



MANATEE COUNTY
VETERANS COUNCIL

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April Meeting, Thursday, April 15, 2021

- 1. Meeting was called to order** at 11:03am by Chairman Edwin Robinson. The meeting was held at the Kiwanis Hall Manatee Performing Arts Center.
- 2. Invocation:** Chairman Edwin Robinson opened the meeting with prayer. Vice Chairman Donald Courtney led the Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.
- 3. Chairman's Comments:** Chairman, Edwin Robinson, spoke about the change of location for MCVC monthly minutes to Post 24.
- 4. Guest Speaker:** There were no guest speaker at this meeting.
- 5. Recognition of New Members and First Time Guests:** There were no new members or first-time guests. This time was spent thanking Webmaster, Les Martin, for his great work and dedication.
- 6. Roll Call:** Roll call was conducted by Treasurer, Margaret Smelser. Present were ten paid members and 4 officers. Quorum was met.
- 7. Minutes:** January will be voted on at May's meeting. February and March's minutes were voted for approval. Vice Chairman, Donald Courtney, made the motion; Teresa Cobb seconded the motion; All voting members voted for approval by stating "Aye". The vote was unanimous for approval to review.
- 8. Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's Report was presented by Treasurer, Margaret Smelser. Treasurer reported that name tags will now cost \$7.50 each. The balance of the General Funds reports as \$10,791.51 and the Restricted Funds at \$7,940.17. The Treasurer's Report will be filed for audit.
- 9. Primary representative reports:** Chairman Edwin Robinson will contact representative that are not present for today meeting. **Manatee County Veteran Services requests** Veteran volunteers to present the Pledge of Allegiance at the open ceremony at the Manatee County meetings which are held on Tuesdays at 9am. Veterans will be presented



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with a gift and certificate of participation. All video and photos of open ceremonies will be forwarded to Council and Veteran. Mr. Washington states he will be making contact with those interested in volunteering regarding these meeting. Mr. Washington reports a flag was lost due to lines snapping. The flag poles require re-rigging. Mr. Washington received an estimate from the company who completed this task previously. The estimate to replace is \$1,930 which includes a crane rental of \$500. Mr. Washington stated that Manatee County will share some of the cost. Mr. Washington will be working with Mr. Klocke on this project and additional quotes. Mr. Washington reported the county is moving towards creating a Veterans Shelter with social services. Treasurer, Margaret Smelser, made a motion to draft a resolution to support Manatee County in finding housing for homeless Veterans. Teresa Cobb seconded the motion; All voting members voted for approval by stating “Aye”. The vote was unanimous for approval to review. Chairman, Mr. Robinson, will have draft available for review at the May meeting. **Manatee Veterans Village reports** having 20 Veterans housed at this time. Ms. Williams gave a big Thank You for supporting local Veterans. All financial support should be submitted to VOA main office earmarked for Manatee Veterans Village.

10. Reports of Standing Committees:

- **Veteran Monument Park:** Jim Klocke reports the trees have been trimmed, grounds have been weeded, and painting around the headstones and monuments have been completed. Mr. Klocke reported the bricks have been dropped off. In addition to the re-rigging of the Flagpole Mr. Klocke reported that five new flags were needed. The cost of each one is \$55. Vice Chairman, Donald Courtney, made a motion to approve a purchase for flags up to \$300. Les Martin seconded the motion; All voting members voted for approval by stating “Aye”. The vote was unanimous for approval to review.
- **Legislative:** Kevin Wright, DAV Post 18, reported there are many items in legislative review for Veteran funding. These include fully funded Veteran Suicide Prevention; Services for Veterans and Families for behavioral and mental health services; Veteran Employment and Training; Veteran Preference in Employment; Veteran Treatment Court statewide; Tax Exemptions for Disabled Veterans; Educational Opportunities for Disabled Veterans; and Alternative Therapy for Active Duties. Mr. Wright will provide an update in future meetings.

11. Old Business:



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- **Memorial Day Ceremony Preparations:** Vice Chairman, Donald Courtney, reported the service is being considered for live broadcast to start at 9 am. A singer for the National Anthem and Honor Guard has been identified. A guest speaker is needed. Mr. Courtney reported that several organizations will present wreaths at 9am.

12. New Business:

- **Move Meeting to American Legion Post 24** – An in-depth discussion in regards to moving the meeting back to Post 24 and if it would improve attendance took place. The focus would be to increase the visibility of the council and reengage members. Kevin Wright, made a motion to move the meeting to American Legion Post 24 located at 2000 75th St W, Bradenton, FL 34209. Jim Klocke seconded the motion; All voting members voted for approval by stating “Aye”. The vote was won by majority to approve the move starting in May. Chairman, Mr. Robinson, will contact American Legion Post 24 to make arrangements.
- Discussion regarding having council participate in community Veterans projects to increase membership and participation. No outcome was determined at the April meeting.
- Treasurer, Margaret Smelser, suggested creating a \$250 Veteran scholarship for USF students. Further discussion will take place at the May meeting.

13. Around the Room: Community Events were presented: Poker Run March 27; Desoto Parade – Veteran Convoy April 24; Military Ball April 17 – see flyers on table. Bradenton Marauders hosting a Military Appreciation Night for \$5 on Saturday May 29 – gates open at 5pm, game starts at 6:05pm. Chairman, Mr. Robinson, requested the Council host a table and have the Council members sit together during the game. Les Martin, made a motion to sponsor the Veterans at the Manatee Veterans Village to attend the game. Teresa Cobb seconded the motion; All voting members voted for approval by stating “Aye”. The vote was unanimous for approval to review. Chairman, Mr. Robinson, request Secretary, Ms. Sadler, to create a press release and turn into the Bradenton Herald, Jim Jones.

14. Closing Prayer: Chairman Edwin Robinson closed the meeting with prayer.



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15. Meeting Adjournment: As there was no further business the meeting was adjourned. A motion was made and seconded at 12:08 pm.

Next Meeting: April 15, 2021 (Thursday) 11:00 am located at American Legion Post 24

Respectfully Submitted, Council Recording Secretary - Tricia Sadler