill Bowman will be appointed to Bricks or Landscape Committee in the future.

Lynn Johnson and Jerry Shorney suggested combining of the Bricks and Landscape Committees. Melissa Wilkerson indicated that her preference is with the Events & Publicity Committee, but will assist on other committees if requested. With additional discussion of continuing as is, waiting until after the first of the year, or combining now, it was determined that the Bricks and Landscape Committees will be combined, with members consisting of Ron Lechner, *Mark Orr, *Brendan Moore, and Dan Petersen, leaving an opening for new incoming Council members to join the committee in the future.

Lynn also noted that an Executive Committee will be formed by Chairpersons of each working committee, which will consist of Ron Lechner (*Council Chair), Melissa Wilkerson (*Events/Publicity Chair), Mark Orr and Brendan Moore (*Bricks/Landscape Co-Chairs), Garry Morgan (*Finance Chair). The Executive Committee will be responsible for setting the agenda for all VMGAC meetings.

Brick of Honor Prices:

It was determined that since this item was not placed on the agenda as an action item for the meeting, a vote would not be permissible. The item will be placed on the October meeting agenda for action. The Bricks/Landscape Committee will meet prior to the October meeting to discuss the costs in order to make a proposal and provide information to the full Council.

Monuments & Memorials Guidelines:

A working committee will be formed of current VMGAC members, as well as previous members, to review recommendations and discuss developing guidelines for placement of future monuments and memorials. Written guidelines will be drafted for VMGAC recommendation, with final approval by Mayoral Executive Order. Committee members appointed by the VMGAC Chair to the Monuments & Memorials Committee: Ron Lechner, *Diane Bartels, Dan Peterson, Bill Bowman, Keith Fickenscher, and Jesse Smith. The first meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 26th, at 12:00 noon.

Strategic Planning/Goal Setting:

Council members discussed potential thoughts for future planning or goal setting, and a variation of a one, three, or five year plan. Lynn suggested a special half-day meeting or work session with all Council members in attendance, possibly an evening or Saturday morning in November. The item will be placed on the October VMGAC agenda for further discussion and determination of a date.

The next meeting of the VMGAC will be on Friday, October 14th at 9:00 a.m., at the Parks & Recreation office conference room. The Executive Committee will meet to finalize the agenda on Wednesday, October 5th at 12:00 noon. Agenda and informational documents should be sent to Council members by Friday, October 7th.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.