



MANATEE COUNTY
VETERANS COUNCIL

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October Meeting, Thursday, October 19, 2023

1. **Meeting was called to order** at 11:00am by Chairman Jim Klocke. The meeting was held at the American Legion Post 24.
2. **Invocation:** Chairman Jim Klocke and Vice Chairman Tom Sweeney opened the meeting with prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.
3. **Chairman's Comments:** Chairman Jim Klocke reported that the City of Bradenton officially denied ownership of the Donald L Courtney Veterans park stating that the county owned it. As of this time the county has not denied or confirmed they own the land. Chairman stated that he would like to move forward as in the past and not pursue this matter anymore.
4. **Guest Speaker:** There were no guest speakers.
5. **Recognition of Special Guests:** Marty from Nathan Benderson Park introduced herself. Joe Coco-Valdez is representing MOAA while Richard Blunt is out of the country. Noel from American Legion Post 24 introduced himself and has information on the POW Mia City/County Campus Program.
6. **Roll Call:** Roll call was conducted by Secretary, Tricia Sadler. Present were 17 people of whom 14 were paid members and 4 officers. Quorum was met.
7. **Minutes:** August's minutes were voted for approval. Donald Courtney made the motion; Theresa Cobb seconded the motion; All voting members voted for approval by stating "Aye". The vote was unanimous for approval.
8. **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer's Report was presented by Treasurer, Janice (Spike) Klocke. Chairman Jim Klocke moved for the Treasurer's Report will be filed for audit.
9. **Primary representative reports:**
 - o **Manatee County Veterans Services:** Renee reported Veterans Housing project (Tunnel for Towers) has been approved for 122 homes. The property is at 66th and Cortez Rd. The project should get started in Feb. 2024 and should be completed in



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one year. The Manatee County Veterans Service will have an office onsite. Renee stated she is hiring for two additional staff positions. Renee requested a color guard for the October 24, 2023 Manatee County Board Meeting. Standdown November 4, 2023 is at the Manatee County Fairgrounds.

- **Manatee Veterans Village (VOA):** Paula reported that the VOA Veterans Village has six Veterans moving to permanent housing and they need furniture. She introduced David Z., a Marine that is currently employed as a community specialist with the VOA.
- **St. Vincent de Paul:** Erica announced that the Manatee County Standdown is Saturday 11/4/23 at the Manatee County Fairgrounds from 8a-12p. St. Vincent de Paul offers employment services for Veterans.

10. Reports of Standing Committees:

- **Veteran Monument Park:** Chairman and volunteers weeded and put down 16 Bags of Mulch was completed for the DAR Dedication ceremony on Oct 21, 2023. The Flags were put up for the event as well.

11. Old Business:

- **2023 Veterans Day Parade:** Tom Sweeney is now the point person for the parade due Chairman going out of town. His phone number is 941-928-3903. Bill Orr, JC Congress, will be traffic point man. Bill states the staging will start at 8am. There will be tents and chairs for parade participants to gather. There will be Jeeps for the “year awards” people. The Bradenton Middle School will be passing out (no throwing) beads. The North River News will be advertising the parade and the Palmetto signs will announce the parade as well. The Grand Marshall will be John, a 105 year old Veteran. First Baptist Church will be passing out small flags.
- **Manatee County Standdown:** MCVC have a booth at the standdown. No interest from MCVC members. Chairman, Jim Klocke, encouraged everyone to volunteer at the event.

12. New Business:

- **Kiwana’s Luncheon November 7th at 11:00am** – Jim and Janice Klocke will be present. Please contact them if you would like to attend.
- **Vote for the Veteran, Auxiliary and Civilian of the Year:** Members voted. Vice Chairman, Tom Sweeney and Tricia Sadler, Secretary counted the votes. Veteran of the Year: Rickard Jensen / Auxiliary of the Year: Kathy Doddridge / Civilian of the Year: Rhonda Daily



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13. Around the Room:

- **Manatee DAR** is holding a dedication ceremony for the Revolutionary War Patriots on October 21 at 10am. It is being held at Donald L Courtney Veterans Park. Invitations are available for everyone to take.
- **Nathan Benderson Park** – Trick or Treat on the Lake Event on Oct 26, Thursday – Free // Dragon Boat: Starting disabled team. November 4 at Lake Hendo for a special Veterans race against the Veteran team from The Villages. Jensen has old vinyl banners that can be recycle for other uses – if you want some please see him
- **Wreaths Across America** – Theresa Cobb reported that the last known they were 800 short for local cemetery. Please donate.
- **Lakewood Ranch Elks** – Free Veterans Lunch on Nov 9th from 12p – 2:30p on Lena Road – Hamburg and hotdogs will be served
- **Bishop Museum** – Free entry for Veterans in the month of November
- **Robert O’neil Knights of Columbus Military Ball** on November 4th in the evening
- **Vern Buchanan Ceremony** on November 11th where he will present accommodation awards to veterans
- October 13th was the **Navy Birthday** - AL Post 24 celebrated by serving cake
- **Army/Navy Game** on December 9th
- **JC Congress:** Tidewell Hospice along with JC Congress pinned and honored 18 Veterans at Truent retirement home. They will be honoring more at various retirement community in Manatee. During the 2024 Manatee County Fair there will be a veteran parade in the fairgrounds. The theme for the participants is grandparents and grandchildren. Update on the Desoto parade will be gated and run from 9th street to 39th street along Manatee Ave. from 8pm to 11pm. Starting a veteran Bowling and softball league.
- **Women Veteran of Suncoast:** Meets at 1pm at American Legion Post 10141 on Oct 21. They do have an all women’s color guard

14. Closing Prayer and Meeting Adjournment: Vice Chairman Tom Sweeney led the closing prayer. As there was no further business the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Jim Klocke at 11:55am.

Next Meeting: November 16, 2023 (Thursday) 11:00 am located at American Legion Post 24

Respectfully Submitted, Council Recording Secretary - Tricia Sadler