

MANATEE COUNTY VETERANS COUNCIL

June 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes

American Legion Post 24 Kirby Stewart, Bradenton, FL

1. **Meeting was called to order at 11:00 am by Chairman Edwin Robinson** with a prayer (in the absence of Chaplain Pat Stiles) and all in attendance reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
2. **Chair Comments:** As this was the first meeting since February due to COVID-19 restrictions, Chairman Robinson stated that in light of some being either ZOOM challenged or fatigued, he wanted to give this opportunity for a live meeting a shot to see who would indeed come. Chairman stated that the main reason for this meeting was to check on the membership and thank them for doing their part to keep themselves and their families safe.
3. **Guest Speaker:** There were no guest speakers at this meeting.
4. **Recognition of Special Guests and First Time Guests:** Chairman Robinson recognized, with appreciation, John Rauh, who is (once again) Commander of American Legion Post 24. Chairman thanked Commander Rauh for allowing the Council the use of the Post main hall as the venue for the meeting. Plans to move the Council meeting to Kiwanis Hall at the Manatee Performing Arts Center have been put on hold until further notice.
5. **Roll Call & Minutes:** Roll Call was conducted by Chairman Robinson (in the absence of Secretary William Carey) and a quorum was established. Chairman asked that if the membership knew of former voting members or voting members that were absent to please show up, pay dues and become re-engaged in the Council. Treasurer Margaret Smelser asked that voting members make sure that their representative roster was up to date. For those that did not complete a form, she asked that those members do so and return to Treasurer Smelser, preferably, at the end of the meeting. Minutes of the February 20 meeting (last meeting before cancellations) was reviewed by Council members. **Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the February meeting. Motion passes unanimously.**
6. **Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer's Report was presented by Treasurer Margaret Smelser. The report was a compilation of monies received over the past three months. Report was approved for review.** Treasurer Smelser also addressed the upcoming increase in our storage unit fees. The bill increased from \$86.05 to \$103.00 per month. Vice Chairman Courtney explained the potential reasons for the increase, as well as the usefulness for the unit. Because of its proximity to Veterans Monument Park and that all contents are in a central location as opposed to someone's garage, a consensus was reached that the Council would shoulder the increase as a fixed expense.
7. **Organizational Reports:** Andre Grant (SCF Student Veterans) reported that the school was preparing to open back up with several precautions and a hybrid learning schedule. Chairman Robinson (Turning Points) reported that he is the new Yellow Ribbon Program Manager. He also reports that he has hired 2 new case managers. Chairman also stated that TP is still helping veterans in housing crises during COVID.
8. **Old Business:**
 - A. Memorial Day Recap: Chairman Robinson thanked all who participated in the Memorial Day Ceremony. Special thanks to Lee Washington, Immediate Past Chairman Carl Hunsinger and Manatee County BOCC for the use of Commission Chambers. Jan "Spike" Klocke was recognized for her rendition of God Bless America. It was a team effort that everyone can feel good about.
9. **Standing Committees**
 - A. **Legislative:** No report
 - B. Veterans Monument Park: Jim Klocke reported that flags were raised in Veterans Monument Park in March and a decision was made to keep them up as a symbol of community strength and pride. It has been received well by the community. Yesterday, the flags were lowered. He did report challenges with the flags at the north entrance to the park. The flags are getting caught by the tree. Mr. Klocke requested the Council purchase 2 smaller flags (size 3X5). Mr. Klocke would check out several organizations to get a price on the flags, with a goal of having them purchased prior to

July 4. **Vice Chairman Courtney made a motion to allot money from the General Fund for the purchase of two (2) 3x5 flags for an amount not to exceed \$150.00. Motion was seconded. Motion passes unanimously.**

8, New Business:

A. Veterans Day Observances: Vice Chairman Courtney reported that the Veterans Day Celebration & Parade would be held on Saturday, 07 November at Sutton Park in Palmetto. Vice Chairman has a singer for the National Anthem and is also looking for a guest speaker. Those wishing to submit nominations for the annual awards program need to begin submitting them into the awards committee as nominations needed to be in by the August meeting. Chairman Robinson, because of current circumstances, extended the deadline to the close of the September meeting. Bob Greene usually handles the Parade, but a new Parade Marshal will have to be named as Bob cannot perform these duties due to health reasons. An Awards Committee was established and chaired by Don.

9. Around the Room: Members mentioned various programs & projects.

10. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned and closed with a prayer by the Chair at 12:00 PM.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the MCVC will be **by Zoom on Thursday July 16, 2020 at 11:00 AM**

FOR THE SECRETARY

Respectfully Submitted,

Edwin D. Robinson
Chairman