

CITY OF MANCHESTER

MEETING OF THE VETERANS COMMISSION

Aug. 20, 2020

A meeting of the Veterans Commission of the City of Manchester, Missouri was held at 3:00 p.m. on the 20th day of August 2020, on the video conference application, Zoom, for the transaction of such business that came before the Commission.

Present:

Mayor Mike Clement
Alderman Megan Huether
City Administrator Larry Perney
City Clerk Justin Klocke
Secretary Bonnie Krueger
Chair Kay Bell
Mr. Bud Niebling
Ms. Julie Nguyen
Ms. Ruth Baker
Mr. Bill Pinkston
Mr. Bob Bell
Mr. James Francis
SSgt. Westley Moore

Introduction/Welcome

Chair Kay Bell called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Bonnie introduced the minutes from the previous meeting held on July 23 and it was unanimously approved. When Westley Moore signed into Zoom, he was introduced and welcomed before the board and each commissioner gave a short bio of why they were selected on the commission.

Moving Forward

Mayor Clement explained that he met with Kay and Bonnie via Zoom to discuss creating an agenda and for Kay to take the lead on meetings going forward. The mayor will continue to send out the Zoom notifications and help with the agenda as needed. The agenda will be sent to Justin Klocke for approval and to send out for notice.

Old Business

Funding for Veterans programs/initiatives

Estimates for program/intuitive funding was made available on the agenda. In addition to those items, adding the Memorial Day upgrades costs, such as having the Eagle present was recommended. City Administrator Perney said that a draft budget is needed by mid-September so Mayor Clement and Alderman Megan Huether will meet with Kat Schien to see if a more accurate budget request can be presented for the 2021 budget committee.

There was discussion about the storage and upkeep of the Flags of Valor. Once they are cleaned it is recommended to finding a storage solution that would help keep them in good condition.

POW/MIA Recognition Event

Megan is helping to coordinate logistics for the Facebook Live POW/MIA event on Sept. 18. Bud Niebling will give the invocation. Chris Becker will either play Taps or will help secure an individual who can do that for us. Bud said for the reflection he had hoped to secure a Vietnam veteran who could give a testimonial. Mayor Clement has a good source through Jefferson Barracks and will pass that onto Bud for inquiry. SSgt. Moore also recommended going through the American Legion.

American Legion Update

Bud gave a comprehensive update on the local American Legion Post 208. The post is open to Bingo, which fluctuates in attendance. The kitchen is closed and has been through the pandemic. The bar is at 25% capacity, which is county recommendations. They have lost many fundraising opportunities since COVID-19. Fish fry sales, homecoming booths and golf tournament are just a few of the lost opportunities. They also had some water damage during the heavy rains in early August and membership numbers are down. Commissioner Ruth Baker asked if they could be the “Round up at the Register” charity at Schnucks. Bonnie also suggested the bag purchase through Schnucks, which earns \$1 per bag

Veterans Service Recognition Report – Commissioner Krueger

Bonnie has not proceeded any further with the research of the 7 individuals from Manchester that the commission would like to honor at the Veterans Memorial Park. Larry suggested moving forward with the plaques as was discussed so that we are not waiting on the expansion of Stoecker Park.

New Business

Helping Manchester Veterans

A significant portion of the meeting was devoted to next steps in identifying and helping veterans going forward. Mayor Clement read a portion of a letter from Bryan Pantazo, who was asking for help in receiving stimulus money and unemployment. He suggested contacting Ann Wagner or Trish Gunby. Justin has contacts through Senator Blunt’s office. He suggested reaching out to one governmental contact so that multiple people do not try to muddle up the process in sorting this out.

Kay suggested forming a welcoming committee of some sort to welcome veterans who are moving into the area. It could include discounts from area businesses and maybe a small token from the city. Perney said with updated occupancy procedures, the city can add a box to mark if a resident is military, which would help us identify them. Creating a pamphlet of veteran services would also be helpful for residents, which could be part of the welcome packet.

Another idea Kay had is to identify veterans who can do odd jobs to help bring in income. On the flip side of that, as part of Manchester Cares, it was suggested to offer to do small jobs for veterans in need. SSgt, Moore has student contacts through Vianney High School who run

“Serving Servicemen” who may look for service opportunities. He also suggested connecting with JROTC programs and other youth organizations to help get volunteers. Bonnie has contacts through Lafayette High’s JROTC program.

Commissioner Julie Nguyen suggested creating yard signs to thank veterans. She also suggested creating an official group similar to what is available on NextDoor and Facebook that opens up the volunteer reach.

Adjournment

Based on the availability of the Commissioners, the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 17 at 5 p.m. via video conferencing. There being no further business, Chair Kay Bell adjourned the meeting at 4:30 p.m.