

Minutes from 5-APR 2021 – recorded by Jim Higgins

President of the Veterans Commission John Gonzales called the meeting to order at 7:00 and we recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bob Blake of the Marine Corps league then gave an invocation.

Approval of previous meeting minutes:

The first order of business was to approve previous minutes from November 2020. Bob Blake made the 1st motion to approve and 2nd by Mike Sloan. The minutes were unanimously approved.

The next item was to approve the March 2021 minutes. Joe Brown made the 1st motion, and it was seconded by Mike Sloan. The motion and minutes were approved.

### **Vietnam Veteran Remembrance Day**

The Mayor, Len Pagano was in attendance and spoke to the commission. The Mayor had read the previous minutes (March 2020) and comments made by commission members critical that St. Peters was not recognizing Vietnam Veterans Remembrance Day (VVR) on March 29th. Len spoke of "raising the bar" in St. Peters and encouraged the commission to plan not only a Vietnam Veterans event in 2022, but additional events honoring veterans. Mayor Pagano proposed the event take place at Williot and Jungerman. Mayor Pagano hoped to make use of the underutilized memorial at Williot and Jungermann Roads for future events. The memorial honors Missouri veterans. Erika Oxford asked when was the wall last updated. There was a comment there were not very many brick spaces available. The pavers were suggested for engraved bricks. There was a discussion whether the large flag on the property could be lowered.

The proprietor of the store located on the property offered his facility should we choose to do an event there (restrooms and parking). There were some safety concerns about using the property (proximity to street).

There was a comment that a Huey flyover would be "special."

The mayor proposed a January 2022 meeting of the commission would likely be needed to organize a Vietnam Veteran Remembrance Day for next March.

### **Korean War Veterans Day**

National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day is observed each year on July 27th. The mayor asked the commission to host an event honoring the Korean War Veterans (KWV). There was a discussion on whether the 27th (Tuesday) or the 25th (Sunday) would be the best day. There was a brief discussion about weather (extreme heat) and attendance (Tuesday versus Sunday). An ad hoc committee was formed (Erika, Bob Blake, and Mark Hoernschemeyer) to settle on a simple format for 2021 with a plan to improve and enhance the event in future years. They will

present their plan at the May commission meeting. Bob Blake mentioned Chris Christifoley (Korean War Veteran) may be able to help or speak at the event. The mayor really wanted the VVR day in 2022 and the KWV events to begin in 2021. There was a discussion whether to play the Korean national anthem. There was little support. There was also a discussion on prayer (invocation) at the events. Terri Violet reminded the commission the Board of Alderman begin the meetings with prayers; a St. Peters policy.

A motion was made Erika to host the Korean War Veterans day event in 2021. The motion was seconded by Bob Blake and passed unanimously. A plan will be submitted to the commission at the May meeting.

### **Pearl Harbor Day**

The mayor stated he did not feel we should continue with the Pearl Harbor ceremony. He feels the lack of attendance particularly by schools (their prime audience) causes the event to miss the mark. Some members stated, there were churches doing such an event and it was crowded, standing room only. There was a comment / question on which day of the week the event was held. After considerable discussion, it was suggested by Erika to replace it with a "virtual" event beginning in 2021. There was agreement the live event would be discontinued. The mayor reminded the commission the Board of Alderman do recognize and honor Pearl Harbor veterans at their December meeting and will continue to do so.

Mayor Pagano asked the commission for make a motion to not end Pearl Harbor day but rather, revise the format. Erika made the 1st motion; Bob made the 2nd. The motion passed.

### **General Comments**

There was a discussion of how other municipalities brought together all veteran groups (VFW, AM, League, KWV) for events.

There was a comment that these events may help prevent veteran suicides by bringing the veterans out. Twenty-two per day was mentioned.

The mayor spoke about a local church who publishes the names of their parishioners in service to their country. He proposed going forward, Hometown Magazine (St. Peters publication) list those in service, active duty.

Mayor Pagano expressed concern he was "overloading" the commission with these tasks. Bob Blake commented, it was overdue. The mayor commented, hopefully the leadership of the county will also raise the bar. The mayor commented that, budget changes will be made to reflect the needed changes.

### **Veterans Day (November 11th)**

There was a discussion to enhance the Veterans day event. There was general agreement and a motion was made (Mike Sloan) and seconded (Bob Blake).

Mayor Pagano thanked the commission for their efforts. There was a discussion about who would be the next Board of Alderman rep on the commission as Terri Violet's term was expiring. The mayor was thankful for Terri's efforts to recognize local veterans. He also encouraged local veterans to run for alderman.

There are two groups coming to the metro area in 2022. One is the Tuskegee Airman and the other is the Buffalo Riders (motorcycle riders). The mayor left the information with Alderwoman Terri Violet. At the time we are unsure how we can recognize these groups coming to town. At the very least, we'll do a proclamation.

**In Public Comments**

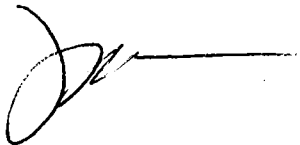
Mark Hoernschemeyer spoke about the Young Marines Program for youth 8-18 years of age. The program will be area-wide (as far as Fort Leonard Wood).

Cody stated that preparing for a virtual Memorial Day (2021) would require about 30 minutes of our time.

John Gonzales began to pass around ten applications for bricks (a few were revised, most were new).

Next meeting is 3-MAY 2021 7:00 PM

Victor Ponce made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:28. Erika seconded the motion. Motion passed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'J' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.