

# MINUTES

## *Veteran's Memorial Garden Advisory Council Meeting*

Parks & Recreation Conference Room

Friday, July 15, 2016 ~ 9:00 a.m.

### **Members Present:**

Diane Bartels	Dr. William Jackson	Ron Lechner	Melissa Marsh
Brendan Moore	Mark Orr	Dan Petersen	Melissa Wilkerson

### **Members Absent:**

Bill Bowman	Garry Morgan
-------------	--------------

### **Staff Members Present:**

Lynn Johnson	Shawn Quinn	David Ross	Jerry Shorney
JJ Yost	Jocelyn Golden (City Attorney's Office)	Angela Chesnut (for Janet Ball)	

**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 following the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Introductions:**

Board members and staff introduced themselves, along with guests and those speaking during the meeting: Barbara Bartle, Rob McMaster, Gunner Noordhoek (Lincoln Community Foundation); Gaylon Young; Joyce Peck and Maria Medrano-Nehls (Gold Star Mothers & Post-9/11 Memorial); Alan Bierman (Nebraska Press Association); Keith Fickenscher; Christie Dionisopoulos (Lincoln Parks Foundation); Daniel Robertson (Doolittle Raiders Memorial); Roger Ludemann and Randy Kassebaum (My Living History).

### **Post-9/11 Monument:**

Joyce Peck and Maria Medrano-Nehls presented information to the Council regarding a monument that would be erected in honor of all of Nebraska's fallen since 9/11, with a request for dedication to be held on Veteran's Day 2017 at the Veterans Memorial Garden. Names of the fallen will be placed on a stone that has been selected, with a list of the conflicts and dates placed on the back of the monument. The goal for the project is anticipated at \$18,000.00 with fundraising planned following approval. Location of the monument and three benches was discussed, which has been approved by the Landscape Committee. Additional discussion was held regarding the placement of a flag pole near the monument site. A motion was made by Diane Bartels and seconded by Dr. Jackson to approve the design of the Post-9/11 Monument as discussed and recommended by the Landscape Committee. Upon roll call vote all members present voted yes.

### **Gold Star Families Monument:**

Barbara Bartle and Rob McMaster with the Lincoln Community Foundation provided a PowerPoint presentation (copy attached to official minutes on record) for Gold Star Families Memorial Monument and the desire to place a monument in Nebraska, and potentially the Veterans Memorial Garden in Lincoln. A Gold Star Families Memorial Monument gives recognition to families who have lost loved ones in conflict. Rob gave a history of the Monument and information on possible designs, as well as estimated costs and a potential

location for placement in the Veterans Memorial Garden. The suggestion for dedication would be on Veteran's Day 2017 or on Gold Star Parent Day, which is the last weekend in September. Council members discussed the suggestions, with a question regarding whether there is an issue since the Garden is intended to honor veterans of combat rather than parents or currently active military. Barbara Bartle noted that the committee has considered that the Capitol city of Nebraska was the appropriate site for the monument, and that the Garden would be a beautiful location. However, they would honor whether or not it would be a good fit with the intent of the Garden. Following further discussion and alternate location suggestions, a motion was made by Dr. William Jackson to consider the Gold Star Families Monument proposal and placement at the Veterans Memorial Garden, and to refer to the Landscape Committee. Motion died for lack of a second.

#### **Doolittle Raiders Monument:**

Daniel Robertson reported that he has raised a couple of hundred dollars at this time. It was also reported that there is now only one remaining crew member, Richard Cole, who was a co-pilot for Jimmy Doolittle. The Landscape Committee will be meeting to review the final design of the memorial. A motion was made by Mark Orr and seconded by Melissa Marsh to table this item until after the Landscape Committee review. All members present voted in favor unanimously.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

Ron Lechner noted a few "open" items, which were briefly discussed. VMGAC members were then informed that in order to act on an item included in the minutes, it must be placed on the agenda prior to the meeting, and that the purpose of approving minutes from the previous meeting was to affirm that they were correctly recorded. A motion was then made by Mark Orr and seconded by Melissa Marsh to approve the minutes from the April 8, 2016 meeting as presented. All members present voted in favor unanimously.

#### **Financial Report:**

A transaction detail report (attached to official minutes on record) was provided for each member listing revenues and expenditures April through June, 2016. Ron Lechner pointed out two transactions which were reimbursements to him: \$378.39 – tables and chairs used at Brick of Honor Day; \$300.00 – paid to Allan Crist for bagpipes. Balances: \$82,479.89 – Endowment; \$16,495.98 – Restricted Funds; just over \$48,000.00 – Unrestricted Funds. Melissa Wilkerson informed that an ad was placed in Macaroni Kid for the brick dedication day, in the amount of \$99.00. She will be providing a receipt for reimbursement. A motion was made by Dr. William Jackson and seconded by Mark Orr to approve the financial report as presented. All members voted in favor unanimously.

#### **Landscape:**

Brendan Moore reported that with the anticipated Lincoln Children's Zoo expansion, the Lady Liberty statue near the 27<sup>th</sup> & A Street Parks & Recreation office will need to be relocated. The proposal is that the statue and Boy Scout donation plaque will be moved inside the star at the Veterans Memorial Garden, with the star perimeter to be raised in height. Discussion was also held on various pathway changes and additions. A motion was made by Diane Bartels and seconded by Dr. William Jackson to approve the relocation of Lady Liberty statue to the Veterans Memorial Garden. All members voted in favor unanimously.

### **Bricks:**

Mark Orr relayed a recommendation from a recent Bricks Committee meeting to change the name of the bricks to Bricks of Honor rather than Bricks of Remembrance, which would also coincide with the theme of "Honor, Inspire, Educate". A motion was made by Diane Bartels and seconded by Brendan Moore to approve the recommendation to change the name to Bricks of Honor, and all members voted in favor unanimously.

Mark also informed Council members that bricks will no longer be ordered from Pacific Cast Stone due to recent issues from the last brick dedication event. Mark has been in contact with potential new vendors, including Speidel Monuments of Lincoln, Arts & Stone from Omaha, Sandstones Inc. of Omaha, Yankee Hill Brick, and TMCO in Lincoln, which would be a metal plate powdered coated to look like a brick. Mark would like to make a determination and establish a contract through the Parks Foundation. Price of the bricks will likely rise between 2% to 4% with a new contract, noting that the cost has not increased in approximately 20 years. Quantity and lead time will also be affected. A motion was made by Melissa Marsh and seconded by Dr. William Jackson to move forward in finding a new brick vendor and establish a contract with the Lincoln Parks Foundation. All members voted in favor unanimously.

The Brick Committee would like to work with the Landscape Committee in preparing a 1-, 3-, and 5-year future plan for bricks and monuments, in order to assist with future planning and budgeting.

### **Events & Publicity:**

Upcoming events include Patriot Day, September 11; Veterans Day, November 11; Pearl Harbor Day, December 7. Ron Lechner asked that anyone with suggestions for programs visit with him. Thoughts from various Council members were discussed and options were considered. No official decisions were made, so ongoing input will be appreciated. Ron has contacted the trumpeters from Lincoln High School for Pearl Harbor Day.

### **Executive Committee:**

Lynn Johnson discussed the role of the Veterans Municipal Garden Advisory Council versus a separate "friends" organization. The VMGAC is a City appointed Advisory group, with bylaws that describe what the group does, including advice and guidance to the City of ongoing development, management, and maintenance of the garden. There has been discussion of the possibility of entering into fundraising, advocacy, and program development, which are a better role of a "friends" organization rather than a City advisory group. Jocelyn Golden with the City Law Department is in attendance to answer any questions on the suggestion. Jocelyn informed that there should be a distinct line between a foundation or "friends" group and a City department. Since fundraising is not within the bylaws of the VMGAC powers, consideration in forming a separate 501c3 organization could facilitate those fundraising efforts, or perhaps work with the Lincoln Parks Foundation as a fiscal sponsor. Additional discussion and consideration will continue.

Council members also discussed current bylaws and perhaps the lack of members having the most recent amended bylaws. Jocelyn suggested that these could be requested and could also be discussed as an agenda item at the next meeting.

The next VMGAC meeting agenda, special meeting on August 19<sup>th</sup>, will include the topic of establishing a "friends" group in order to further discuss and vote on the matter. An August 4<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee meeting will be held to establish the agenda.

**Staff Report:**

Lynn Johnson reiterated Mark Orr's message of terminating the working relationship with Pacific Stone, and that the department would be working with Mark in finding other options for engraved bricks or engraved plates.

**Adjournment:**

A motion was made by Dr. William Jackson and seconded by Brendan Moore to adjourn the meeting of the Veterans Memorial Garden Advisory Council. All members voted in favor unanimously.

Ron Lechner announced that for those who wish to remain, One Source Marketing will be providing their proposal for consideration.

**NOTE:**

- A special meeting of the Veterans Memorial Garden Advisory Council will be held on Friday, August 19, 2016 at 10:00 a.m., at the Parks & Recreation Admin Office, 2740 A Street. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the VMGAC will be held on Friday, October 14, 2016 at 9:00 a.m.