

VETERAN'S MEMORIAL GARDEN ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES FOR December 12, 2019 Meeting

Antelope Enclosed Shelter, Antelope Park

7:00am

Advisory Council Members Present: Mark Orr, Dr. William Jackson, Craig Anderson, Brendan Moore, Marcy Haas, Joe Brownell, Claude Frerichs

Advisory Council Absent: Melissa Wilkerson, Thad Fineran

Others Present: Diane Bartels

LPR/Lincoln Parks Foundation Staff Present: Lynn Johnson, Chris Myers, Shawn Quinn, David Ross, J.J. Yost, Maggie Stuckey, Roy Rivera, Denise Pearce

1. - Call to Order (roll call) – During roll call, Johnson mentioned that Jim Gordon was not seeking reappointment to the VMGAC.

2. - Open meetings Act – Orr 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 -- All stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

***4. - Minute approval** – Approval of the prior meeting's minutes was moved by Moore and seconded by Dr. Jackson/Frerichs; the motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

5. – Introduction of New Member – Thad Fineran

Johnson reported that Thad Fineran is the newest member of the VMGAC; he was appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. Although he was unable to attend this morning's meeting, he was at the Veteran's Day event last month. Fineran is a colonel, active military, with the Nebraska National Guard.

Johnson also introduced Denise Pearce to the group. Pearce is a Special Projects Administrator with LPR; before joining the LPR team, she was the Mayor's Aide for many years for Mayor Beutler. Pearce will be transitioning into the VMGAC coordinator role, which Sara Hartzell has been fulfilling. Members of the group introduced themselves to Pearce.

6. – Public Comments for items not listed in the agenda -- No public comments.

Dr. Jackson took advantage of time and informed the group that the Pearl Harbor Day event went well, although not as many people attended. He noted that depending on day of the week, more or fewer people might attend. There was discussion on expanding the scope of publicity to increase attendance.

7. – Committee Reports

Executive Committee

Finance Report – Lincoln Parks Foundation, Maggie Stuckey

Stuckey reported that the total number of bricks ordered as of 12-10-2019 was 26, which is right about on target when compared to where we were last year. The Lincoln Parks Foundation paid the first down payment for the brick holder replacement project, given the Foundation's ability to process payments at a faster rate than the City and the close working relationship between the Department and the Foundation. Both entities will then coordinate to reconcile project funding.

There were two cash sponsorships secured through the folder distribution program from Changing Spaces LLC and Members Own Credit Union. These two organizations will therefore be listed in this year's program as sponsors. Leon's also made an in-kind contribution for events this fall. Stuckey asked members to advise the Foundation if they know of any organization or individual who would be interested in contributing. There have been 29 booklets/folders distributed so far, \$500.00 has been received, which is a good start.

Proposed 2020 Budget

Orr opened the discussion regarding the budget.

Dr. Jackson asked about increasing funds for Clergy, singers and for other participants at events. Johnson stated that there was a slight increase proposed for Music-Taps, Clergy and Honor Guar. For Music-Taps, the proposed budget includes an increase from \$25.00 to \$35.00; for Clergy there is an increase from \$25.00 to \$50.00; and Honor Guard \$35.00 to \$40.00.

The discussion turned to the projected shortfall of programming funds in the proposed budget. The proposed 2020 budget for programs, minus what the City covers, is \$1830.00 with 2019 brick sales anticipated to generate \$800 for programming—leaving a \$1,030 deficit, unless donations/in kind contributions are secured. Brownell asked about the decision to increase the stipends for the services mentioned above, given the projected funding gap. Dr. Jackson and Orr stated that most of these services are usually provided as in-kind donations; however, it is necessary to increase the stipend to reflect the value of the services provided. These services were, for the most part, provided as in-kind donations during the 2019 Veterans Programs schedule, which meant that costs were well below the budget for the year. Orr indicated that it is necessary to keep monitoring the trend and modify the expenditures as needed. The group agreed that it is necessary to continue seeking donations to fill in the current gap in the proposed budget. Four \$250.00 donations from sponsorships would fill the current gap. It was noted that there are expenditures that might not need to happen, such as the purchase of the wreath with a cost \$150.00. If the wreath is still in great condition next year, that expenditure will not need to be made.

Orr requested a motion to approve the proposed 2020 budget. Dr. Jackson moved to approve the proposed 2020 budget; seconded by Moore. Motion passed with unanimous approval via roll call vote.

***Suspension of Rules**

Johnson requested that the Council consider suspending the rules to consider and vote on a slate of officers for 2020 at the same meeting. According to the By-Laws, the Nominating Committee, which should have been created at the June meeting, should then present a proposed slate of officers at the September meeting, for a vote at the December meeting. Due to the length of time between meetings, it is difficult to follow this procedure. Johnson therefor suggested that the Council suspend the rules in order to present the nominees for Chair and Vice-Chair and vote at the current meeting. Johnson also suggested modifying this bylaw provision in the future.

Orr requested a motion to suspend the rules. Dr. Jackson moved to suspend the rules, and Moore seconded the motion. Motion passed with unanimous approval via roll call vote.

***Nomination for Chair and Vice Chair**

Joe Brownell was nominated for Chair and Craig Anderson for Vice-Chair. Dr. Jackson moved to approve nominations for Chair and Vice Chair, and Orr seconded. Motion passed with unanimous approval from the Board via roll call vote.

Orr and Dr. Jackson were recognized for their service to the Board as well as their service as Chair and Vice-Chair.

***Election of Officers**

Dr. Jackson moved to approve the slate of officers-- Joe Brownell for Chair and Craig Anderson for Vice-Chair— and Orr seconded. Motion passed with unanimous approval from the Board via roll call vote.

Appointment of committee chairpersons and members

Facilities Committee –Brendan Moore agreed to continue as Chair for another term.

Events Committee – Dr. Jackson is stepping down. Orr encouraged any members interested in this position to approach the Executive Committee if interested.

Facilities Committee

Moore reported that the bench guidelines need to be addressed. Yost indicated that the Planning and Construction team is going draft guidelines, but they have not been able to take on that task yet. There are several questions in regards to the process for bench memorials. An idea shared was to approach the Lincoln Children’s Zoo for guidance with the guidelines.

Phase 2 Memorial Monument Conservation--Yost indicated that Phase Two of the memorial monument conservation has been completed by Jensen Conservation Inc. The first phase, completed approximately one year ago, consisted of about half of the memorial monuments. The second half was going to be split into two phases; however, a sufficient level of funding was available in the Department’s CIP to proceed with conservation of all of the remaining memorial monuments in Phase Two.

WWII Brick Holders –Yost reported that LPR and the Lincoln Parks Foundation are working with Arrowstone to replace the WW II brick holder monuments. The goal is to complete this project by Memorial Day (weather and site conditions permitting), and so far the team is on track to meet this deadline. LPR and the Foundation have also been working with Brick Markers to record all the names; the proofreading/quality check is complete for the replacement bricks. Ten brick monuments will be purchased to replace the nineteen existing brick monuments. Arrowstone will donate one brick monument to replace the newest monument located near the Garden entry in order to keep consistency in the design.

SE District – Quinn stated that LPR staff are currently removing trees from the Garden, and replacement planting is planned for the spring. His staff will continue their assessment of the shrubs/bushes in the Garden.

Events Committee

Dr. Jackson noted that the Committee meets one or two months before an event to prepare, including contacting music and ministers well in advance of the event. It was suggested that to increase attendance, the Council/Events Committee may want to consider inviting children/families from LPS, Honor Guards, the American Legion, Boys Scout troupes and/or Girl Scout troops. Johnson reminded

the Council to communicate/coordinate with Stuckey and Pearce in regards to help needed for events. It was noted that the Events Committee coordinates with the Lincoln Memorial Day Observance Association (see <http://lincolnmemoralday.org/> for information on Memorial Day events in the city).

Orr suggested that the Council add the Veterans Parade to its list of events, and the Council agreed with this suggestion. Orr also suggested that the Council purchase a better banner and be more involved with the Parade going forward, noting it would be good publicity for the Veterans Memorial Garden. Johnson mentioned that there is \$150.00 budgeted for a new banner in the 2020 proposed budget. Bartels noted that Antonio Marino usually emails her in regards to the Veterans Parade and when registration opens.

Staff Reports--Announcements

Dr. Jackson has tendered his resignation to the VMGAC effective next week. Dr. Jackson was thanked for his years of service to the VMGAC and the City of Lincoln.

Bartels provided information about Wreathes across America this Saturday, December 14, 2019, at 11:00 a.m. in Wyuka Cemetery. She noted she is also working with the Lincoln Parks Foundation to plant a Rosie the Riveter bush at the Hamann Rose Garden. Brendan Moore is helping with the project and the planting will take place sometime in 2020.

Bartels noted that she is a member of the Wyuka Historical Board and also on the Observance Committee for Memorial Day. She indicated that would like to be included in the Event Committee for Memorial Day.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting, and the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Roy Rivera, Recording Secretary

Mark Orr, Chairman