

LOUISIANA NAVAL WAR MEMORIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of Commission Meeting

September 19, 2019

4:00 p.m.

Members present:

Richard Brandt
Robert Hawthorne
Henson Moore
Larry Muenzler
Karen St. Cyr
Hans Sternberg

Robert Schilling
Leonard Sedlin
Joey Strickland, Secretary of Veterans
Affairs
John Wells
Roderick Wells

Members absent:

Franklin Foil
Joe Jenkins
Kyle Kennedy

C.J. Krueger
Michael Vicari

Others present:

Fritz Embaugh
Todd Maulding
Cliff Deal
Kristin Fontenot
Ron Richard

Tom Miller
Russel Primeaux
Cliff Grout
Brad Bongiovanni

Call to order: At 4:00 o'clock p.m. the meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Henson Moore, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Secretary Strickland.

Agenda: The Chairman announced that a quorum was present and asked if there were any additions or changes to the agenda. There were none so he proceeded to the business of the Commission.

Minutes. The minutes of the last meeting of the Commission as previously circulated were approved on motion made by Commissioner John Wells and seconded by Commissioner Brandt.

Treasurer's Report. Commissioner Muenzler reported that we got a "clean" audit for last year and that overall, we are in a healthy financial condition. Todd Maulding reported on the July Fourth event and explained that because of the losses the last few years they were looking at changes for next year, one of which would be for volunteers to man the bars and service areas. He hopes the individual Commissioners will be able to help with that. Changes will also include more emphasis on patriotism.

Search Committee Report. Commissioner Hawthorne, on behalf of the Search Committee, moved that Rosehn Gipe be employed as Executive Director October 1, 2019, with basic terms are as follows:

- Base salary of \$75,000 per year;
- Match up to 5% of base salary contributions to an approved retirement plan;
- Reimbursement of up to 50% of the premiums for reasonable health care premiums for her or 50% of the cost for her participation in a group health insurance plan when one is available.
- She will be allowed time off to honor and fulfill two prior commitments. She knows at this time that she will need time off for commitments out of State on October 16 and 17, and on November 6-11. The Chairman may approve additional time off if needed.
- The Chairman is authorized to negotiate other terms and conditions consistent with the Commission's existing policies and practices.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner John Wells. The Chairman pointed out that all of the commissioners present, except Secretary Strickland, had met Ms. Gipe and asked if there was any discussion. Several favorable comments were made and Commissioner John Wells asked that the commissioners see a copy of the actual contract which will be presented to her with an opportunity to make contents. He was assured that they would receive a copy. After discussion was completed the motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Nominating Committee Report. The Chairman explained that Commissioner Jenkins is absent because he had an outpatient procedure this week. Had he been present, he would have urged all of the commissioners to be proactive in identifying potential commission members. Secretary Strickland explained that he has the same type of problem and is familiar with how the system works and who to contact. The Chairman thanked Secretary Strickland for his offer to help and promised to be back in touch. Commissioner Muenzler pointed out that a potential commissioner, Cliff Grout, is present and he had Mr. Grout identify himself. Mr. Grout is an architect and presently serves on the City-Parish Planning Commission.

Theatre/Multi-Purpose Room Renovation Project. The Chairman called attention to the written report in the packet and gave a short history of the project. He then recognized Commissioner Sedlin who introduced Fritz Embaugh, an architect/contractor, who has volunteered his time to date to design a plan. He passed out a copy of his proposal which included a narrative, drawings and a cost projection. He also recognized that Brad Bongiovanni with RockitScience has been involved in the design. He also introduced Kristin Fontenot from his office who worked on the project. Secretary Strickland spoke enthusiastically about the need for such a space by his department. A meeting with the potential donor is presently scheduled for October 1, 2019. In response to questions, Fritz estimated that the finished space should accommodate 70 for a seated dinner and 90 in a lecture configuration. Commissioner Sedlin explained that the ask of the donor will include \$15,000+/- for a welcome film and \$14,000+/- for table and chairs. Secretary Strickland suggested that we invite the Governor to have a Cabinet meeting in the space after it is finished. Fritz pointed out that the cost estimate

includes \$90,000+/- for the AV equipment but does not include upgrades needed to our wifi and computer network systems to take maximum advantage of the new AV equipment, Todd Maulding interjected that Cox estimated that it could provide the upgrade to our computer infrastructure for \$1,000+/- per month.

Museum HVAC System. The Chairman referred the Commission to a written report by Tim NesSmith.

Historic Naval Ships Association. The Chairman referred the Commission to a written report by Tim NesSmith. He also called attention to our intent to bid for their 2023-2024 meeting.

Next Commission Meeting. The Chairman announced his intention to call a meeting of the Commission for December 12, 2019 at 4 p.m. at the Museum to discuss the budget for next year and to consider a comprehensive report on the condition of the ship. No one voiced objection so the Chairman instructed the commissioners to put that date on their calendars. The Chairman elaborated that the ship needs improvements including a hull survey. Commissioner John Wells commented that the survey should include a topside survey and a below decks interior survey. The Chairman expressed his preference for a WWII camouflage design when the ship is repainted. Brad Bongiovanni interjected that camouflage would be great for marketing purposes. The Chairman asked if there was any objection to the December 12 meeting. There was none.

Directors Report. Cliff Deal as interim Executive Director called attention to his written report in each commissioner's packet. He elaborated on several items including:

- the importance of a "curator" position. He explained that Isabella, the part-time person in that position is a history major and is doing a great job. She is working with PastPerfect which has been upgraded and is the standard industry software for museum collections.
- He has drafted changes to the personnel manual which should be incorporated with whatever additional modifications seem appropriate after the new executive director is onboard.
- He pointed out that the City-Parish grant request has been submitted but includes an alternate required by the City-Parish in the event the St. George incorporation passes.
- The staff along with Carolyn Castel have met several times and have recommendations for the Commission to consider for next year's July 4th event including those in a separate written report prepared by Todd Maulding which is in the commissioners' packets.
- On the gala, they along with Carolyn Castel have begun planning for next year,
- They worked with CVB and are back on their digital billboard.
- The staff is close to finalizing a sponsor for the "Snoopy and the Red Baron" exhibit.
- He has looked into the VR contract with King Crow and in his opinion the Commission is not required to make further monetary contributions.
- Todd has made great progress in cleaning up the exterior of the property.

- With three full time employees, we are eligible for a group insurance plan.
- He has initiated regular staff meetings which he hopes will continue.

Cliff reiterated his desire to come back and help with collection management or any similar needs we may have. The Chairman thanked Cliff for his service as interim executive director which will continue through September 30. The Chairman also listed a number of other accomplishments brought about by Cliff in his role as interim.

New Business.

- Secretary Strickland suggested that he is in charge of the next convention of State Veterans Affairs Directors which will be in 2021 and he may be able to include the Kidd in some of its activities.
- The Chairman announced that the WWII Museum has promised to make the Kidd its first auxiliary affiliate when that program is formalized.
- Secretary Strickland suggested that we consider asking for State support for our operations. The Chairman added that we are working hard to be in a position to justify support if we decide to make that request.

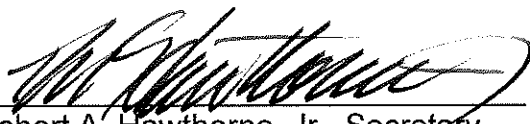
Old Business.

- In our desire to clean up the ship, we should consider using college groups and other volunteer groups. Fritz Embaugh volunteered to talk to his scout troop. Others agreed to contact similar groups. Commissioners Sedlin and Muenzler commented on the importance of supervision and safety in such activities.

Public comments. The Chairman asked if there were any comments from the public.

- Tom Miller briefly explained the commitment of the volunteers he works with every Thursday on the ship. He also expressed the need for more volunteers.
- He invited each of the commissioners to have lunch with the volunteers each Thursday at noon.

Adjournment. No one offered further comments so the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.


Robert A. Hawthorne, Jr., Secretary