VETERANS MEMORIAL COMMISSION

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA

March 9, 2017

5:30 p.m.

Veteran’s Memorial Building, 4th Floor Conference Room

Present:  Kristin Delfs, Chairwoman  Gary Grant
Constance Arens, Vice Chairwoman  Cindy Guckenberger
John Powers  Sherri Schuchmann
Scott Olson, Councilman  Teri Van Dorston, Assistant Director
Mike Jager, Executive Director  Nikee Woods, Program Coordinator

Excused:  Jerry Ziese

Guests:  Jim Koenighain

The regular meeting of the Veterans Memorial Commission was called to order by Chairwoman Delfs at 5:26 p.m.

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

Financials:
Chairwoman Delfs asked if the VMC has used any of our CIP budget, which Executive Director Jager shared we had not this year. Commissioner Grant inquiries if the remittances from the City to our CIP budget are current, which E.D. Jager believes in December was updated from Fiscal Year 2016. Commissioner Grant made a motion to approve the January and February bills; seconded by Commissioner Powers. The motion carried with no objections.

Museum Report-Assistant Director:
A.D. Van Dorston updates the VMC that the gallery exhibition refresher to the Spanish American War Memorial Gallery is on schedule to be complete by April 6, 2017. That date is significant as it is when the United States became involved in WWI. The exhibit will have pieces added from WWI as well as a mural of the SAW. Also joining the exhibit will be the Grant Wood study for the WWI soldier, which is on permanent loan to the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art for the duration exhibit. Hopefully, the Grand Lodge of Iowa will aid with their collection of artifacts on loan to bring the WWI collection items of WWI Army nurse, Isabelle Pirie, known as Mrs. D. Pirie Beyea, who resided in Cedar Rapids following WWI. Some of those artifacts include her canteen, many photographs of her service in the field, as well as WMT radio recordings of her experiences.

The Vietnam exhibit will be extended to 2018 so that the public will have more time to experience the exhibit. With new advertisement through the Cedar Rapids Convention Bureau, it is hopeful that more visitors will frequent the exhibits as well. E.D. Jager presented all those present with the recent
publication from Go CR 2017 Official Guide which includes the VMC advertisements. Page 25 shows ads for the Grant Wood Memorial Window, as well as the In-Flight Horsky Exhibit.

E.D. Jager shares his appreciation of VMC staff member Tony Hlas, as his dedication to Veterans showed as he worked hard to fulfill the request of SGT Sean Callahan’s family. SGT Callahan, stationed in Texas, passed away unexpectedly February 18, 2017. He was a Cedar Rapids resident, where most of his family still resides. We granted their request for his visitation to be held in the lobby on February 26, 2017 at no cost. Mr. Hlas had the Coliseum space prepared for family and friends to gather, even though there was an event held in the space the night prior. Discussion on how often requests in this nature are received was had within the VMC. E.D. Jager stated this was the first request of this nature and considerations will be decided on a case by case basis, just as this request was handled.

Communications from the Metro Veterans Council:
Commissioner Powers reports that the annual Memorial Day programming at the AVM Park is progressing, and asks that the Coliseum be on standby for inclement weather. E.D. Jager obliges use of the space. Commissioner Schuchmann recommends listing the location as well on any advertising. Commissioner Powers also inquired that any suggestions on speakers for the event to be sent to his attention. Commissioner Powers shares that the Fundraiser Head of the annual Stand Down event has resigned. After a brief discussion including duties and needs of the position, a rough strategy was suggested by Chairwoman Delfs. A.D. Van Dorston asks for clarification if Commissioner Powers is looking for funds to be donated or assistance with finding a replacement for the position of Fundraiser Head. Commissioner Powers would like help finding a new individual to be the Fundraiser Head.

Public Comment:
Commissioner Powers introduces guest, Mr. Koenighain, who is present to continue discussion on the proposed “Freedom Rock” at the AVM Park from January’s VMC meeting. Mr. Koenighain reads a Mary 2016 article publicized by local radio station, KHAK regarding the “Freedom Rock” in Linn County. From the article, one may be under the impression that the VMC has provided approval of such monument. E.D. Jager clarifies that he has had discussions, but asked for more specific planning information to be provided prior to final approval. The VMC has many concerns with the proposed monument and encourages that all entities interested in the monument work together to plan accordingly to gain the VMC’s final approval. Mr. Koenighain also presented a visual aid of his proposed display stand to keep the brick directory list available for guests’ viewing at the AVM Park. E.D. Jager said they can work together to come up with a solution.

Commissioner Grant made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m.; seconded by Commissioner Powers. The motion carried with no objections.

Respectfully submitted,

Nikkee Woods, Program Coordinator

CHAIRWOMAN______________________________________ Date

VICE CHAIRWOMAN_________________________________________ Date