

VETERANS COUNCIL OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

17 NOVEMBER 2021

CALL TO ORDER 7:00 P.M.

OPENING REMARKS: Chairman Dudley

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Chairman Dudley

INVOCATION: Vice Chair Quinn

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

David Kennett, Transition Assistance Advisor

Andrew Coughlan, Wounded Warrior Project

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING: A copy of the last meeting minutes was made available to all in attendance. The minutes had also been posted on our Face Book page prior to the meeting as well. Chairman Dudley asked for both comments and approval of the minutes. There were no comments and the minutes were unanimously approved.

TREASURERS REPORT: As of 27 October 2021 the bank balance at Ameris Bank was \$58,051.93 and as of this date 17 November 2021 the balance is \$62,130.46.

About 4/7 of the \$62,130.56 is restricted to specific programs. Major deposits received since last report include, \$2,500 from PGA Tours and \$3,000 from the Jaguars Foundation. All other deposits, withdrawals and charges were itemized on the report. A vote was taken to approve the report and received unanimous approval.

SPEAKERS:

Mr. David Kinnett was introduced and he offered a presentation on his mission for retiring and discharged personnel from active duty, National Guard and Reserves. His office is located in the Mark W. Lance Armory at 190 San Marco Avenue, St. Augustine. He is able to provide counseling in finance, adjustment

to civilian life and much more. No longer are our patriots terminated and forgotten but have a huge list of benefits and assistance available to them.

Mr. Andrew Coughlan offered a very informative presentation concerning the work of Wounded Warriors. He explained that warrior and veteran support is available and family support as well. There are extensive mental wellness programs within the array of assistance. Physical wellness programs are provided. One item not considered when thinking of the Wounded Warrior Program is career and VA Benefits counseling. This benefit assists the warrior or veteran by easing them into the civilian environment.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

CSM McDermott gave an overview of current operations within the Veterans Service Office. He stated that claims submitted to the National Personnel Records Center are still delayed. He stated there are a half a million claims that have not been reviewed. He stated his office is running smoothly however he is seeing a large increase in the number of veterans wishing to apply for a disability.

John Leslie announced the current success rate of the Veterans Court is so great it has the highest percentage of success than any other Florida court. There have only been two failures among the almost 100 participants. Incredible results. He stated that anyone wishing to attend the next session it would be conducted Friday 19 November 2021.

Ray Quinn gave successful numbers for our Wreaths Across America project. Sufficient funds are on hand the wreaths will be shipped soon. Plan on assisting with unloading and placing the wreaths. We will unload wreaths at the St. Augustine National Cemetery at 0900 hours Saturday 18 December 2021. Our ceremony and placement of wreaths will begin at 1200 hours same day. Please assist.

CHAIRMAN DUDLEY:

Chairman Dudley gave an overview of the highly successful Veterans Day Observance held 11 November 2021 at the Anastasia Baptist Church. He thanked all those present that helped make the event possible. He estimated that there were 1,000 in attendance. Reports from the community continue to

come in about how well the event was conducted. There was an incredible amount of planning that went into the event and now we turn our thoughts to Memorial Day.

Chairman Dudley explained that the grand opening of our community based clinic had been delayed once again. He states at present there is not a plan in progress.

Chairman wished all a Happy Thanksgiving and thanked all for their service.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Dudley asked for Good of the Order comments and afterwards declared the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Dudley, Chairman

Ray Quinn, Vice Chairman