



## **SOUTHFIELD VETERANS' COMMISSION MINUTES – May 13, 2019**

The meeting of the Southfield Veterans' Commission was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairperson Pulliam with presentation of colors, and pledge of allegiance.

### **MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

G. Pulliam, G. Houston, D. Craig, B. Seldon. R. Caruthers,

Absent: B. Clarke

Excused: City Liaison: C. Miller promoted to Watch Commander, replaced with Detective, Lieutenant Jeff Jagilewski.

**GUEST:** Mr. Douglas Marble, Forgotten Heroes, L.L.C.

Mr. Marble was invited to the May meeting by Dr. Caruthers to discuss his role in getting support to veterans, especially veterans of color. He spoke about the thousands of veterans who miss out on their benefits. He passed out an article about the percentage of veterans that do not take advantage of their benefits after service, basically because they are not aware of them. He spoke about his business called "UNFOROTTEN HEROES." He spoke of the many service members he has helped get their benefits. Things like life insurance, and more. He will provide us help for our Southfield vets to help them to receive benefits. His business card was provided to all of the commissioners.

### **CHAIRPERSONS REPORT:**

Gregory Pulliam

A Commanders report was provided by Chairman Pulliam outlining important discussion points for the June Meeting. (see handout) Discussed will be:

- Defining who we are
- What do we want?
- Establishing in writing policies and procedures
- Clear up internal issues
  - Will Ms. Seldon continue as secretary, if not someone will volunteer
  - When communicating with the chair, he should be addressed directly and in a voice that can be heard.
  - When communication with Dr. Caruthers - be so kind as to address him as Doctor.

- Address members opinion about assisting an Army veteran who is experiencing kidney failure, awaiting transplant, experiencing financial strain, auto repossessed, issues paying utilities, been to Dingell, help denied. Should we ignore? These issues will be addressed at the June meeting.

#### **TREASURER REPORT:**

Rodney Caruthers

No written report still going through transition:

No change, \$6,509.00

Vice-Chair Houston reported that he met with Jeff Jagilewski, the new City Liaison replacement. He will need a monthly report about our funds; we will need to submit W-9 when spending for veterans. It was also noted that our funds are not lost because we are not required to spend all on an annual basis, ours is a trust.

#### **INTERIM SECRETARY'S REPORT:**

Barbara Seldon

April's minutes were submitted to Vice-Chair Houston. Minutes were read, verbally by the secretary. Corrections were made.

Corrections include placing the time meetings start and recognizing the title of City Liaison. It was suggested that the minutes be submitted 10 days prior the next meeting.

The Secretary will type, submit to all commissioners for corrections and if none are returned, submit for placement on the website.

It was moved and seconded that April minutes be approved with corrections. (Carried)

#### **FIRST VICE CHAIR REPORT:**

Gerald Houston

We are all set for May 24<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Houston read the letter sent out by City of Southfield on Southfield letterhead announcing that Mayor Siver and the SVC will be hosting the Memorial Day Ceremony in Council Chambers. The full letter was read by Commissioner Houston. A flyer has been designed and is being distributed. It has been placed on the website.

A news release was sent out on March 29<sup>th</sup> about the veterans' tribute by Southfield Community Relations Department. It announced that If anyone wanted to present a tribute of any branch of the service, to a family member, friend, loved one, spouse, etc. they may do so that day . They have to submit a photo (preferred in uniform), short remembrances, especially WWII, in advance for a pre- prepared presentation.

A plaque for Tim Wirkus (posthumous) and Felix Seldon has been ordered.

New berets have been ordered. We ordered 15 at varied sizes. They will be Maroon in color with white letters. They will be available at the June meeting.

It was moved and seconded that the Vice-Chairs report be accepted as presented.

(Carried)

#### **COMMISSIONER DANNY CRAIG:**

The AARP May 6th event was very successful. Barbara Seldon and 25 other women veterans were honored/ recognized. Will be done again next year.

By-monthly veteran support group is scheduled on May 15<sup>th</sup> from 6PM til 8PM. About 18 – 20 will be in this round table event. There will be 3 speakers Martha Scott, Thomas Minginski from the VA, and Chris Brown County veteran military Navigator.

Carr's Bus tours, and the Shrine of the Black Madonna will host first Fundraiser trip to Mt. Pleasant June 1<sup>st</sup>. 35 tickets have been sold there is still room for sales. Cost \$40.00 and get 20 dollars to play. Due by May 29<sup>th</sup>.

June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11AM to 1 PM, 14<sup>th</sup> District veteran's forum will be held at Southfield Parks and Recreation building. A large veteran's support group including service officer, and vendors. Veterans and non veterans are being invited. It will be a round table discussion. Everyone gets a chance to participate. It will involve veteran benefits. Advocates will be there to help you get your claims approved. There will be much about High blood pressure, diabetes, Agent Orange, PTSD, sexual trauma. There is a need for former female vets.

There are plenty of vendors. It will be a great event. Clear Captions will provide Refreshments. (flyer passed out)

Champaign tour of the Whitney on August 31<sup>st</sup>. with Lunch at Meriwether's, Alaska Cruise, (flyers passed out)

Open house September 4<sup>th</sup> health fair, Westminster Presbyterian Church is invited. There will be Bingo, prizes, etc.

It was moved and seconded that Commissioner Craig's report be accepted as presented. (Carried)

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

In reference to Chairman Pulliam request to assist a needy female veteran, it was stated by Vice-chair Houston that we no longer receive City funds because we did not utilize the funds. If we utilize our funds there is a procedure that we should follow. The procedure will be discussed at the next meeting.

The only funds we now receive are from the spell bowl. The mayor and others are frowning on using our 501C3 funds for feeding to draw people to events.

It was suggested that before we utilize our funds, we should call Abdullah Hammoud State Capital 517 373-0847 and tell them who you are and ask about help/money for needy elderly veteran out of a 501C3 fund grant. Also you may call the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund of Oakland County at 248 655-1265. The SVC and the individual have to fill out a W9 and could receive up to \$3000.00. Is there an application? Will they have to prove they are truly needy? It is a one time per person or family fund.

**GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

- Vietnam Vets of America will pick up old clothes and other items to help soldiers. Commissioner Caruthers suggests that we place this on the website. Barbara Seldon suggested that to be fair other charitable veteran groups such as Purple Heart should be placed on our website. We should get their permission to link them.
- Commissioner Barbara Seldon attended the Student Veterans Gala of Lawrence Technological University held at Bellagio's in Dearborn Heights. It was a very formal fundraiser for student veterans. It was well attended by veterans and others in southeast Michigan.
- Chairman Pulliam mentioned the largest group of Black females unit at WestPoint now graduating.
- Chair Pulliam brought up City Ordinance 1571 referencing sewerage issues at the south end of the City. Many elderly people and veterans are losing their homes to foreclosure because they cannot afford to replace with City water. The political group is angry with SVC and the City because we will not come out in support of their efforts. It was mentioned that we are a service organization and not a political organization and it would violate our 501c3 status.

**DEPARTING PRAYER and RETIREMENT OF COLORS**

**ADJOURNMENT 8:30 PM**

**Next meeting June 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30PM**

**Barbara Seldon, Interim Secretary**