

CITY OF MANCHESTER

MEETING OF THE VETERANS COMMISSION

October 14, 2020

A meeting of the Veterans Commission of the City of Manchester, Missouri was held at 5 p.m. on the 14th day of October 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
Secretary Bonnie Krueger
Ms. Julie Nguyen
Ms. Ruth Baker
Mr. James Francis
Ms. Kat Schien
City Administrator Larry Perney

Introduction/Welcome

Mayor Mike Clement called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. A mistake in the spelling of Bonnie Krueger's name was identified in the September minutes. With the correction they were approved. Mayor Clement asked that the minutes be forwarded to City Clerk Justin Klocke to be posted on the city of Manchester website. Clement gave an update on the Bells, who were not at the meeting. Bob fell from a ladder and after believing he was stable, he was hospitalized for injuries. Their address was provided to send them notes of encouragement.

Old Business

POW/MIA Recognition Event

Megan Huether debriefed the event. It went very well and had high sound quality. Huether hopes that a recording of the event can happen every year, even if the event is held in person. Clement inquired if using an iPhone or video camera was best. Kat Schien suggested continuing the use of the iPhone.

Veterans Service Recognition Report

Krueger connected with the brother of deceased serviceman Ryan Connolly as a family contact for any memorial that may be added. She signed up for Togetherweserved(Army) to find some missing contacts, but it has not helped in finding anyone at this point.

Military Honor Wall

After creating the FB page (<https://www.facebook.com/SouthFreedomMemorialWall/>) on Sept. 9, Krueger has had a lot of success adding new names. About 25 plates were added to the wall in the last 2 weeks, and she is ready to order 30 more. However, All-Star Trophy was bought out and is doing business as Collegiate Awards. Krueger is in the process of trying to get permission to order the plates through Denny, who was let go from All-Star but has his own business now.

Clement wants to host a meeting at the wall to show it to the commission. As soon as the building is open, she will help coordinate. The principal at South, Dr. Aitch, approved a Veterans celebration at the wall in 2021. We will try to coordinate with the city as not to have them at the same time.

New Business

Vision for Vets

Clement gave an update that Vision for Vets has permanently closed. Scott Beatty dedicated six years of his life to the organization and Clement has reached out to him for support as he seemed to be suffering emotionally. Unfortunately, he has not responded.

Veterans Day Breakfast

Schien is planning the drive through breakfast at the American Legion Hall from 7 to 10 a.m. Plans for an assortment of red, white and blue breakfast items. Some of the options include: bagel, muffin, donuts, yogurt, fruit, scrambled egg carton, oatmeal carton, milk, juice, coffee. Huether suggested a patriotic cookie for later. The exact menu is still being planned.

The city will provide delivery service within a certain radius for homebound vets and their families. Schien suggested that the Legion send a robocall to potential families so we can plan for delivery for those folks. The food will be individually wrapped and in a box per St. Louis County. Since this is a drive through, it was suggested to have flags and music while the men and women are on the lot.

Clement recommended adding a pamphlet that would give notice of the Hometown Heroes roll out in the city. We may get some advance orders as Christmas gifts to loved ones. The pamphlet could include calendar dates of future events or perhaps some resources for veterans. Kat will look into past attendance to see how many boxes should be prepared.

Expansion of Margaret Stocker Park

Schien said there will be an initial meeting with staff (with veteran commission and planning team members welcome) to evaluate options for the addition of 1/3 acre after acquiring the home to the south of the Veterans Memorial. The initial thought is adding parking, another restroom, perhaps a pavilion, a splash pad or a bridge.

With the guidance of a landscape architect through a grant obtained, design concepts will be given to community and other stakeholders. A final meeting will finalize the plans. Schien said that any construction will be completed in phases. The home will be demolished in 2020, but no construction will begin until 2021.

Typically, grants are not available for construction of monuments and memorials, but Schien will continue to seek them out. Clement suggested finding benefactors to help with costs. In total, the park will have 3.7 acres with acquisition of home and property.

Krueger suggested a water feature to honor the men and women who lost their battle with depression and died by suicide. Huether said the national recognition for PTSD is June 27, founded in 2010. We may find a way to honor those individuals on that date.

Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m. by Mike Clement
Next meeting date was confirmed for Wednesday, Oct. 14 at 5 p.m. via video conferencing.