

**Veterans Memorial Garden Advisory Council  
Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 7:30 am  
Antelope Enclosed Shelter  
3200 Memorial Dr  
Lincoln, Nebraska

**Advisory Council Members Present:** Ricki Barber, Craig Anderson, Brendan Moore, Marcy Haas, Carol Tanner, John Mamaril

**Others Present:** Joyce Peck, Diane Bartles

**LPR/Lincoln Parks Foundation Staff Present:** Maggie Stuckey-Ross, JJ Yost, Shawn Quinn, Denise Pearce, Randy Gordon, Chris Myers, Jamie Granquist, Mike Comstock

**1. Call to Order (roll call):**

Craig Anderson called the meeting to order, and Jamie Granquist called the roll.

**Quorum was not present to start the meeting but was confirmed by 6 members total present at 7:45am.**

**2. Welcome & Introductions.** Craig introduced the VMGAC's newest member who was approved by City Council on Monday—John Mamaril. The Council introduced themselves.

**3. Recognition of Open Meetings Act:** Craig recognized that the meeting is subject to the open meetings act and referred the Council to the related poster in the back of the room.

**4. Pledge of Allegiance:** Craig led the pledge of allegiance outside, overlooking the Garden.

**5. Approval of Minutes:** Brendan moved to approve the minutes; Marcy seconded. **The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.**

**6. Public Comments for items not listed on the Agenda**

None.

**7. Finance Report: Lincoln Parks Foundation**

- **Quarterly Financials:** Randy reminded the Council that the LPF holds a fund from former VMGAC member Claude Frerichs' memorials. This fund is available for those who cannot afford to purchase a BOH brick in the Garden. The fund was recently utilized for the first time.
- "The Bricks of Honor Fund was started by the family of Sgt. Claude Frerichs, who passed away in December 2021. A proud Marine veteran who served in Vietnam from 1968-1971, Claude was a longtime member of the Veterans Memorial

[Bricks of Honor Fund Inquiry \(google.com\)](#)

team had set up 120 chairs, and Auld was about half full. The Events Committee will consider doing the memorabilia table next year (Mr. Grof had a family emergency/was not able to attend this year.)

It was suggested that in the future, the Event lead take a rough head count of attendees for historical/planning purposes. It was also suggested that the Council try to engage youth more in future programs.

- **2024 Events:** The Council was encouraged to add these events to their calendars.
  - **Memorial Day** (organized by Lincoln Memorial Day Observance Association): Monday, May 27 evening ceremony/typically 8pm
  - **Bricks of Honor Dedication** (organized by Lincoln Parks Foundation), Saturday, June 8 at 10 am
  - **Patriot Day** (organized by VMGAC/coordinate with City-wide event at State Capitol), Wednesday September 11; time TBD
  - **Veterans Day Parade** (organized by Lincoln Veterans Parade Group/Veterans Day Parade Committee), November XXX (tbd)
  - **Veterans Day** (organized by VMGAC), Monday, November 11 at 11am in Auld Pavilion
  - **Pearl Harbor Day** (organized by VMGAC), Saturday, December 7 at 11:55 am in Auld Pavilion

#### **Executive Committee:**

- **Election of Officers\*** Craig presented the slate of officers: Craig for Chair and Marcy for Vice Chair. No other nominations were made. Craig moved to have Marcy serve as Vice Chair; Carol seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote. Marcy then moved to have Craig serve as Chair, Carole seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.
- **Committee Chairpersons and Members** (current committee list was provided in packets) Denise noted that the Committee Meeting Schedules was also provided today. She encouraged Council members to let Craig know (cc Denise) if wanting to change committees and/or join another Committee. Denise will then send out an updated Committee list towards the end of the year. Denise also noted that the Events Committee is always looking for additional members/needs a number of folks to help organize events. With respect to Committee Chairs: Brendan agreed to remain as Chair of the Facilities Committee; Joe and Carole agreed to co-chair the Events Committee.
- **Proposed 2024 Budget\*** Denise noted that LPRD staff modified/simplified the budget to focus on the programming side. JJ will continue to budget on the CIP side for projects and report out to the Facilities Committee, along to the full Council on those projects. Shawn will continue to budget for things like replacement flags.

Denise noted a few changes to the 2024 budget—

- Increased the Taps honorarium line item from \$35 to \$50 per person/\$100 per event (if Echo taps)
- Increased speaker honorarium from \$75 to \$100.
- Miscellaneous line item added for unexpected expenses. Denise noted that for the Veterans Day event, there was an expense for enlarging General Pershing prints. Ricki graciously agreed to cover the cost. This line item could be used for that type of expense in the future.

Denise noted that the Department will also continue to budget for member recognition plaques, and staff will hopefully get back to that project in 2024.

Denise noted that \$30 from each brick sale is transferred to LPF Programming account and is intended to fund the Council's events. For the 2023 Bricks of Honor event, 108 bricks were sold, netting \$3240 for programming in 2024—we are well beneath that figure.

Denise noted that the 2023 expenditures were also included in the packet.

Council members discussed how helpful the Blue Star Moms have been for events. Carole moved to amend the budget for 2024 to increase the Blue Star Mom honorarium from \$25 to \$50 for both Veterans Day and Pearl Harbor Day. Ricki seconded and passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Craig moved to approve the budget as amended. Brendan seconded. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

#### **9. Announcements: Council vacancies (2)**

- Denise noted that we have two Council vacancies—please let her/Mike and Craig know if you have potential candidates.
- Denise noted Council member Duden's interest in our programming and promoting our events.
- The Council expressed its thanks to Ricki for serving on the Veterans Memorial Advisory Council and chairing the Events Committee.
- Randy reported that was contacted about a bench missing from Garden during prior renovations. LPRD staff noted there will be a new bench in front of the Airbourne memorial, using the original plaque.
- JJ reported that new signage will be installed related to the Dogs of Defense course at Rickman's Run. The Nebraska State History Museum created and installed pieces of equipment in honor of Dogs of Defense used in World War II; the dogs were trained at Fort Robinson. The equipment was installed earlier, and the History Museum is now following up with interpretive signage fabricated through the State sign shop. The exercise equipment is modeled after what was at Fort Robinson.

- Diane mentioned that Wreathes Across America, in which over 2,000 wreathes will be placed, is on Saturday at Wyuka. She also added that on Friday at 11am, volunteers will 100+ wreathes as well.
- Denise noted that she will be transitioning VMGAC board liaison role over to Mike Comstock in 2024. While she will continue to help during the transition, members may contact either Mike or Denise with questions or issues.

#### 10. Adjourn\*

Craig moved to adjourn; Brendan seconded.

**\*Denotes Action Item.** All votes will be taken by roll call vote.

**Next Quarterly Meeting: March 14, 2024, 7:30am (Antelope Enclosed Shelter, Antelope Park,  
S. 32<sup>nd</sup> & Veterans Drive)**

Respectfully Submitted:



Jamie Granquist, Recording Secretary