

THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF THE 2/22/11 MEETING

The meeting convened at 1:00 pm.

Those attending: Gayle Sovinee, Chairperson, Ken Vasilik, Pam Kelly, Alyce Knaflich, Jan Banks, Michael Reich, Jason Martin, Andrew Clark, Debra Collington, and as guests: Ron Kennedy (American Legion Post 526), Manny Gonzalez and John Thoen (Healthcare Solutions Network of NC) and Garrett Artz (Pisgah Legal Services).

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Introductions were made by the attendees.

Motion made, seconded and passed that the minutes of the 1/25/11 meeting be accepted.

There being no committee treasurer present, there was no treasurer's report. However, Pam Kelly stated that there was no financial activity from the previous month.

Old Business

2011 Goal Setting There was no further discussion from the floor.

Membership and Attendance Continuing the discussion from last month's meeting, it was decided that when a member has at least 3 unexcused absences in a year, the Chairperson will discuss with the member their interest and ability to continue as a committee member. As may then be indicated, the member will either be continued or dropped from the Committee. The By-laws now state, "Members are expected to attend a minimum of 60% of regularly scheduled meetings during an operating year (May 1 - April 30) with a maximum of three consecutive unexcused absences". The need for active members necessitates the need for this action.

New Business

Veterans Forum Update With the leaving of Kim Spangle, Andy Clark has agreed to be the Subcommittee Chair. March 12th is still the date at the Veterans Restoration Quarters beginning at 2pm and ending at 5pm. Participating service organization can set up as early as 1pm. The format of the Forum as follows:

- 2pm to 3pm Keynote speech by the Mayor
3 to 7 minute presentations by 5 to 7 panel members discussing their specific areas especially those issues most experienced from veterans.
- 3pm to 5 pm Approximately 16 service organizations/vendors will have tables towards the back of the room and in the lobby of the

VRQ and will answer questions/address issues of individual attending veterans.

Michael Reich will be the Moderator for the panel discussions. Michael will also provide the required tables and chairs and will also provide light refreshments.

\$100 from the committee's budget was allocated as needed for the Forum.

Memorial Day Event Allison Bond agreed to Chair a subcommittee for this event. Members are encouraged to volunteer for this subcommittee by calling Allison. Debra Collington and Andy Clark indicated their desire to volunteer. The event will be held on Monday, May 30th (observed Memorial Day) at City-County Plaza starting at 3pm. Sandra Travis will continue as the City Parks & Rec coordinator. It was noted that budget items for a wreath and program printing be designated.

Bele Chere A location request has already been submitted for the MCVA booth. It is the same space as last year at the corner of Battery Park and Haywood St. The booth that is used needs waterproof side walls and the MCVA sign needs better support in the middle. Also, a suitable "white board" should be selected and purchased. A budget item of \$250 was suggested for these. It was suggested that with the number of service organizations participating in the Veterans Forum, a sign up sheet for manning the booth by these organizations be circulated at the Forum.

Veterans Day Gayle S. mentioned that at a meeting with the Mayor earlier in the day, the Mayor discussed she would like to strive for a more community-oriented observance of Veterans Day as compared with the event held this past year at the VA Medical Center. The Memorial Day event was indicated as a format and more desired caliber of event for a Veterans Day observance.. The City-County plaza was noted as a more desirable location. Some serious planning will have to be done as this committee's participation in last year's Veterans Day event was quite minimal.

March Meeting The March meeting will be held on March 22nd and the agenda will include nominations of new officers for the following year which begins on May 1st. The positions include: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Financial Secretary, and Secretary. Elections will be held at the April meeting. A suggestion was offered for consideration by Ken Vasilik that the Vice Chairperson automatically becomes the Chairperson the next year. Although that would require a 2-

year commitment of serving as a Committee Officer, the duties now of the Vice Chair are to assume the duties of the Chair as directed by the Chair or in the Chair's absence and perform other duties as assigned by the Chair. It would give the Vice Chair some experience and a "running start" in assuming the office of the Chair. This change would require a modification of the By-laws.

Also on the March agenda will be a review of the By-laws to determine if changes may be necessary.

Announcements and Comments

Jan Banks announced that Senator Burr, Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs introduced a resolution to honor veterans who served in Vietnam by designating March 30th as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day". March 30th marks the anniversary of the day that combat and combat support units withdrew completely from South Vietnam.

Jan also announced that the U. S. House of Representatives has again introduced a new bill to establish an Honor and Remember Flag. The Bill has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee.

Also announced that the Vietnam War traveling wall, the "Wall That Heals" will be coming to the area and displayed at the Harley Davidson Distributorship in Swannanoa. The Vietnam Veterans of America local chapter 124 is requesting financial support. Contact is Lester Bullock at 281-3174, lebcpa@bellsouth.net. Also, more info can be gotten from Spider Trantham of Chapter 124 at spidroadglide@gmail.com.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:58 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 22 at 1:00 pm Park & Rec Office , 72 Gashes Creek Rd. (at the Nature Center).