



Dublin Veterans Advisory Committee September 21, 2023 Meeting Minutes 3:30-5:00 PM

1. **Call to order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Noble called the September 21st, 2023 meeting of the Dublin Veterans Committee to order at 3:32 pm in person.

2. **Roll Call**

Committee Members Present: Jeff Noble (Chair), Mike Kehoe, Sean Clifton, Mack Parkhill, Steven Dickman, Roger Ansel, John Reiner (arrived at 3:45), and Bonnie Gamary

Committee Members not Present: Jan Rozanski and Tim Hansley

City Staff Present: Kendel Blake, Carrie Ritzler, Madi Kregel, and Lori Gischel

3. **Review and approval of July 20, 2023 Minutes**

Mr. Noble proposed a motion to approve the May 18th, 2023 Minutes, with a second from Mr. Parkhill, the motion was unanimously approved.

4. **Rules and Regulations**

Ms. Blake reiterated the importance of attendance at meetings, noting that two or more absences would result in consultation with the Mayor and City Manager. She also mentioned term limits and explained the rules surrounding consecutive terms.

Mr. Noble brought up some exceptions to the term limit rule regarding representative appointments by the Legion, City Council, and Washington Township.

Mr. Clifton asked what the process is for tracking the time served and if members are allowed to take time off and then rejoin the committee.

Ms. Blake noted that staff is tracking current terms and explained the rules regarding the necessary time off before rejoining a committee.

Mr. Noble explained the way that the committee was previously set up with the different branches being represented.

Ms. Blake noted that the committee moved away from this system and is open to all veterans regardless of what branch they served in.

Mr. Clifton asked where members or the public could see an organizational chart of the Veterans committee to gain a better understanding of the current makeup and process.



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Ms. Blake highlighted that there are no vacancies and explained when terms would come to an end. She noted that discussion regarding the veteran's website was later on the agenda and would provide more insight.

5. Dublin Irish Festival, Hero Hut Recap

Mr. Clifton remarked on some of his thoughts and ideas regarding the Hero Hut. He complimented the new layout of the tent, overall setup, and volunteer rotation.

Mr. Noble noted that the weather helped with attendance.

Mr. Dickman said that his friends enjoyed the Hero Hut and were impressed with how it was organized.

Mr. Noble talked about a conversation with Ms. Ritzler and noted that the horses, honor flight, and Director of Franklin County Veterans Service were a good addition. He noted that Resurrecting Lives was underutilized, but overall numbers were strong with over 400 people visiting the tent.

Mr. Parkhill stated that the number of people was good and highlighted the change to make the Hut more open and accessible.

Mr. Noble also noted that the Hut was open to first responders and that he met several.

Mr. Reiner arrived at 3:45 PM.

Ms. Ritzler highlighted the need for organizations that are targeted towards first responders and asked the group to send suggestions for next year.

Mr. Noble suggested getting ahead for next year in terms of finding sponsorships for the Hero Hut.

Mr. Dickman suggested a friend of his at Ease Logistics could be a good connection.

Ms. Ritzler agreed they would be a great sponsor to connect with.



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Mr. Reiner noted that the president of OhioHealth is a retired Air Force General and could also be a good connection.

Ms. Ritzler remarked that OhioHealth is already a volunteer sponsor but said that staff could address a Hero Hut sponsorship as well.

Ms. Garmy agreed that the Hero Hut was welcoming this year and noted that the volunteers were very nice and helpful.

Mr. Clifton agreed the volunteers were great. He noted that the biggest improvement going forward would be securing a sponsorship. He asked if this responsibility should fall on staff or the committee.

Ms. Ritzler said that it is a dual effort and staff is more than happy to have help and connections from members of the committee.

Ms. Blake noted that it makes the most sense for it to run administratively through the Community Events Division but the committee should coordinate with Events.

Mr. Clifton highlighted the desire for another main event to bring more people in, such as a dinner, award, or raffle. He noted that an outdoors event through Adaptive Sports could be a good idea. Additionally, more physical items or games would be a good addition to the tent.

Ms. Garmy agreed that more physical activities would be a good way to draw more people in the tent.

Mr. Clifton mentioned that he had talked with recruiters to try and get a pull up bar activity. Overall he wanted it to be a memorable and useful experience for people who attend.

Mr. Clifton also recommended getting a local celebrity such as Brady Quinn or Dana McDaniel to stop by and draw more attention to the Hero Hut.

Ms. Ritzler commented that moving forward, the Irish Festival Committee will need to grow and extended an invite to the members of the Veterans Committee. She also reminded the group that the purpose of the Hero Hut is for veterans and first responders and expanding it too much could lead to the entire festival wanting to utilize the tent, which could take away from its purpose.



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Mr. Clifton thanked Ms. Ritzler for clarifying his remarks and noted that he is just looking to make the tent a more interactive and enjoyable experience. He asked Ms. Ritzler for more specifics on expanding the Hero Hut Committee.

Ms. Ritzler noted that if the group wanted to expand the Hero Hut, expanding the Irish Festival Committee would be a good first step. She thanked Mr. Noble for his commitment but highlighted that in order to expand, assistance is needed.

Mr. Parkhill noted that Mr. Clifton's ideas were great and could even be used to expand some of the services offered on Memorial, Independence, or Veterans Day.

Mr. Clifton agreed but referred back to Ms. Ritzler's point about needing volunteers and help if there is a desire to expand.

6. Veteran's Day

Ms. Gischel noted that Veteran's Day falls on a Saturday this year, so the Ceremony will be on the previous Friday (11/10) at 11:00 AM at Veteran's Park.

Mr. Noble added that La Chatelaine is hosting the Veteran's breakfast that morning.

Ms. Blake also noted that the City's Communications & Public Information team will be making a promotional video for the event and that Ms. Gamary and Mr. Dickman will be in it. The details regarding filming are still being worked out. This video will also be used to promote the Veteran Appreciation Card, which will be available for in-person sign up at the Veteran's Day event.

7. Dublin Cemetery Columbarium

Ms. Blake referred back to the previous meeting where the committee asked staff to look into the options for veterans interred at the columbarium.

Ms. Blake shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting some of the different options offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. She also noted the number of veterans (9) currently interred at the columbarium.

Mr. Noble invited Ms. Blake to the Franklin County Veterans Services Commission to learn about different options for burial and interment for veterans.

Mr. Reiner asked for some clarification on if this was a voting matter.



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Mr. Noble noted that these were the current options and asked if the veterans currently interred were offered markers.

Ms. Blake confirmed that staff is asking when a niche is purchased, if they are a veteran. The committee should not limit the options. She reminded the group that this is one of their committee duties in the established resolution.

Mr. Reiner asked how many spots were still available within the columbarium.

Ms. Blake responded that she did not know but could have the number for the next meeting.

Mr. Reiner suggested that as the spots run out to remind Council to add another columbarium section in the Capital Improvement Program Budget.

Ms. Blake noted that she will have the number of open spots and if they were to fill up, the Committee could make a recommendation to Council to add another.

8. Veteran Messaging and dublinveterans.com

Ms. Blake reminded the group that in the past the Committee had discussed messaging and how it could be beneficial to speak with a member of the City's Communications & Public Information team and introduced Ms. Kregel.

Mr. Clifton commented that he was on the Dublin Veterans website and made his way to the resources page that was well put together. When he went back to the home page however it was difficult to navigate back to the resources page and suggested making it more accessible.

Ms. Kregel noted that she will work with the City's Communications & Public Information team to help resolve this issue and highlighting different things on the website would be worthwhile.

Mr. Clifton walked the group through the websites user interface and suggested his changes again.

Ms. Gischel reminded the group that when the Remembrance Project was added it changed the layout of the website, but suggested that the website is updated to better reflect current goals.

Mr. Kehoe suggested some updates to the current email blast such as a story about the Veteran Card.



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Ms. Kregel noted that staff plans to send out information and promotional material regarding the Veteran Appreciation Card prior to Veterans Day. She also highlighted the plan to make a promotional video as previously mentioned.

Mr. Clifton remarked that the website is a huge resource for the committee and that among other things, could serve as a volunteer hub for the Hero Hut.

Ms. Kregel agreed and said that staff would look into the way to best implement this.

Mr. Clifton questioned the administrative process for adding things to the website.

Ms. Blake responded, saying that it was rather straightforward and City Council approval was not needed. As long as there was committee consensus staff can move forward with recommendations.

Mr. Noble spoke about the involvement of Dublin Retirement Village and their partnership with the committee. He told the group that Ms. Blake was going to create a presentation to help recruit its veterans for the Veteran Appreciation Card and suggested that if anyone had other connections to similar retirement homes to please come forward.

9. Veterans Affairs

Ms. Gamary highlighted some events within the community such as Military Appreciation Night and invited the group to the upcoming event. She also talked about the Veteran Story Event and asked for volunteers to talk at the events and sit at the roundtable.

Ms. Blake asked if there was any non-veteran help needed

Ms. Gamary noted that there is a ton of community involvement and any help is appreciated.

Mr. Noble spoke about an event at Coffman where veterans can speak about their service to students. He noted that in the past Jerome has struggled to organize an event like this.

Mr. Reiner asked about interest in an ROTC program at the three Dublin High Schools.

Mr. Dickman noted that he has seen interest in high school students in the past but there is a significant process to create such a program.

Mr. Reiner noted that one of the candidates for school board is a naval officer.

Mr. Noble highlighted some of the legislation currently slated regarding veterans affairs. He also talked about the upcoming rededication of Monahan Veterans Memorial Park and a flag laying activity for Veteran's Day.



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10. **Military Round Table**

Mr. Noble remarked about a pair of authors that will be at the Roundtable. Dublin Police and Fire will be at the upcoming meeting to make a presentation. Mr. Noble also mentioned he had been in contact with Dave Yost's scheduler to have him come and present to the group. He also noted that there is a retired Air Force Colonel that will likely present soon as well.

11. **New Business**

Mr. Noble suggested that the group looks forward to what they can add to the benefits of the Veteran Appreciation Card. He asked members to broach the subject to local businesses.

Ms. Gamary asked if there was a flier with information that could be used. She also noted that the group should avoid duplicating their efforts.

Ms. Blake noted that she would work with the Communications & Public Information team to help make a flier, and suggested instead of a percentage off, coupons could be a better idea and would come with the card when you receive or renew it.

Mr. Noble reminded the group that some restaurants and businesses already do this and they could be added to the list or ask them for a discount.

Mr. Clifton asked about the Chamber of Commerce's records and if they keep track of veteran owned businesses.

Ms. Blake remarked that she would reach out to find out more.

Mr. Dickman highlighted an activity in his hometown that involves three Huey helicopters, American Huey 369, as well as looking into an ROTC program in Dublin.

Mr. Reiner noted that a Huey landing at DIF would be remarkable.

Mr. Dickman did mention that it is rather expensive.

Mr. Noble asked if it was feasible to do this for Veteran's Day.

Mr. Dickman said that logistically it could be difficult to make this happen.

Mr. Dickman talked with Ms. Gamary regarding the Purple Heart School at Coffman. His niece Emerson is in the process of creating a club and listed some of their goals. He asked Ms. Gamary for her help and input.

Mr. Reiner talked about Veteran's Day at Adaptive Sports and asked for volunteer help. He suggested staff add information regarding Adaptive Sports to the veteran website.



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Mr. Reiner also talked about signage such as veterans parking and pregnant woman parking signs. He remarked about his trip to Japan.

Guest Tom Holton spoke about his appreciation for Hero Hut this year. He also proposed the idea of a cornhole tournament (branch vs. branch). He suggested that sponsors could do a donation matching program as well.

Ms. Blake gave an update on the Veteran Appreciation Card and talked about the road-show she went on to advertise them. She also noted the number of people who do not qualify but highlighted that the city is keeping their info for future events.

Ms. Gamary liked the idea about a cornhole tournament.

Ms. Gamary motioned to adjourn

Mr. Reiner seconded

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 PM

12. Adjourn

Respectfully Submitted,

Kendel Blake, Management Analyst

Jeff Noble, Chair