

**Louisiana Naval War Memorial Commission**  
Commission Meeting  
April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022, 4:00pm  
Manship Deck at the USS KIDD Museum

**Members Present:**

Robert “Bob” Hawthorne (Chairman)  
John F. Pugh, Jr. (Vice Chairman)  
Aaron Bayham (Secretary & Lt. Governor Designee)  
Larry A. Muenzler (Treasurer)  
Joe Jenkins (Past Chairman)  
H. Davis Cole  
Roderick A. Wells  
Earnest Buckner, LDVA Designee  
Richard “Dick” Brandt  
Christian “CJ” Kreuger (by phone)  
Karen St. Cyr  
John B. Wells

**Members Absent:**

Jacob Colby Perry  
Michael D. Vicari

**Others Present:**

Rosehn Gipe (Executive Director, USS KIDD)  
Todd Maulding (Business Manager, USS KIDD)  
Tim Nessmith (Ship Superintendent, USS KIDD)  
Lloyd Johnson (Auditor and CPA, Faulk & Winkler)  
Robert L. Schilling (Former Commissioner)

**Call to Order:** Chairman Robert Hawthorne called the Commission Meeting to order at 4:00pm. Commissioner Joe Jenkins lead the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Determination of a Quorum:** Twelve Commission Members were present, therefore there was a quorum.

**Secretary’s Report:** There was one correction to the previous meeting minutes of November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, which was that the date of the next meeting was initially incorrect. That correction was made on the most recent version of the minutes circulated to Committee Members. Commissioner Dick Brandt made a motion to accept the corrected minutes. Commissioner John Wells seconded the motion, and the motion passed without objection.

**Treasurer’s Report and Audit Report:** Treasurer Larry Muenzler deferred to USS KIDD Business Manager Todd Maulding to present the financials for the KIDD. Todd Maulding introduced Larry Johnson with Faulk & Winkler who recently completed an audit of the USS KIDD’s financials and management. His summary was a “Clean Opinion” which indicates that there were no disagreements with the information that was presented to them by KIDD Management. No issues were noted during

the audit: they found that the KIDD was meeting all Governmental Auditing Standards and complying with all applicable laws and regulations. Mr. Johnson presented a slideshow of high-level graphs, which showed the following:

1. The KIDD's Cash position in 2021 is much higher than over the past 3 years. Cash is increasing year-over-year and liabilities are decreasing, with is a positive progression.
2. The KIDD's Net position is currently in a deficit but trending in the right direction. Most of the KIDD's Equity is tied up in capital.
3. Comparing numbers in 2021 vs. 2019 (the last year pre-COVID) indicates that admissions, sales and programs are all trending in the right direction over 2021, but not necessarily to the levels of 2019 and 2018 (2019 had higher admissions and programs but lower sales). Expenses are either flat or have tapered down compared to 2019 and 2018.

Faulk & Winkler's full report will be submitted to the Legislative Auditor next week and will be a public document.

**Foundation Report:** Carolyn Castel (Chairman of the Louisiana Veteran's Museum Foundation) was not present, but KIDD Executive Director Rosehn Gipe gave a recap of the Roarin' on the River Event which was held on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The event was profitable, though attendance and sponsors were both down slightly vs. the previous event in 2021.

The Chairman publicly thanked KIDD Management and specifically Rosehn Gipe and Todd Maulding for their commitment to "good finances", bookkeeping and management practices.

**Hull Restoration:** The Chairman provided an update regarding the \$3.6 Capital Outlay Request which was filed with the Louisiana State Legislature. Senator Franklin Foil is carrying the request through the legislature, while Jay Dardenne (Governor's Commissioner of Administration) and the Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser have both pledged support. The House Ways & Means Committee has considered the request but dropped the priority from a Priority 2 status to Priority 3. Senator Foil believes he can get at least the planning portion of the request re-prioritized in the Senate. Commissioner John Wells asked if there is an account already set up for funding and donations for the hull restoration project. Military Veteran's Advocacy may be interested in partnering for a fundraiser as well. The Chairman stated that staff have begun taking donations through the Foundation, which can be earmarked for Hull Preservation Fund. Donations can also be made through the KIDD Web site and noted that the donation is for HPF. Henson Moore has promised to lead the campaign to raise money.

#### **Staff reports:**

**Ship Status Report:** Ship Superintendent Tim Nessmith gave a ship status report, saying that there has been good volunteer response recently. Missionaries have been coming every week performing paint prep and cataloging navigation charts. An Eagle Scout project cleared up 2,000 feet of cabling to allow access to the chain locker. There are currently 5 leaks in the hull, ranging from seepage to tiny flow. The KIDD has started a YouTube series which includes a safety video on touring the ship. Yoga classes have returned.

**Executive Director's Report:** Executive Director Rosehn Gipe gave a recap of the Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day that was held on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The KIDD Museum hosted current crew members of the currently-commissioned USS Kidd (DDG-100), including Commanding Officer CDR Matt

Noland, who is a native of Baton Rouge. The KIDD also hosted a “KIDD Keynotes” presentation on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 titled “Philippine Sea Expedition 2021” and featured Parks Stephenson regarding his work in locating the wreck of the USS JOHNSTON which was a WWII Fletcher-class destroyer. In February, Rosehn Gipe, Tim Nessmith and Nate (USS KIDD employee) traveled to visit the USS ORLECK in dry dock, which will be moving to Jacksonville, FL once completed. Rescue training groups use the Kidd on a regular basis (both for meeting space, and the tower and ship for confined space training). Disney’s “National Treasure” television series rented the building for 9 days to film in. They only needed the Museum, so the ship stayed open to the public. The KIDD hosted its annual Kamikaze Attack Remembrance Ceremony on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and was also involved in the Baton Rouge Arts Council’s Ebb & Flow Festival on April 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

The Chairman stated that the HVAC system continues to be improved and there is still an additional phase of changes to be completed. He recapped the report and recommendations from the Louisiana State University Industrial Assessment Center, and explained that the recommendations can be implemented with little expense but should bring the Museum’s utility bills down further. The Chairman stated that the building’s elevator is not fixed yet, and Rosehn further explained that the elevator maintenance contractor has had issues determining what needs to be fixed, and that the issue was caused by a utility spike from Entergy so repairs will be paid for by the state’s insurance policy.

**New Business:** Commissioner Joe Jenkins, who is the Chairman of the Nominating Committee, stated that there are currently three (3) vacant seats on the Commission, and asked for Commissioners to submit names of anyone who may be interested and effective in serving. He also offered Zoom as a solution for the Nominating Committee to meet if in-person meetings were not possible.

Tim Nessmith notified the Commission members that Dave Light and Leroy Jenkins, who have volunteered on the KIDD in the past, are both in poor health.

**Public Comment:** There were no members of the public present who wished to make any comment.

**Adjournment:** The Chairman asked the Commission if there was any other business to be addressed. Seeing none, Joe Jenkins made a motion to adjourn. With no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 4:52pm.