

**VETERAN'S MEMORIAL GARDEN ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**  
**FOR September 14, 2018 MEETING**

**Advisory Council present:** Ron Lechner, Chair; Diane Bartels, Bill Bowman, Claude Frerichs, Jim Gordon, William Jackson, Brendan Moore, Mark Orr, Melissa Wilkerson

**Advisory Council absent:** none

**Ex-Officios present:** Lynn Johnson, Sara Hartzell, Chris Myers, Shawn Quinn, David Ross, Maggie Stuckey, J.J. Yost

**Ex-Officios absent:** none

**Call to Order:**

Lechner, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05. A “roll call” attendance was read. All stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

There was no vote on the June 8<sup>th</sup> minutes because it was not an official meeting due to a lack of a quorum. Moore noted he is no longer Vice Chair.

**Committees:**

**Finance:** Though the Finance Committee did not meet, Stuckey reported there were twenty-two orders for bricks in the past quarter. Johnson said financials will be brought forward at the December meeting. Any other agenda items for the December meeting should be submitted before December 4, 2018.

**Facilities:** The Bricks and Landscaping Committee is being renamed the Facilities Committee to reflect the evolving nature of the committee.

Yost reported previous tree removals now allow for ten new trees to be planted. With a budget of \$2,500, Parks & Rec purchased these trees from a local nursery that contracts with the City. Four of the trees are columnar deciduous, three are flowering/ornamental deciduous, two are evergreens, and one is an overlay deciduous. Yost had a map to indicate where the trees would be planted; most would be in the northwest corner of the Garden. Bartels made a motion to approve the tree planting, Gordon seconded, voted, unanimously approved.

Yost then explained working with Jensen Conservation in Omaha. After a thorough examination of all the memorials, their estimate was \$32,000 to clean up and restore all the monuments. Because this is currently more than the budget allows, the monuments were ranked “A” (in most need of repair) through “D” (of least concern). Seventeen were categorized as “A” memorials, and the budget was \$17,000 to clean off the mold and fill in the concrete cracks. The Capital Improvement Plan can cover that expense. Yost said he hoped repairs could begin in the fall depending on the weather and Jensen’s availability. Going forward, the monuments could get into a regular rotation of maintenance and cleaning.

The discussion turned to JEO’s initial assessment of the brick holders. They were in better shape than many expected. Two of the WWII brick holders need the most attention. One has toes that aren’t level, and the other has legs that aren’t quite stable. Lifting these holders will support weak legs and make them more level. Yost said JEO recommended getting the cracks cleaned and putting water-repellant sealer to preserve the bricks as some of the older ones have shifted over the years.

Stuckey brought two samples of bricks from a new vendor to share with the Committee. She and Ross have been examining a new vendor out of Florida. While Parks & Recreation tries to use with a local vendor whenever possible, the Lincoln brick supplier is no longer in business and the Omaha vendor’s bricks are of lesser quality. The Florida vendor has both full brick and brick veneer options (about ½”) thick. The characters are etched with laser vitrification, using heat to etch the brick surface into the glass, making them more durable

to erosion than traditional engraving techniques. In addition to the improved engraving, the Florida vendor also has an online portal to enter all the information. While there is a strict eighteen-character limit per line, this allows everyone involved at the back end of the brick process to see exactly what is being put on the bricks, thereby lowering the chance of typos or other mistakes. A third innovative feature is the ability to create replica bricks for an additional fee. This would allow the donor to have a keepsake brick for their home or garden, thereby increasing brick revenue. Jackson asked if there is still a paper form for the bricks. Stuckey said there was, but the Foundation was working on a sheet for both VMG and Sunken Gardens bricks.

Orr is stepping down as co-chair of the Facilities Committee. Any VMGAC who would be interested in co-chairing the Committee should speak with Lechner.

**Events & Publicity:** Hartzell shared a new Mission Statement draft which reads:

“The mission of the Veterans Memorial Garden Advisory Council (Council) shall be to recommend policy to the Director of Parks and Recreation, the City Council and the Mayor on issues relating to the development, design, programming, and preservation of the Veterans Memorial Garden (Garden) area, and all the memorials contained in the Garden; to promote public awareness of the Garden; and to identify and coordinate events to take place in the Garden.”

Hartzell noted the addition of “to promote public awareness of the Garden” and “to identify and coordinate events to take place in the Garden.”

**Executive Committee:** Lechner asked for volunteers for the Nominating Committee for 2019 Officers. Jackson and Frerichs both offered to be on the committee.

In order to attract new Committee members, discussion ensued about moving meetings to 7:00 a.m. Johnson noted it has worked very well with the Pedestrian/Bicycle Advisory Committee, which has met at this early time for years and has several members with school-aged children. Bartels remarked the need to get the word out with local veterans’ organizations to publicize the time change. Orr made a motion to change the meeting time to 7:00 am, Gordon seconded, voted: AYES: Bartels, Frerichs, Gordon, Jackson, Lechner, Moore, Orr, Wilkerson; NAYS: Bowman.

**Announcements:** November 3<sup>rd</sup> is the date that has been set for the City’s Veterans Day parade. Bartels reported there will be a rededication of the original veterans’ plaques at Memorial Stadium. It will take place at Gate 20 on November 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:45 a.m. Wreaths for Wreaths across America must be purchased by November 16<sup>th</sup>. Donations are \$15 per wreath to be laid at Wyuka Cemetery, and the ceremony will be December 15<sup>th</sup> at the Warner Chamber of the Capitol building.

The next meeting will be Friday, December 14, 2018 at **7:00 a.m.** at the Antelope enclosed shelter. Please note the time change.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Ann Kontor, Recording Secretary

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Ron Lechner, Chairman