

# MINUTES OF THE US MILITARY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Dunedin Community Center

Wednesday, February 7, 2024 / 10:00 am

Members Present: Rob Cozen (Chair), Larri Gerson (Vice Chair), James Spangler, Eric Keaton, Kevin Sinnett, William Short, Lacy Zabel Hollings.

Members Absent: Frank Vanore, Paul Thompson

Presenters: Dennis Bovee

City Staff Present: Vince Gizzi, Parks & Recreation Director; Lanie Sheets, Administration Superintendent

Other Attendees: Vice Mayor Moe Freaney, Commissioner Robert Walker, Commissioner Gow

**CALL TO ORDER: Chair Rob Cozen called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Committee and Guests recited the Pledge of Allegiance**

## 1. ADMINISTRATIVE

- a. Approval of January 2024 Minutes, with amendments that are included in NEW BUSINESS topics below (Donald Roebling Park, MIA/POW table).

**MOTION:** Motion was made by James Spangler and seconded by Eric Keaton to approve the January 2024 minutes.

**VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Welcomes – The committee welcomed Vice Mayor Moe Freaney and Commissioner Robert Walker (Commissioner Gow arrived later).
- c. Introduction – Rob Cozen introduced Dennis Bovee, VFW Post 2550, who presented the Committee two National League of Families POW/MIA flags for use on the Dunedin City Hall flagpole.

## 2. NEW BUSINESS

- a. 2024 Plans of Action - A request was made by Rob Cozen to include the 2024 Plans of Action to the meeting agenda.

**MOTION:** Motion was made by Larri Gerson and seconded by James Spangler

**VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously

- b. 2024 Plans of Action – Veteran Owned / Veteran Friendly Business. Discussion on continued emphasis by Committee members to encourage local businesses to apply for this City program. Chamber of Commerce to identify Veteran Owned and Friendly businesses with a ‘flag’ symbol in their annual Business booklet.

The following businesses completed applications for consideration: The Gym (TG) Dunedin (Veteran Owned), FishStalkerz BaitHouse (Veteran Friendly), and Happy’s Bayou Bites (Veteran Friendly)

**MOTION:** Motion was made by Eric Keaton and seconded by Larri Gerson for the committee to approve all three applications.

**VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously

- c. 2024 Plans of Action – POW/MIA Flags for City Hall. Dennis Bovee presented two POW/MIA flags for use on the Dunedin City Hall flagpole. The Committee accepted and thanked Dennis and the VFW Post 2550 for the flags. Rob Cozen requested to represent the Committee at the Thursday, February 8<sup>th</sup> City Commission meeting to encourage the commission to approve the display of the POW/MIA flags on the City Hall flagpole.

**MOTION:** Motion was made by Eric Keaton and seconded by Larri Gerson for the committee to approve Rob Cozen to represent the Committee at the City Commission meeting.

**VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously

- d. 2024 Plans of Action – Placement of POW/MIA Table in City Hall. Discussion centered around the requirement for the of the POW/MIA table to be displayed in or near a dining facility. James Spangler volunteered to research the protocol for table location. The Fine Arts Palm Café was identified as a possible alternate location. Larri Gerson mentioned the need for a replacement item, should the table not be displayed in City Hall, possibly a military display case. The Committee decided to **TABLE** the topic and add to the March meeting agenda.

- e. 2024 Plans of Action – Establish a portion of Main Street as a “Purple Heart Trail”. In 2006 the City of Dunedin was designated as Florida’s first Purple Heart City. Discussion addressed the idea of designating a “Purple Heart Trail” on Main Street from the Skinner Blvd split through downtown to end at Alt 19 (Purple Heart Park). Further discussion centered on identifying a section of the Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail from the American Legion Post 275 south to the VFW Post 2550 as a better trail location. Lacy Zabel Hollings volunteered to contact the appropriate representative for the Pinellas Trail to gather information on the possible designation on the trail. The Committee decided to **TABLE** the topic and add to the March meeting agenda.

- f. 2024 Plans of Action – Renaming Edgewater Park to the Donald Roebling Veterans Park. At prior meetings the Committee had voted to recommend the changing of Stirling Park to the Donald Roebling Veterans Park. Lanie Sheets and Vince Gizzi mentioned the City Commissioners are still exploring the Stirling Park features. Larri Gerson mentioned the significance of the Stirling Park location as the Alligator training site and the old Marine Barracks. Larri Gerson volunteered to investigate the

history of the Donald Roebling amphibian transport vehicle (Alligator) and report back to the Committee. The Committee decided to **TABLE** the topic and add to the March meeting agenda.

### **3. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. None.

### **4. OPEN FLOOR**

- a. None

### **5. NEXT MEETING**

The next committee meeting is scheduled for 10:00 AM, March 6, 2024.

#### **AGENDA ITEMS**

- POW/MIA Table at City Hall
- Purple Heart Trail location
- Donald Roebling Veterans Park location
- City HR Department veteran employment considerations

**MEETING ADJOURNED 11:17 AM**

**MOTION:** Motion by Larri Gerson, seconded by James Spangler

**VOTE:** Motion carried unanimously

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