

**West St. Paul
Beyond the Yellow Ribbon
Minutes of February 5, 2019**

1) Call Meeting to Order and Introductions

Chair Le called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

Members Present: Chair Sherrie Le
Committee Members SFC Larkin Adey, Jan Bremner,
Shirley Buecksler, Julie Burkhardt, Ed Iago, Gene Kahnke,
Mary Kahnke, Brad Legrid, Jesse Mettner and Melissa Pond-Benesh

Also Present: CPT Zachary M. Duckworth, Commander-West St. Paul Armory
Carly Duckworth, Family Readiness Group (FRG) Leader

2) Approve Minutes of January 8, 2019

Motion was made by M. Kahnke and seconded by Mettner to amend the minutes with minor clerical corrections and approve the minutes of January 8, 2019, as amended.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

3) Treasurer's Report

Buecksler provided the Treasurer's report for the Committee. There have been no deposits or withdrawals since the last report dated January 8, 2019. As of February 5, 2019, the checking account had a current balance of \$7,773.70, and the savings account had a current balance of \$558.00.

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

4) Old Business

A. Continued Discussions on Connecting with FRG, Family Readiness Group

CPT Duckworth said they appreciate the work of the West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon. He said the FRG will become operational during deployment. Next month, Jeff Sabatke will take CPT Duckworth's position and his spouse will likely head the FRG in West St. Paul. Between himself and SFC Adey, CPT Duckworth said they will maintain continuity and build the relationship with the new FRG.

CPT Duckworth said there will be a pre-deployment ceremony and a ceremony when they return. He said the Yellow Ribbon can help with both, as well as assist families with any hardships while service members are deployed. Mrs. Duckworth said they also have a Christmas party and monthly meetings. She said a lot of help will be needed for yardwork and snow removal.

CPT Duckworth said having a list of contractors that families can call when in need would be helpful. Iago said he is currently working on this list. SFC Adey said it would be helpful to have a flow chart showing who should be contacted first and next, before contacting the Yellow Ribbon. CPT Duckworth said the FRG will be the liaison between families and the Yellow Ribbon.

SFC Adey suggested that Mrs. Duckworth and the new FRG Leader attend the March or April Yellow Ribbon meeting.

CPT Duckworth said anything related to child care, any relief or help the Yellow Ribbon can provide, would be substantial. Mrs. Duckworth said Augustana Lutheran Church has provided childcare during their meetings during deployment. SFC Adey said that there has been some dysfunction between the Church and BTYR and that there has been no communication. Iago said he will contact the Church and talk with them.

Chair Le asked about the approximate date for the pre-deployment ceremony. CPT Duckworth said it may be in the spring. He said outreach and coordination for bringing community members to show support arranging an escort by the Mayor, the Fire Department and Police Department would be helpful. SFC Adey said it would be best planned for April or May 2020.

Chair Le said the Yellow Ribbon will work with the FRG regarding pre-deployment, return, and the holiday party.

CPT Duckworth said anything that we can do for the kids during monthly meetings would be great. Mrs. Duckworth said the challenge is not knowing how many people will be there to watch them. She said the best attended event was at the Como Zoo.

Mrs. Duckworth said the kids can really use school supplies. They usually meet once a month during deployment and quarterly after deployment.

Chair Le asked how we can connect the spouses with Yellow Ribbon and build trust beforehand. CPT Duckworth said they have an open house before deployment and will invite everyone here to intermingle.

GSA Administration and other childcare subsidy programs are expensive, only cover half of the costs, are only available for daycare centers, and take time to enroll. CPT Duckworth suggested researching now for places that will take children and who would consider being a resource for childcare for just a day or two, depending on the situation, as well as creating a list of qualified babysitters. If childcare is needed long-term, it would be helpful to know if they would consider offering a discount for military.

Mrs. Duckworth noted that many soldiers don't live in West St. Paul and that their trash hauler in Lakeville provided them a discount during deployment. She said to let her know if there is any information on businesses that offer discounts. She

suggested sending updates to her on a regular basis so a digital program can be created of all the businesses that offer discounts. She said the Family Readiness Center has a database.

Legrid said there are many funds that can be used for any vet who has served even just one day in the military. He said the Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV) has many programs to help with housing, legal issues, etc. He said any veteran can attend the first meeting of each month. These meetings are listed on their website at www.mac-v.org/upcoming-events.

CPT Duckworth said there is a very significant need when soldiers return and that is when resources are needed the most. He said there are three phases of deployment: the first phase is when they head out the door, the second phase is during deployment, and the third phase is during the first six months after they return.

Chair Le said the City also offers free movies in the park and holiday shopping with a Police Officer or Firefighter. Mrs. Duckworth said it would be helpful to know about these events and others ahead of time.

B. Continued Discussions on Process of Merging with Mendota Heights and Possibly Other Nearby Cities

Mayor Garlock, Mendota Heights, was not present at the meeting. Chair Le said prior to merging with Mendota Heights, we will need to meet with the State's Yellow Ribbon Outreach Director and rewrite the paperwork to add Mendota Heights. SFC Adey said the bylaws may not need to be rewritten since Mendota Heights does not currently have bylaws but he will contact the State.

Chair Le said that Dan Nowicki, Marketing & Communications Manager, will create a separate page on the City's website for West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon information. She said he has also created business cards and stationery. If Mendota Heights joins, we will need to share any costs.

Chair Le said Annette Kuyper will join the upcoming meeting to discuss the merger.

Iago said he will talk to Mayor Francis about the South St. Paul Yellow Ribbon. Chair Le said we could connect with the Cities of Mendota Heights and Mendota now and connect with South St. Paul later, if need be. She said Inver Grove Heights may also be interested in joining, although she isn't sure if that would be too many.

The Committee discussed naming options for the combined group and whether there will be a need for separate checking accounts. The Board will need to make these decisions later.

5) Liaison Reports

A. County and Military Resources Updates

B. Business Update

Iago said he has a meeting on February 6th with the CEO of Tapemark Charities. He said Tapemark would like to participate in Yellow Ribbon activities.

Iago said it would be best if families connect with the FRG and then the FRG would contact him or the Yellow Ribbon. The Yellow Ribbon can connect the FRG with businesses so there is no stranger relationship for the families. He said he is working on a "community partners" list.

C. Volunteer Update

6) New Business

A. Continue Discussing 2019 Goals

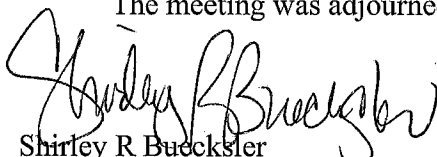
- i. Prepare for assisting families during upcoming deployment
- ii. Look into merging with Mendota Heights and possibly other cities, changing name and submitting documents to be recognized with new name
- iii. Assisting guard members, their families and veterans in West St. Paul, Mendota Heights and nearby cities
- iv. Reaching out to businesses to create partnerships

7) Next Meeting

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

8) Adjourn

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


Shirley R. Bucklesler
Secretary/Treasurer