

Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. Minutes of April 28, 2016

Officers present: Chairman Bill Dudley; Vice Chairman Ray Quinn, Secretary Michael Rothfeld; Treasurer John Mountcastle
Chairman Dudley called the meeting to order at 1900 hours

Chairman Dudley led the Pledge to the Flag

Vice Chairman Quinn gave the Invocation

Last month's Minutes were approved as presented at the meeting.

The Treasurer's Report was approved as presented at the meeting.

Speakers:

Judge Howard McGillin, COL USA, ret., Judge McGillin spoke to the membership about the long awaited start of the Veterans Treatment Court, (VTC). The County Commissioners have to vote on hiring an administrator. Veterans with PTSD and TBI will be serviced by the VTCs. Support services will be provided as will follow up counselors and mentors. Sheriff Shoar supports this program. Three to five veterans a month will be in VTC a month. Follow up provided also upon release.

Rory Diamond, Exec Dir., K9s For Warriors and Brett Simon, Warrior Trainer spoke about K9s expansion plans in number of kennels, dogs and warriors each month. After graduation warriors and dogs are followed to ensure health and safety. Bayer will be providing dogs with free vet care and \$ 1000 yearly in free dog food. K9s goal is to have warrior return to family, society, schools and work. Most k9s are rescues from local shelters.

Les Davis, AMVETS National Recruiter, Les spoke about why younger veterans are not joining existing Veterans Organizations, i.e., VFW, AMVETS and American Legion. Post 9/11 veterans are different and have different needs. Smoking, bars and drinking are out. His suggestions are, try to offer what they are looking forward, wi-fi, coffee and juice bars as examples. Les thinks today's vets would appreciate a community center type of meeting place rather than a windowless environment in most VSOs.

Committee Reports: (Because of the number of speakers reports were kept to a minimum)

Joe McDermott, SJC VSO: The Homeless Veterans Standdown is on August 20th, setup on the 19th at the St. Augustine Elks Lodge.

Kathy Church, FL Director of MIAP, no plans for interment until Fall when it is not too hot.

Ray Quinn, Jacksonville National Cemetery. The Memorial Day event at Jacksonville National Cemetery, 10:00 am, will be on Saturday, May 28 prior to Memorial Day so as not to conflict with Jacksonville's ceremony. The public can start place flags at 9am.

Michael Rothfeld: The Veterans Council has a new Facebook page, all are invited to become members.

Chairman Bill Dudley: Asked everyone to attend the Board of County Commissioners meeting on Tues. May 3 at 9am when the Veterans Treatment Court will be discussed.

Meeting ended at 9:20 pm

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 26th, 7 pm, Elks Lodge # 829, A1A S., St. Augustine

Respectfully submitted by Michael Rothfeld, Secretary, Veterans Council SJC