

VETERAN'S MEMORIAL GARDEN ADVISORY COUNCIL
MINUTES FOR March 10, 2022, Meeting
Antelope Park Enclosed Shelter
3200 Memorial Drive
Lincoln Nebraska
7:00 am

Advisory Council Members Present:

Chris Stokes, Craig Anderson, Brendan Moore, Joe Brownell, Thad Fineran, Alexandria Evers, Ricki Barber, Thomas Blanton

Advisory Council Absent:

Marcy Haas, Jim Murphy

Others Present:

Diane Bartels, Mark Orr

LPR/Lincoln Parks Foundation Staff Present:

Lynn Johnson, Chris Myers, Shawn Quinn, J.J. Yost, Denise Pearce, Jamie Granquist, and Maggie Stuckey-Ross

1.- Call to Order (roll call) & Introductions:

Joe Brownell called the meeting to order and prompted all attendees to introduce themselves to the group. Everyone in the room provided a brief biography and initial ice breaker conversations were had.

Quorum was met with 8 members present.

2. – Recognition of Open meetings Act:

Joe Brownell noted that the meeting was subject to the Open Meetings Act and indicated where the Open Meetings Act notice was posted in the meeting room.

3. – Pledge of Allegiance

4. – Approval of Minutes: September 9, 2021 meeting & summary notes *Council did not meet in December/no quorum

Approval of meeting minutes for September 9th, 2021.

Moved to approve by Craig and seconded by Tommy; motion approved unanimously.

5. – Public Comments for items not listed on the agenda:

None.

6. – Finance Report: Maggie Stuckey, Lincoln Parks Foundation

Maggie Stuckey-Ross presented the VMG account balance report for end of 2021. Stuckey-Ross reported that there are three accounts that hold funds: Programs, Bricks & Improvements, and Endowments. 63 bricks sold to be dedicated June 11th at Bricks of Honor event, with the majority going into the new holders. There are still openings in WWII. March 1st was the last date to order bricks but let Maggie know by March 20 if anyone has a new brick request. The Endowment number will go up after transfers; this fund is performing well.

a. Report on Fundraising Campaign:

- i. In process of replacing holders. WWII has been replaced and looks beautiful. On the handout provided to attendees it was noted that on

pages 2-3, is the template language being used when applying for grants. LPF is happy to submit any grant requests/letters to individuals or businesses who may want to contribute.

ii. List

1. Rotary-all but affirmed at \$50,000
 2. Met with Lincoln Community Foundation & the new CEO-very interested
 3. Nebco-meeting scheduled first week of April
 4. TMC meeting in April as well
 5. Remaining on list-donations requested
- iii.** Chris Beutler is working on this proposal and will be invited to the next VMGAC meeting.
- iv.** LPF is happy to contact or meet with additional suggested contacts or names of potential donors, contact Denise or Maggie with those connections.
- v.** Trying to close WWII fundraising gap of \$150,000. Strategy is 3 donors at \$50,000. Total is \$425,000. LPR and Maggie --\$50,000 & Rotary \$50,000
- vi.** Construction schedule is entirely dependent on how quickly money comes in + Arrowstone schedule. They are the company that manufacturers the new holders and they do a great job but it is a big job for them.
- vii.** Right now, would like to fill the gap and do one construction phase. That puts additional pressure on Arrowstone, but will have to determine as funds come in, whether or not multiple phases will be done.
- viii.** Unwritten goal is to announce this project in June at the Bricks of Honor event.

Joe suggested that the group should discuss phasing the project at the next VMGAC meeting, and the group agreed that this was a good plan.

7. – Committee Reports

a. Facilities Committee: Brendan Moore, Chair

i. Adding inscription for Cpl. Daegan Page to Post 9-11 Monument*

The Facilities Committee met on 12.1.2021 and recommended adding Corporal Page's name to the Post 9-11 monument. He was killed this past summer in a suicide bomber attack during the evacuation of Afghanistan. At this point, after a review of the list of "Nebraskans Who Have Lost Their Lives in Service to our Country since 2003" on the Nebraska Veterans Affairs website, Cpl. Page is the only name that will be added.

Next steps-staff will reach out to the family and then working with Trump Memorials to inquire about the schedule/timing for this work to be done. Lynn noted that engraving occurs in a limited temperature range/would likely occur sometime this summer. Lynn also noted that there is money set aside with the Foundation to add names. The engraving could be incorporated into the Veteran's Day program.

**Brendan moved to approve the name addition. Tommy seconded.
Motion passed unanimously.**

ii. World War II monument will need a flag holder.

Shawn Quinn reported that there is a new bench pad poured in front of the WWII monument that never had a flag holder installed. He has sleeves there and all ready to go as soon as the temperature is at the right level.

iii. Bricks of Honor program promotion during events:

Denise Pearce reported that she picked up the table, chairs, and Bricks of Honor materials from Claude's wife, Nadine, back in January and is currently storing them in her office. She noted that the group will need to identify someone to take on the Bricks of Honor role for events. The group discussed ideas and who is willing to reach out. Mark volunteered if no one else volunteers. Thad suggested that this role falls within Outreach/indicated that his group will work to get people to staff the table when we have events in the Garden. The table will be set up at every event, including Memorial Day; please let Thad know if you'd like to participate.

iv. Garden Tours:

Joe asked JJ to schedule Garden tours this spring. JJ will identify dates and times; Joe encouraged new members to join a tour if they can. The tentative plan is to schedule tours for early May. JJ will identify three times – morning, mid-day, and late afternoon, with a walk & talk type format. Brendan mentioned that a brief outline of how the Garden was formed, along with the history of some of the monuments, would be nice. Thad offered that one of the projects of the Outreach Committee is to have QR codes on each monument that provide a one-page summary of each monument when scanned.

b. Events & Publicity Committee:

1. Event Debrief:

- a. Veterans Day Parade(organized by Lincoln Veterans Parade Group/Veterans Day Parade Committee), Sunday, November 7th at 2pm. Brendan mentioned that the new banner was good.
- b. Veterans Day(organized by VMGAC), prerecorded and aired on Thursday, November 11th 2021.
- c. Pearl Harbor Day (organized by VMGAC), prerecorded and aired on Thursday, December 7th 2021 at 11:55am in Auld Pavilion.

2. Events Scheduled for 2022:

- a. Memorial Day(organized by Lincoln Memorial Day Observance Association): Monday, May 30th 2022 in an evening ceremony, typically 8pm.
 - i. Events Committee met earlier this month. Diane and Brendon are the VMGAC's connections to the LMDOA. Planning is underway, and the Committee is working on identifying program participants.
 - ii. Diane encouraged folks to come early and serve as hosts/hostesses of the Garden. She noted that the Blue Star Mothers will again be assisting with candles and program/song sheet distribution-she encouraged VMGAC members to ask the Blue Star Moms whether they need help on the evening of the event.
 - iii. Joe reminded the group to let Marcee and Denise know who is planning to attend the event.
- b. Bricks of Honor Dedication (organized by Lincoln Parks Foundation), Saturday, June 11th 2022 at 10am.
 - i. Maggie will be in touch regarding any volunteer needs, and Joe mentioned to let Maggie know how is attending the event. Lynn added that there will be a Veterans Freedom Festival that starts at 11:30am in Antelope Park that day, following the Bricks of Honor Dedication.

This event will feature live music and booths with agencies that provide services for veterans. The National Guard will land a helicopter at this free community event. The Veterans Advisory Group is the lead organizer of this event, which used to be out at the VA Center. This group also still does a monthly coffee at Auld, host a car show at Star City Shores in May, and organize the Veterans Music Festival.

- c. Patriot Day (organized by VMGAC & coordinated with the City-wide event at the State Capitol), Sunday, September 11th 2022, time TBD.
- d. Veterans Day Parade (organized by Lincoln Veterans Parade Group/Veterans Day Parade Committee), November 13th 2022, at 2pm
- e. Veterans Day (organized by VMGAC), Friday, November 11th 2022, at 11am in Auld Pavilion.
- f. Pearl Harbor Day(organized by VMGAC), Wednesday, December 7th 2022, at 11:55am in Auld Pavilion.
- g.

Joe emphasized that members should not feel like they have to attend every event; committing to 3 or 4 events would ensure we have good VMGAC representation at each. A minimum of 4 members per event would be optimal.

b. - Executive Committee:

- a. **Election of Officers:** At September's meeting, Joe was nominated as Chair and Craig as Vice Chair. Brendon moved to elect Joe Brownell as Chair; Ricki seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Joe moved to elect Craig Anerson Vice Chair; Brendon seconded; The motion passed unanimously.
- b. **Appointment of Committee Chairpersons and Members**
 - i. Committee Meeting Schedule: Denise noted the Committee schedule in the packets and asked members to volunteer for one or more committees. Denise noted she would like to finalize committee lists and get calendar invites out for the year by the end of March. She also noted that the Events Committee could use additional help. **Tommy volunteered to be on the Events Committee, and Joe confirmed his appointment.**
 - ii. Discussion continued on the Special Outreach Committee and leaving it as "Special"? Bylaws were cited as indicating we can designate additional standing committees by resolution.

c. Proposed 2022 Budget*

- i. Packet includes two documents: (1) the proposed 2022 budget that we would have adopted during the December 2021 meeting, had we been able to meet; and (2) the 2021 budget with the actual expenditures noted in the far-right hand column. Denise focused the budget presentation on the 2022 proposed budget, and staff offered to answer any questions about 2021 actuals or 2022 proposed.
- ii. Facilities: If budget approved, Shawn will order the Space Force Flags.
- iii. Events: Budget is based largely on last year's budget for events, with a few exceptions.
- iv. Blue Star Moms: added an honorarium for 2021 events at the end - \$100. For 2022, the draft budget proposes splitting that honorarium among the three events - \$50 for Memorial Day(where we ask quite a bit of them with

the candles), and \$25 each for Veterans Day and Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

- v. Patriot Day: Staff recommends no honor guard/printing programs/musicians/benches. Patriot Day will be a short program, after the Capitol event, where we focus on placing the wreath and reading the names on the post-911 monument. Diane and Joyce handled the reading of the names last year; this year, we are thinking we will incorporate that into the ceremony.
 - vi. Took banner out of budget; two banners are in Denise's office.
 - vii. Red numbers: Have \$2160 from brick sales for 2021 event of \$1855 budgeted. Pivoting over to 2021's budget, we spent just under \$1000 on programming in 2021. Reminder that two of those five events were virtual events in 2021.
 - viii. Joe emphasized to the group that hopefully events will be in person this year, and we will need to do a "full court press," including advertising and flyers to promote events in 2022. He encouraged the group to think about ways to attract attendance at events. The group agreed we should be full stocked on Garden brochures; Denise indicated she would order more and also leave some at the LPR front desk for Thad.
- d. Brick of Honor inscription text guidelines***
- i. Parks and Foundation staff have been working on updating a package of policies, some of which date back 20+ years. One of those policies deals with inscriptions that end up in our City parks.
 - ii. When talking about inscriptions on things like bricks or tiles that become City property, there are first amendment speech implications, so we have worked closely with City Law on these policies as well.
 - iii. We recognize, though, that the Brick of Honor program is a little different, and we want this group's feedback and approval on inscription rules for bricks in the Veterans Memorial Garden.
 - iv. The Parks and Rec Advisory Board is scheduled to consider and vote on approving the package of polices later this afternoon, including the language regarding the Bricks of Honor.
 - v. You'll see some highlighted language that came up during the Executive Committee discussion that the Committee wanted to bring to the full Council's attention: reference to *Parachutists & Gliderman* and whether *Peace Time* should have the years identified
 - vi. Mark mentioned to the group that we've never verified veteran status, and that issue has only come up a time or two in the last many, many years. In the past, if someone requests a special brick or area for Airborne, you had to prove to him that you had the license.
 - vii. Maggie noted that text on the bricks is limited.
 - viii. As part of the group discussion, it was determined that we make the following edits to the draft text:
 1. Add a definition of "veteran," by reference to state law, assuming such definition is not unnecessarily exclusive.
 2. Strike the reference "Parachutists and Gliderman" and allow a general reference to the honoree's duty.
 3. Strike the Peace Time dates.

- 4. Add Cold War as an option after Peace Time. Strike the "After 1980" option.
- ix. **With these edits, Craig moved to approve the text for the Bricks of Honor program; Chris seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- x. Maggie will update the Bricks of Honor form and send it to the Executive Committee.

9. - Special Outreach Committee:

Thad updated the group that one of the Committee's goals is to capture the history of each monument. 2021 had three different events cancelled due to COVID. He and Denise will work on formalizing the Committee, including identifying when the Committee will meet and who attends. The Committee plans to work on a flyer outlining how their Veterans Groups can connect with the Garden and the VMGAC.

10. - Announcements:

- a. Updated bylaws for everyone's binders are in the packets
- b. Claude's service will be on June 4th, 2022 during the middle of the day, at Auld. Nadine indicated the family would like to have forms available at the service. She will need a volunteer to assist with that and to let her know if you want to assist. A reminder to let Denise know if you are attending.
- c. Living Well Article. The group was encouraged to take a copy with them to review.
- d. June Meeting. The City Attorney will provide the annual training; we will review the Open Records and Open Meetings rules and regulations at that time.

11. - Adjourn:

Call to adjourn at 8:22 am

The next VMGAC board meeting will be Thursday, June 9th at 7:00 a.m. at the Antelope Park enclosed shelter.

Respectfully Submitted:



Jamie Granquist, Recording Secretary