

Veterans Council of St. Johns County, Inc. Minutes of May 26, 2016

Officers present: Chairman Bill Dudley; Vice Chairman Ray Quinn, Treasurer John Mountcastle, not present Secy M Rothfeld
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.

Mac reported that all in his office completed their annual in-service training in Ocala and were back at work on their backlog of Veterans' needs.

Bill Dudey reported on continuing CBOC discussions with county representative (Kevin & Darrell). 98% of the requirements specified by the US DVA can be met by the county, the remaining 2% will be discussed when a representative of their contracting office visits St. Augustine in the near future.

Steve Spickelmeier reported on MIA project, believes that their might be a ceremony at Sarasota before the next one at Jacksonville.

Bill Dudley spoke on behalf of George Linardos (he attended MOAA Luncheon today) about Monday's Memorial Day ceremony at the St. Augustine National Cemetery at 1000 hours.

Ray Quinn then spoke about Saturday's ceremony at the Jacksonville National Cemetery, reporting that more than 10,000 flags will be placed, one at each grave site, in an hour because of the many volunteers present.

WSOS is starting a new program, half hour format, where local Veterans will be interviewed about their experiences in the service of the United States. Leaders of Veterans' organizations should provide names of volunteers to Bill Dudley or Ray Quinn. Most interviews would be held at Beaver Toyota.

Tammy spoke of the upcoming Veteran's Stand Down, August 20 at the Elks Lodge on Anastasia Island. Because of the fire at the central warehouse, deliveries of military surplus must come from multiple depots and Tammy asked for names of volunteers who could, on one day's notice, pitch in to unload these trucks. She is in need of new underwear, just received a donation of men's clothing. Volunteers are needed to set up on Friday, August 19.

Bill Dudley spoke about Veterans' Day; the city has agreed that the Nov. 11 parade is a legacy and can be held in future years. Bill has received requests from additional high schools to have marching units in the parade; an Army band as well as Navy Band South East will participate. We have also received confirmations from the Spanish Consul and the British that the Generals who attended last year will also be present this year. The French have not yet responded.

There will be speakers throughout the parade route this year, so that the MC (Judge McGillin has agreed to serve in this capacity again this year) will be heard simultaneously as he describes the units marching past the reviewing stand (which will be relocated). The National Park Service is also on board for the parade.

Pedro Menendez HS received a new flagpole at their courtyard, courtesy of the two VFW posts; Cdr Glen Tilley was present when they dedicated the flagpole on the last day of school.

Judge Howard McGillin then spoke about the progress of the St. Johns County Veterans' Treatment Court. He described a potential candidate who was behind in child support; neither he nor his ex-wife wanted him incarcerated but the Veteran had PTSD and could not handle the stress of making application to the US DVA for service-connected disability nor to US Social Security Administration for disability from his post-service injuries. Judge McGillin directed him to the St. Johns County Veterans Service office that day, and set a deadline for filing with Social Security. Once Social Security benefits start, child support would be automatically provided.

The Judge then mentioned that the Treatment Court should not only be a stick, but also offer an occasional carrot. He asked that the Veterans' Council provide a representative on the one day each month that Veterans' Treatment Court cases would be heard, to provide gift cards to Veterans who are current in their commitments to the Court, as a further inducement. Donations of gift cards from clothing stores, food stores and others provided necessities should be accepted, but those from exclusively beverage alcohol merchants would probably not be a good idea. John Mountcastle agreed that the Veterans' Council would be the ideal organization to collect and account for these donations of gift cards to be used as further incentives for participating Veterans.

Judge McGillin also reported that the needed policies and procedures had been developed for:

- Mentor Manual
- Participant Contract
- Program Manual

He also reported that the County Board of County Commissioners had not only agreed to add one position at a budgeted cost of \$100,000 to service the Veterans' Treatment Court, but that the staff budget for the next fiscal year had been approved with this position intact.