

**CITY OF PEORIA, ARIZONA
VETERANS MEMORIAL BOARD
RIO VISTA RECREATION CENTER
LAKEVIEW EAST CONFERENCE ROOM AND WEBEX**

July 2, 2020

A **Regular Meeting** of the Veterans Memorial Board of the City of Peoria, Arizona was convened at 8866-A West Thunderbird Road, in closed and virtual session in the Lakeview East Conference Room, at 5:04 p.m.

Members Present: Tad Snidecor, Terry Brezina, Anthony VanGoethem and Kacie Franklin

Members Present Remotely: Anthony Irby, Donald Scott and Duane Danner

Members Absent: 0

Municipal Officials Present: John Sefton, Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Director; Ted Mariscal, Assistant City Attorney; George Anagnost, Peoria Municipal Judge

Municipal Officials Present Remotely: Art Miller, Police Chief; Bill Patena, Councilmember; Daniel Murillo, Council Assistant; Cathy Foland, Executive Assistant

Audience: 0

NEW MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Snidecor welcomed two new members to the Board: Kacie Franklin and Duane Danner. All of the Board members introduced themselves.

1. CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Brezina moved to approve the Consent Agenda items, including the absences and minutes from the March 5, 2020 meeting. Mr. Irby seconded the motion and, upon vote, the motion carried unanimously, 7 to 0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3. Veterans Court

Peoria Municipal Court Judge George Anagnost gave a short presentation regarding how the Peoria Municipal Court serves its veteran patrons. Judge Anagnost explained that the Peoria Municipal Court does not offer a "Veterans Court" per se, but focuses all services on individual needs. Court staff considers veterans' unique circumstances, and offers alternative resolutions to avoid criminal records.

The Court works closely with the Police Department in providing assistance, including housing, medical care and behavioral health services. In some cases, public defenders work

directly with Veterans Affairs and, through a referral program, veteran offenders may not be required to return to court at all.

Judge Anagnost explained that the key intake for many veterans is the Police Department's Misdemeanor Repeat Offender Program (MROP). This program allows Police staff to intervene before a case makes its way to court.

He stated that the Peoria City Court participates in the Annual Veterans Stand-down each January, which is held at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum. A variety of services are offered to veterans at this event, including City Court case review.

Chairman Snidecor is glad that Peoria is flexible and can get the veterans the care they need immediately, rather than having them return to court at a later date.

Mr. Irby stated he appreciates that the approach is therapeutic rather than confrontational.

Mr. Scott expressed his appreciation for the consideration and effort in understanding veterans' issues.

Judge Anagnost closed by stating all are welcome to call or come visit the City Court.

No action taken

NEW BUSINESS

4. Peoria Police Department

Chairman Snidecor offered his condolences to Police Chief Art Miller on the loss of Officer Justin Judd yesterday.

Chief Miller thanked Chairman Snidecor for his kind words. He stated Officer Judd was a 12-year Air Force veteran, and spent 21 years with the Peoria Police Department. He was the finest of the finest.

Chief Miller gave a brief overview of programs the Police Department has in place to work with veterans. Two full-time detectives—Lisa Scott and Tomoki Scheideman—work with veterans and the homeless population. The Police Department participates in homeless outreach events, which are held three times per year at the Rio Vista Recreation Center. At these events, homeless individuals take advantage of a variety of services, including haircuts, showers, food assistance, etc.

The Peoria Police Department has a regional partnership with a variety of mental health and homeless providers. The department's approach will always be that arrest is the last resort.

All patrol officers are trained in the academy on how to work with all populations, and to treat everyone in a professional and compassionate manner.

The Police Department also maintains a great working relationship with Luke Air Force Base, providing training on DUI enforcement, mental health, domestic violence situations and working with combative people. Deputy Chief Marcel Spaulding is an honorary officer at Luke.

Chief Miller offered the Board members the opportunity to ride along with Officers Scott and Scheideman, post-COVID. He also welcomed them to visit the station to talk about the MROP or other programs.

Chairman Snidecor stated he has worked with Officer Scott on homeless outreach events, and she does great work. Leadership is where it starts, and he has seen nothing but great things from the Peoria Police Department.

All of the Board members expressed thanks to the chief for the Police Department's efforts.

In response to a question from Ms. Franklin, Chief Miller stated Officers Scott and Scheideman know the names and backgrounds of most of Peoria's homeless population, and actively visit the riverbeds and other known locations where they hang out. All officers respond to calls from the community regarding the homeless, and often follow up on previous interactions to ensure any issues have been resolved.

Mr. Sefton thanked Chief Miller and Judge Anagnost for coming. This was a great opportunity to learn about their services.

No action taken

5. Veterans Day Event

Mr. Snidecor stated that the Veterans Day event may not be held at Rio Vista Community Park this year due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

Mr. Sefton suggested that the Board come up with some ideas on how to hold an online event. He pointed out that the July 4th festivities are all going to be online, and he suggested something similar for Veterans Day. We can work with the Office of Communications to create content for a "virtual" event.

Mr. Irby suggested short soundbites from each Board member on what Veterans Day means to them.

Being new to the Board, Ms. Franklin asked what the normal Veterans Day program included. Chairman Snidecor explained the typical annual program consists of bagpipes, speeches from dignitaries, honoring veterans, unveiling new names on the Honor Wall, and a breakfast.

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The event has historically been well attended, with many veterans coming in uniform.

Mr. Sefton pointed out that Veterans Day falls on Wednesday this year, although the program is typically presented on a Saturday.

Discussion followed regarding the content for an online program.

Mr. Sefton suggested a subcommittee of three collaborate and put a plan together, so there can be clear direction and recommendations ready for the next meeting.

Ms. Franklin suggested interviewing some of the older generations of veterans.

Chairman Snidecor suggested recognizing city employees who are veterans.

Discussion followed regarding who Board members can contact to interview.

Donald Scott suggested producing a video about the Veterans Memorial, including the Honor Wall, encouraging folks to visit on their own.

Mr. Sefton stated that applications for additional plaques on the Honor Wall should be submitted by September 30, to be installed by November 11. We will soon have a social media push for that.

Ms. Franklin would like to include Peoria students somehow, as well as the Luke Air Force Base Blue Blazers. She also suggested highlighting the services and resources available to Peoria veterans.

No action taken

REPORT FROM STAFF:

Mr. Sefton again pointed out there will not be any fireworks on the 4th of July. The City's celebration will take place entirely online.

He stated Peoria's newest neighborhood park, located at 97th Drive and Williams Road, will be called Liberty Park. It is currently under construction, to be completed in September or October. Additionally, the first phase of Paloma Community Park, located at Dixileta Drive and Lake Pleasant Parkway, will also be completed in September or October.

REPORT FROM BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Irby stated the Operation Restoring Veteran Hope car dedication in April had a great turnout, and he appreciated all that was done to assist the organization. The organization will soon be delivering donations to the Navajo Reservation.

Chairman Snidecor stated his community outreach for Senator Sinema's office has been stalled by COVID-19, however, every two weeks he has been participating in a call for veterans. He asked the Board members to reach out to him if they know of anything that is a concern for veterans.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.



Tad Snidecor, Chair



Cathy Foland, Executive Assistant