The regular meeting of the Veterans Memorial Commission was called to order by Commissioner Delfs, Chair, at 5:30 p.m. following the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes:
Commissioner Arens made a motion to approve the minutes of the July meeting; seconded by Commissioner DeWolf. The motion carried with no objections.

Financials:
Commissioner Guckenberger asks if the bottom line is last year versus this year’s budget. FD Pestel clarifies it appears that we are negative this month as the tax levy revenue is not included in the budget report. The only profit showing on this month’s report is building rentals. Mr. Olson asks if the levy is credited on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis to the VMC account, FD Pestel will confirm by next meeting. Commissioner Delfs asks if the other insurance budget line is a normal payment, AD Van Dorston clears up it is the NFIP Flood Insurance that is required by FEMA. The other insurance budget line was consistently over several years put in the catchall line to balance the budget out and will be properly addressed and divided among accounts by FD Pestel. Commissioner Powers made a motion to approve the bills; seconded by Commissioner Anderson. The motion carried with no objections.

Facilities Director Report:
FD Pestel shares that the seventh floor sprinkler addition is completed and up to code. Leaving only two floors to bring up to code with fire safety. FD Pestel has been working with the Building Department along with Solum Lang Architects and Innovative Engineers to produce a Professional Service Agreement for upcoming work on third and sixth floors as well as the seventh floor lobby. This will bring the entire building to code in regards to life safety corrections. We will also be working with the City of Cedar Rapids to update the bathrooms to ADA compliance standards while accessing the appropriate funding sources.
Commissioner Delfs inquires if the seventh floor lobby renovation would be all due to the bathroom updates. FD Pestel shares part of the lobby reconfiguration is to accommodate a renovated and ADA compliant bathroom, but also to address the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission’s (CRCRC) safety concerns. The overall goal for the VMB is to place the same Lenel System that the City of Cedar Rapids uses in their other facilities for employee badge access at many access points of the VMB. It will be a long process, as it will be a detailed and a thought out plan when considering the historic nature of our facilities. At this time, the security upgrades that CRCRC desires would be funded partially by that tenant.

FD Pestel, VMC Chair Delfs, and AD Van Dorston recently met with the Finance committee. Unfortunately, it was confirmed after extensive research of the funding gap of the renovations from the Flood of 2008. Monies to pay the bills came from the iJobs fund and beyond that out of the City of Cedar Rapids general ledger. The Finance Department will work on a proposal for FD Pestel to provide to the VMC in regards to a plan of repayment. Both FD Pestel and the Finance Department approximate a $4.1 million total, though the final total amount has not been disclosed yet. A few possible options for repayment may be city bonds, paying $200,000 every year for 20 years, though bonds are not the preferred option. Another option is a proposed four-cent levy increase to allow the VMC to repay the shortfall within 14 years, while not effecting our budget. Commissioner Arens asks if that comes from the City of Cedar Rapids taxpayers, which it is confirmed it is, as Mr. Olson clarifies. It would require voting approval from the Cedar Rapids City Council. FD Pestel specifically asked for the four-cent increase, as in 14 years, the lifespan of all the larger air handling equipment will need addressed. The difference in the levy increase would give us a chance to prepare for their replacements.

FD Pestel’s next topic is to request that the VMC form an ad-hoc committee that would be available occasionally on short notice. This committee would be expected to speak on behalf of the VMC, as to not delay the process of Finance Department’s findings to best repay the $4.1 million shortfall. Commissioners Delfs, Guckenberger and Anderson volunteered for the ad-hoc committee.

Another task that FD Pestel has been working on is forming By-Laws for the VMC, as the VMC has never officially had any in place. Without the By-Laws, we have been bound to the City of Cedar Rapids policies. A third party had formulated by-laws for us in the early 2000s. They are a great starting point to finish the process. One important reason to do so is the VMC assets, as by City of Cedar Rapids policies could carry negative outcomes for VMC employees without safeguards in place. Another reason is to become compliant with employee reviews. With the VMC’s blessing, he would like to start working on the By-Laws and bring them back to the VMC for review by addressing a few points at each VMC monthly meeting for the next year. The By-Laws are not long and he hopes they be more general and leave specifics to a VMC policy manual.

Commissioner Arens asked if the employees would be doing a self-review prior to his evaluations. FD Pestel shares, yes he has a template for staff to review prior to the evaluation. All staff will work on goals. Commissioner Delfs gives background to the newer Commissioners that the Facilities Director will complete employee reviews on staff. However, the review for the Facilities Director will be completed by the VMC directly, including his six-month review, following the completion of his probationary period, in December of 2018.

Museum Report:
AD Van Dorston is pleased to report that she has been able to focus more on the collections and exhibitions. AD Van Dorston recently placed our Marvin Cone’s painting that inspired the 34th Division Unit patch design on display. In anticipation of the upcoming day training and an evening banquet of the 1-133rd Infantry of the local 34th division within the VMB, and with the connection of the Red Bull insignia.
She also shares the recent insurance appraisal of the original Memorial Window sketches from Grant Wood onsite at the VMB. The insurance value is approximately at $365,000 each. AD Van Dorston will be investigating fine arts insurance policies for appropriate coverages. The other 54 sketches are on long-term loan to the Cedar Rapids Art Museum. She also shares that the Memorial Window is now insured for $3.5 million.

**Communications from the Metro Veterans Council:**
Commissioner Delfs requested that AD Van Dorston communicate information from her attendance at the August monthly meeting of the MVC. It was shared that the MVC held elections at the meeting with the following Veterans appointed: Bob Feiereisen as President, Shirley Niedermann as Vice President and Cheryl King continuing as Secretary/Treasurer. They are working on the program for 2018 Veterans Day. Commissioner Powers shares history from an ongoing yet reoccurring discussion within the MVC of former MVC member, Pete Welch. AD Van Dorston adds that she is working to complete a policy that will help address where responsibilities lay for the MVC and VMC in regards to the All Veterans Memorial Park.

**Public Comment:**
Mr. Chismar shares of how successful the American Legion sponsored state baseball championships were. Next year, the American Legion will be celebrating their 100-year anniversary that again will be held at the Jefferson High School baseball fields. Mr. Chismar also shares that the Disabled Veterans of America along with the Veterans Affairs will be hosting a national tee tournament event to celebrate the 25th anniversary on with it’s opening ceremonies on September 9th, located at the Riverside Casino and Golf Resort. He will get a schedule out to the VMC prior to the event as everyone is invited to attend.

Mr. Olson shares that the financial meeting mentioned earlier by FD Pestel was very refreshing and the discussion went well with all involved. Mr. Olson also discussed the upcoming levy proposal for the additional funding of future flood planning for the City Council. He is very optimistic about the team effort of all involved in regards to the shortfall that the VMC owes to the City of Cedar Rapids. Commissioner Delfs shares with newer commissioners that Mr. Olson is the VMC liaison to the City of Cedar Rapids City Council as the only Veteran on the City Council. Commissioner Andersen inquires if there are any formal internal process for reaching out other Veterans groups. Commissioner Delfs shares that there is not, as in the past, we have worked with the MVC directly. However, a few ideas have been discussed on how to increase communication with other organizations and may be attempted before future discussions within the VMC meetings.

Commissioner Powers proudly shares that he received his Early Bird 50 Year American Legion Card, which all congratulated him for his commitment.

Commissioner Powers made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:06 p.m.; seconded by Commissioner DeWolf. The motion carried with no objections.

Respectfully submitted,

Nikee Woods, Program Coordinator

CHAIR___________________________________________________________ Date

VICE CHAIR____________________________________________________________________ Date