The regular meeting of the Veterans Memorial Commission was called to order by Commissioner Delfs, Chair, at 5:30 p.m. Commissioner Delfs asked that PC Woods conduct a role call following the Pledge of Allegiance. The guest introduced himself following the commissioner’s role call.

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

Financials:
Commissioner Grant asked if the billing received from Lynch Dallas, P.C. was the final billing for services rendered, Commissioner Delfs and PC Woods confirmed it was. Commissioner Arens asked if there was any credit or reduction in regards to the Alliant billing as it was thought it was previously mentioned in the past. AD Van Dorston and PC Woods clarified that the amounts paid are at the discretion of the City of Cedar Rapids Finance department and that occasionally amounts paid could be from multiple months. Commissioner Delfs also asks if the payments made to Emerson Specialty Hardware are in regards to the interior keys of the VMB, AD Van Dorston confirmed this. Commissioner Grant made a motion to approve the bills; seconded by Commissioner Arens. The motion carried with no objections.

Museum Report-Acting Director:
AD Van Dorston has asked that for the interim, the monthly VMC’s agenda indicate this topic to reflect as “Acting Director’s Report” instead of Museum Progress Report. This topic will still include a few museum discussions, but mostly will be an update to facilities topics.
Recapping from our annual fire inspection on December 27, 2017, with Fire Marshall Steve Dunham, the finalized report has cited 12 failures. AD Van Dorston is happy to discuss these 12 items in further detail, by reaching her directly outside of the meeting individually. By delegating within the VMC staff and working with the Cedar Rapids Fire Department, we are tackling the 12 failures. VMC’s Building Worker III, Tony Hlas, is handling inexpensive corrections that can be handled within three months. PC Woods is working on the fire retardant recertification of the curtains within the Coliseum space. Commissioner Ziese asked if maps were mentioned from the Fire Marshall to post within the VMB as well as fire extinguishers. AD Van Dorston shares that we are up to code on those topics. Commissioner Ziese also asked for any mention on the sprinkling of certain floors within the VMB, AD Van Dorston shares those were indicated on the 12 failures and that she is working on the remedy moving forward. Commissioner Delfs clarifies if the balcony seating curtains are included within the recertification process which PC Woods confirms they are.

The VMC’s FMS staff is unfortunately experiencing a low count in staffing temporarily due to some injuries outside of work in the past few months and the retirement of FMS worker, Richard Keller in August of 2017. AD Van Dorston has begun the process to procure a temporary worker from Kelly Services, a vendor of the City of Cedar Rapids. The VMC’s HVAC specialist position is moving along, with interviews scheduled for the five applicants the following week.

Museum report continues with an update about the Grant Wood retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. The Whitney is opening a Grant Wood exhibition in March of 2018. AD Van Dorston has been working with their curatorial team and is happy to report that the Grant Wood, “Memorial Window” not only will be represented in the catalogue but also as an over-sized print within the exhibition. AD Van Dorston will be traveling to the opening in February. Also shared are the VMC’s two new eager volunteers that have been assisting with the cataloguing of new donations. Commissioner Arens asks if we are receiving any donated items from Enduring Freedom eras, AD Van Dorston shares we do receive items from that era, but seeing more WWII currently at this time.

**Approval of CR Ball Club Inc. Resolution #01-11-18:**
Commissioner Delfs opens the floor for motion to approve the resolution #01-11-18 for approval of the second half of Fiscal Year 2018 invoice of $47,845.50. The resolution can be read in its entirety which accompanies these minutes in full. Commissioner Grant made a motion to approve the resolution #01-11-18; seconded by Commissioner Schuchmann. The motion carried with no objections.

**Communications from the Metro Veterans Council:**
Commissioner Delfs spoke on MVC communications as Commissioner Powers is unable to attend tonight’s meeting. It was updated to those present that he is home now, receiving physical therapy and hopes to return to meetings soon. Commissioner Delfs attended last night’s January meeting of the MVC.

As the MVC discussed the topic of the Freedom Rock of Linn County at their meeting, Commissioner Delfs comments that VMC has heard from many entities on this topic. However, the VMC has not heard directly from the lead of the project, John Mikelson of Midwest Military Outreach. Since it has been indicated in print on KHAK’s website that they intend to place the Freedom Rock within the All Veterans Memorial Park, Commissioner Delfs feels it imperative to have Mr. Mikelson propose his plan to the VMC directly. Commissioner Grant thinks the VMC only needs to hear this plan if they are planning to place it on the AVM grounds as the VMC has never given approval to do so. Commissioner Delfs is also curious for more details to the organization if they have linked the VMC to any portion of fundraising or any other financial documentation to fund their project.
Commissioner Delfs comments next upon the topic of the open staff position of “Executive Director” at the VMC. Prior to the VMC’s meeting today, she met with the City of Cedar Rapids Human Resource Class and Labor Relations Program Manager, Heath Halverson, to discuss possible changes to the grades and/or description of the open position. Commissioner Grant suggests that this topic should have been on the agenda if we are going to be talking about altering a position. Commissioner Delfs agrees and continues that Mr. Halverson would like a response to a few phrases. Commissioner Grant retorts that it would be best to move this discussion to the Public Comment section, even if no voting is to occur. Grant states; the public may have come to this meeting had they known what it was prior to the meeting had they known it would be discussed or had it been placed on the agenda. Commissioner Delfs continues that while she agrees with Commissioner Grant, she wanted to share this topic prior to the Election of VMC’s Officers for the year in case she would not retain the Chair position. Commissioner Grant shares that regardless of the vote, she is VMC Chair until the meeting is adjourned.

Commissioner Delfs proceeds on the topic: that Mr. Halverson wanted to just point out a few phraseology and dollar amounts to the VMC of the open position. Nothing involving schematics or duties and responsibilities at this time—as once they are prepared—HR will send to the VMC for review and input. Delfs continues by sharing the following details: The current grade of the VMC’s Executive Director position is at 16, which starts out any new hire at $80,537.60. Mr. Halverson’s initial suggestion would be to drop to grade 15, which would start at $69,000.00. Delfs continues: another discussion was to make the position that AD Van Dorston is fulfilling as well as the future fulfilled Executive Director position, a dual supervisor split between the two; so that neither answer to each other, rather both answer to the VMC. AD Van Dorston would continue then with museum curation, while the Executive Director role would oversee the facility. Commissioner Delfs then asked the VMC for any feedback on the discussion. Commissioner Grant replies that he dislikes either suggestion and the last applicant pool [of the executive position] didn’t provide a plethora of qualified candidates. Grant also questions—why wouldn’t the job title be changed as well.

Commissioner Delfs responds that if this change would occur, the titles for both the new hire and for AD Van Dorstons would change as suggested by HR. This would reflect the fact that other “departments,” do not offer any Executive Director roles. Commissioner Grant states while that may be such for other departments, we are a Commission and that the other independent commissions of Cedar Rapids hold an Executive Director role. He reminds us that we are not a department, rather an independent commission of the City of Cedar Rapids. Commissioner Ziese contributes that if both positions were created to a dual supervisory role he believes they still need to work under the same budget. Commissioner Delfs clarifies they would use the same budget and also hold the same title level. AD Van Dorston would be fulfilling the entire mission of the building as the other position handles the facilities. Commissioner Grant would foresee difficulties for employees, not only for those holding the positions, but by creating confusion for those under them.

Commissioner Delfs wants to prevent past mistakes, while Commissioner Grant responds this would alter the organizational structure, not prevent past mistakes necessarily. Councilman Olson suggests utilizing the HR Department for a reorganizational structure as the other departments are already undergoing that process with an outside consultant. Olson continues on that this building isn’t what it was prior to the 2008 and it has changed significantly. He suggests that the VMC complete a new organizational chart and then continue on to possible rewriting of job descriptions and roles. Commissioner Grant interjects again his concerns that this discussion is close to a violation to Iowa’s Open Meeting Laws and thinks this discussion needs tabled for the next VMC meeting. Councilman Olson continues that he suggests we complete an organizational chart and then proceed on to any new job description. Commissioner
Schuchmann asks if the items mentioned would be available via hard copy, which was answered that if the topic is placed on the agenda, yes, hardcopies would be available of organization charts and job descriptions.

Commissioner Delfs apologizes for stepping out line, but wanted to provide an update to Mr. Halverson. Commissioner Schuchmann asks if the consultant would do the Commission, Councilman Olson believes HR would be able to complete the request and an outside consultant wouldn’t necessarily be needed.

Election of VMC Officers:
Commissioner Delfs opened the floor for nominations for the Vice Chair position of the VMC. Commissioner Delfs nominated Commissioner Guckenberger; seconded by Commissioner Arens. With no other nominations made, the nominations are closed. The motion carried with no objections.

Commissioner Delfs opened the floor for nominations for the Chair position of the VMC. Commissioner Arens nominated Commissioner Delfs; seconded by Commissioner Guckenberger. With no other nominations made, the nominations are closed. The motion carried with no objections.

Public Comment:
Mr. Chismar comments that he is appreciative of the 2017 commitment from the VMC and believes 2018 will be great. Commissioner Delfs thanks him for his appreciation.

Commissioner Ziese comments on the remarks about the open Executive Director again and suggests looking at any stipulations in place that may indicate that role be filled by a Veteran. Others agree and Commissioner Ziese continues that the AD Van Dorston isn’t a Veteran and yet provides excellent employment regardless to the VMC.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Nikee Woods, Program Coordinator

CHAIR  

_____________________________  

Date

VICE CHAIR  

_____________________________  

Date