

**West St. Paul  
Beyond the Yellow Ribbon  
Minutes of January 8, 2019**

1) Call Meeting to Order

Chair Le called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chair Sherrie Le  
Committee Members SFC Larkin Adey, Hayley Ball,  
Shirley Buecksler, Julie Burkhardt, Ed Iago, Mark Juelfs,  
Gene Kahnke, Mary Kahnke, Mary Jo McBride, Jesse Mettner,  
Melissa Pond-Benesh and Lisa Thomas

Also Present: Mayor Neil Garlock, Mayor – City of Mendota Heights  
Captain Adam Gades, Cottage Grove Armory

2) Approve Minutes of November 13, 2018

Motion was made by Juelfs and seconded by Iago to approve the minutes of November 13, 2018.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

3) Treasurer's Report – Transition to New Secretary/Treasurer

New Secretary/Treasurer Buecksler provided the following report to the Committee:

On January 2, 2019, Juelfs and Buecksler made changes to the bank account at Ideal Credit Union. Juelfs' name was removed to the account and Buecksler was added as Treasurer. Darlene Lewis and two others were also removed who should have been taken off previously but, for some reason, the bank didn't complete the requested update at that time.

Checking Account Balance: \$7,773.70

Deposits and Withdrawals since November 2018 Meeting:

- 12/03/18 Purchase of \$25.00 Target gift card for Holiday Party gift
- 12/21/18 Check \$1,450.00 towards Guard Holiday Event
- 01/02/19 Deposit of \$2,000.00 for donation from VFW Post 6690

Savings Account Balance: \$558.00

No account changes since last meeting

Total Donations Received in 2018: \$7,045.03  
(Information received from Laura Brigham, Neighbors, Inc.)

The Treasurer's report is attached to the minutes as part of the record.

4) Update on Possible Veteran with Boarding House

Building Official Dennis Schilling was unavailable for the meeting. Chair Le said there is a veteran who was in the service from 1958 to 1960 that we have been trying to help. It is possible the big fire that destroyed a lot of military records destroyed this veteran's records that cannot be found in the system. He has a dog tag and says he has his military papers. Le said Schilling talked with this veteran today and he will look for his DD214. Lisa Thomas said she will work with Schilling.

5) Discussions with Mendota Heights and South St. Paul

Iago said we are very pleased to have Mayor Garlock at the meeting today. Iago asked Mayor Garlock if the City of Mendota Heights has interest in joining the West St. Paul Beyond the Yellow Ribbon (BTYR), in order to expand services to our veterans. Mayor Garlock said that Mendota Heights will join. Iago said he will work on terminology for this joint effort. By Mendota Heights joining with West St. Paul, we will be able to develop a larger area to provide goods and services to veterans.

With help from Mayor Garlock or his designee, Iago said they will be able to call on businesses to become corporate partners. The approach will be to let businesses know what we can do for them, in order for us to gain their assistance in return. He said we can put their name as business partners on the City's website and in any literature.

Iago said the South Robert Street Business Association has been great so far. Iago said he has a meeting scheduled with the CEO of Tapemark Charities. He also contacted Extreme Tree for tax deductions and is working on developments with other businesses, as well. If there are any businesses that Iago should call on, please contact him at [yellowribbon@wspmn.gov](mailto:yellowribbon@wspmn.gov).

Iago said he would like to put together a core volunteer committee.

Iago said he called South St. Paul Mayor Jimmy Francis who referred him to the new person in charge of South St. Paul's Yellow Ribbon. He has left that person messages but he has not heard back from him. Iago said the new Chair for the South St. Paul Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Committee is Glen Boche and has good references from Dakota County. Iago said he will try again to contact him.

Mayor Garlock said he will talk to his administration to add this topic to the next Council agenda for discussion. He said it is a natural thing for Mendota Heights to join West St. Paul.

Chair Le said we cannot call them Yellow Ribbon businesses as there already is such a thing as Yellow Ribbon businesses and there are strict criteria for being named a Yellow Ribbon business. So we will need to figure out how we can designate businesses as part of BTYR.

Captain Gades said we will need to reconcile the BTYR bylaws and rename the organization. He said the bylaws will need to reflect the joint organization, with a cooperative understanding between the two parties, two checking accounts, etc. Captain Gades encouraged Mendota Heights and West St. Paul to pursue this route.

6) Liaison Reports

A. County and Military Resources Updates

SFC Adey said they received the check from the BTYR for \$1,450 for their January 12<sup>th</sup> event. He said they raised \$7,450 total. Money was also received from both the Chaplain and the Chaplain's Assistant and their spouses. He said they should have enough funds to cover the event. SFC Adey said he will bring photos of the event to the next meeting.

SFC Adey said they closed the Family Readiness account at US Bank and the money will be donated back through the MMMF to come back to the BTYR.

SFC Adey said he will be due to rotate out in the next six months or so. He would like to invite the FRG (Family Readiness Group) to come to our meeting.

Chair Le thanked SFC Adey for the donation from the FRG account to BTYR. SFC Adey thanked the group for the donation to the party. He said they were able to help soldiers who could not afford to attend. SFC Adey also said that one soldier in northern Minnesota received financial assistance from a grant.

Captain Gades said the Yellow Ribbon Outreach Coordinators are shifting. He said they will brainstorm between BTYR communities at a feedback panel on February 13<sup>th</sup> in St. Cloud to get everyone on the same page and launch a strengthening activity throughout the state. Captain Gades said Yellow Ribbon Outreach Coordinators are supporters for Yellow Ribbon committees that need assistance. He said they help new organizations set up their bylaws, help others that lose their momentum and are available to answer any questions.

B. Business Update

Iago said if someone makes a contribution to BTYR, he would like to provide a professional framed certificate to display at their business, as well as a generic letter sent to the business to keep them advised of where their funds were spent. He said it is a tax write-off for businesses. Any suggestions or ideas, please forward to Iago.

Captain Gades suggested including it on social media with shout-outs to those who donated.

Iago said a list of contributions and donations, along with places the BTYR has participated in, could be listed on the City's website, contributors names printed on a banner, and also in the City's newsletter.

C. Volunteer Update – Transition to New Volunteer Coordinator

Bremner was absent. Pond-Benesh said she will meet with Bremner.

7. Job Descriptions for Committee and Officers

Chair Le provided a copy of job descriptions for review.

The new email for Iago and the BTYR is [yellowribbon@wspmn.gov](mailto:yellowribbon@wspmn.gov). It will also be listed on his business cards. Chair Le said the BTYR phone number for the business liaison will go to voicemail and can be accessed by Iago and Le through phone or email. All other contact information will remain the same. Thomas said she will add this information to the County's website, also.

Contact information for BTYR is:

Ed Iago, Business Liaison Officer  
(651) 552-1930  
[yellowribbon@wspmn.gov](mailto:yellowribbon@wspmn.gov)

Iago suggested adding generic information at the bottom of the letterhead to include resources for help with code enforcement issues and, hopefully, asking veterans of limited means to contact West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon as a resource. Since there are different programs for different people and different types of problems, The City Manager is working with Community Development to see what is possible. Currently, if Code Enforcement sees a significant problem at a home and the person is a veteran, they let the veteran know to contact Chair Le.

Chair Le said she will need funds for frames, certificates, envelopes and business cards to get people in touch with BTYR, so there may be a little overhead.

Thomas asked if this network will serve South St. Paul. Chair Le said it will for sure serve Mendota Heights but we are not sure about South St. Paul, yet. With a new person in charge in South St. Paul, they will need to decide if they will get back up on their own or join. Captain Gades said he will contact Glen Boche, South St. Paul's new Chair. In the meantime, Chair Le said the West St. Paul BTYR won't turn veterans away.

Juelfs said South St. Paul does some things with St. Paul Guard but didn't have enough funds to help veterans.

Chair Le said she and Pond-Benesh need to discuss how to divide duties.

8. New Business

A. Discuss 2019 Goals

- 1) Business Promotions
- 2) Merge with the City of Mendota Heights
- 3) SFC Adey said Mrs. Duckworth of the Family Readiness Group (FRG) will attend the next meeting to discuss any needs where BTYR can assist. He will ask her to start coming to meetings as a replacement for him. SFC Adey or Mrs. Duckworth will be sure there is a hand-off so the BTYR has a connection when Captain Duckworth and Mrs. Duckworth are replaced here.

9. Other

Thomas said she has seen other Yellow Ribbon communities that offer meals, yardwork, etc. to veterans.

SFC Adey said some families may be able to help others but they may need to fall on the BTYR for assistance.

Chair Le suggested the BTYR consider creating an "Adopt a family" program.

Captain Gades said the FRG funds have to help everyone, not an individual, but the BTYR can help individuals. Before sending care packages, contact the unit to find out what needs they have.

SFC Adey said the best help for a unit is the support network for their families. He said a lot of his troops have young families.

McBride said she would like to see the BTYR highlighted in the display case at City Hall outside the Police Department. SFC Adey said he can get a photo from this weekend's event for it. Chair Le said it would be nice to have additional photos or possibly some items from the unit, along with a list of anyone who has donated. Thomas suggested adding the mission statement. McBride said she will contact SFC Adey and Chair Le to coordinate this.

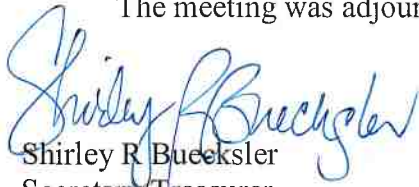
Thomas suggested taking more photos at future events. Captain Gades said some organizations have a social media coordinator. Chair Le said we can only request minimal assistance from the City's Marketing & Communications Manager as he has done a lot for us and is pulled in a lot of different directions. Juelfs suggested asking Steve Arzdorf from South Metro Fire to take photos at events.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the BTYR committee is scheduled for 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 5, 2019.

11. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m.



Shirley R. Bueckler  
Secretary/Treasurer