



MANATEE COUNTY
VETERANS COUNCIL

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February Meeting, Thursday, February 15, 2024

1. **Meeting was called to order** at 11:15AM by Chairman Jim Klocke. The meeting was held at the American Legion Post 24.
2. **Invocation:** Chairman Jim Klocke opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.
3. **Chairman's Comments:** Chairman Klocke reported that the Veterans Parade Critique Committee had met and are planning an additional meeting to finish critiquing last year's parade's pros/cons, and beginning planning for November 2024. Jim also stated that the MSWD Army of Hope annual fundraising event will be held on March 3, 2024 from Noon to 4:00PM at the Sarasota South Elks, # 2495. Tickets are \$12 in advance or \$15 at the door. The funds raised go to helping families in need of deployed servicemen and women. There will be guest speakers, music, raffles, food, etc.
4. **Guest Speaker:** There were no guest speakers.
5. **Recognition of Special Guests:** There were no special guests.
6. **Roll Call:** Roll call was conducted by the Secretary-Appointed, Molly Boardman. Present were 16 people of whom 11 were paid members and 3 officers. Quorum was met.
7. **Minutes:** January's minutes were voted for approval. Charlie Fitt made the motion and Theresa Cobb seconded the motion. All voting members voted for approval of the minutes by stating "Aye". The vote was unanimous for approval.
8. **Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's Report was presented by Treasurer Janice "Spike" Klocke for January 2024. Charlie Fitt moved for the report to go to audit. Janice stated that the 990N tax form has been submitted and is pending.
9. **Primary Representative Reports:**
 - **Manatee County Veterans Services:** Renee Medina reported that the flag lines at Memorial Park need some repairs. Renee reported that the Marauders and Pirates Baseball

Organizations have added Veterans Organizations to their Three Pillars of Work in the Community. They are looking for service projects and new organizations to donate jersey money to. Give Renee any suggestions for the Baseball Organizations and she will pass them along. Renee stated that her organization currently has one Veterans Service Counselor position open.

- **Manatee Veterans Village (VOA):** David Zareceny stated that Veterans Village was at capacity, with one veteran on the waiting list. They have received multiple furniture donations. They are currently accepting food donations.
- **Sarasota County Veterans Commission:** Carlos Moreira shared a variety of topics of interest. The Pirates will be hosting a Military Appreciation Spring Training Game on February 27, 2024. The Orioles will also be hosting a Heroes Day Game on February 29, 2024, honoring Veterans and Police. On March 2, 2024, The Patterson Foundation will be celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Patriot's Plaza. Sarasota Military Academy has a Color Guard that can attend events, contact Carlos. Carlos is working with a group of students from different schools that want to put together goodies to send to units overseas. It was suggested he contact Manasota Operation Troop Support for information.
- **USFSM Office of Veterans Success:** Carlos Moreira reported that they have one open position for a Veterans Success Coordinator. Carlos' organization is planning to hold a webinar about community resources for veterans in the future, details to come. USF finally has housing and scholarships to help pay for housing. Carlos is working with 2 student veterans who are going to Washington, D.C. for cyber security training. He is looking for donations to help cover the cost of the trip.

10. Reports of Standing Committees:

- **Donald L. Courtney Memorial Park:** Chairman Klocke is meeting Sunday February 18, 2024 with the gentleman to engrave the names of the 2023 Winners of Veteran, Auxiliary, and Civilian of the Year on the stone at the Park. The flags will be up until President's Day.

11. Old Business:

- **2023 Veterans Day Parade/Ceremony:** See #3 Chairman's Comments.
- **Audit Committee:** Gill Ruderman reported that the Audit Committee met today and everything checked out, but they didn't have a digital copy of the checkbook available, so a report will be forthcoming in March 2024.
- **Chaplin Position:** Dave Klein has volunteered to fill the full time MCVC Chaplin position.
- **2024 Budget:** Treasurer Janice Klocke presented the proposed 2024 budget. The budget was voted for approval. Charlie Fitt made the motion and Molly Boardman seconded the motion. All voting members voted for approval of the 2024 Budget by stating "Aye". The vote was unanimous for approval.
- **Scholarship Update:** Gill Ruderman stated that the scholarship interviews will be conducted at Lakewood Ranch High School. Meeting date and time TBD. If you would like to volunteer to help with the interviews, please see Gill.

12. New Business:

- **Lee Washington** has started a food truck called Pee Wee's Cantina. It will usually be parked in front of Manatee Players Thursday through Sunday from 11:30AM to 6:00PM.
- **2024 DeSoto Grand Parade:** Bill Orr of Manatee JcCongress reported that plans are well underway for this year's DeSoto Parade, held on Saturday April 27, 2024, starting at 8:00PM. The next planning meeting will be held at Popi's Restaurant in Palmetto, on February 20, 2024 from 7-8:00PM. Vietnam Veterans will be honored in this year's parade. Men and women veterans are encouraged to participate.

13. Around the Room:

- MCVC received a Certificate of Appreciation from Cookie Agan for our donation to Wreaths Across America, 2023.
- Women Veterans of the Sun Coast: The next meeting will be Saturday, February 24, 2024 at the VFW Post 10141.
- Kevin Wright shared that the Cracker Ride Across the State will be on Saturday February 17, 2024.
- Gill Ruderman shared that the Southeastern Guide Dogs Walk-A-Thon will be held at Benderson Park on March 2, 2024.
- Charlie Fitt shared that the Kirby Stewart Post will be having their Annual Pig Roast with food and music from 3 different bands on Saturday February 24, 2024. The tickets are \$15. The event is from noon to ????
- Molly Boardman shared that Rebecca McAllister from the VA will be retiring at the end of March 2024. Alana (Hollie) Stamper-Gimbar, LCSW will be taking her place as the Veteran Community Partnership representative for Bay Pines VA.
- Bill Orr suggested that we form a Fundraising Committee at the next MCVC meeting.

14. Closing Prayer and Meeting Adjournment: Chairman, Jim Klocke led the closing prayer. As there was no further business the meeting was adjourned by Jim Klocke at 12:25PM.

15. Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held at the American Legion Post 24 on Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 11:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Boardman

Council Recording Secretary-Appointed

