

**West St. Paul
Beyond the Yellow Ribbon
Minutes of May 7, 2019**

1) Call Meeting to Order and Introductions

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

Members Present: Sherrie Le, Chair
 SSG Ralph Blystone
 Jan Bremner, Volunteer Coordinator
 Shirley Buecksler, Secretary, Treasurer
 Julie Burkhardt
 Ed Iago, Business Liaison Officer
 Mark Juelfs
 Mary Kahnke
 Gene Kahnke
 Brad Legrid
 MaryJo McBride
 Jesse Mettner
 Lisa Thomas

Also Present: Dustin Rockow, Dakota County Veterans Services
 Mike Windsperger, Yellow Ribbon Regional Outreach Coordinator
 for Central Minnesota

2) Approve Minutes of April 2, 2019

Motion was made by Iago and seconded by M. Kahnke to approve the minutes of April 2, 2019, as presented.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

3) Treasurer's Report

Buecksler provided the Treasurer's report for the Committee, which is attached to the minutes as part of the record.

Current Balances:

- Checking: \$ 1,947.73
- Savings: \$12,285.00

M. Kahnke asked for a correction to show that a thank you letter was sent by her to VFW Post 6690 for their January 2, 2019 donation of \$2,000. Buecksler will make the correction.

Iago requested that the minutes and Treasurer's report be listed on the City's website. Le will check with Dan Nowicki, Marketing & Communications Manager.

4) Old Business

A. Summary of Merger Meeting

Mendota Heights City Council approved merging with West St. Paul Beyond the Yellow Ribbon. Mendota and Lilydale will be taking it to their City Council this month for approval. South St. Paul chose not to join the merger. The next step will be to bring it to the State Yellow Ribbon and begin paperwork to complete the merger.

Le suggested the name of the group to be the Northern Dakota County Yellow Ribbon.

After approval of the other Cities, Le said we will need to create a task force to structure the steering committee. She also said that the other Cities may have representatives from their committees where we do not have anyone present, such as religious or other organizations.

Iago said we need to know the dates of Mendota and Lilydale's Council meetings. Windsperger said he will connect with Annette as to whether or not she will be attending their meetings. He will follow-up with Le.

Le said the merger meeting went well and that we now know what our next steps are. She also said we do not need to be a 501C3. She added that since Neighbors, Inc. is our fiscal agent, this would still be one account; however, we will have to find out if Neighbors is required to approve both the merger and the name change.

Any business cards, pamphlets, media information, etc. will need to be changed, as well.

Thomas asked if West St. Paul will handle any requests from South St. Paul residents. Legrid said this was discussed and that the consensus was that West St. Paul would take care of them.

Le said that she will send an email to South St. Paul Yellow Ribbon when requests are received. Thomas said Dakota County will forward requests to both West St. Paul and South St. Paul for response.

Legrin suggested keeping track of how many veterans we care for that are residents of South St. Paul.

B. Harmon Park Festival Plans

Iago and Bremner said they will staff the Yellow Ribbon booth at the event. Set-up is on Friday, May 17th, at 1:00 p.m.

SSG Blystone said he will look for any photos or props to bring to the event.

The history of the unit (PowerPoint from the Guard) will be book in a book as reference for volunteers at the booth.

C. Volunteer Program

We need to get more volunteers and follow-up with them by regular contact. We also need articles for the newsletter. Le and Bremner will meet to get things started.

Volunteers are need to help people move or for any manual labor. We do have someone on call for handyman work. Le and Iago have met with him and agreed to pay him a stipend so he can respond to calls quickly.

One suggestion was to include a volunteer sign-up sheet at the Harmon Park Festival, including a place for them to add their contact information, as well as list things that they can do as a volunteer. Bremner said she will create this sign-up sheet.

5) Liaison Reports

A. County and Military Resources Updates

SSG Blystone said the Guard's Family Day is scheduled for August 18th but they are looking for a location where they can cook for them. The Sports Complex was suggested, which has a grill. This location will need to be scheduled in advance.

Le said West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon can help and grocery stores may also want to contribute.

SSG Blystone said he will know by next weekend the number of attendees.

Le said she will check if the Sports Complex is available and will also contact Metro Transit regarding parking cars at the complex during deployment.

Le said we want to assist families during deployment and provide activities for their children during family meetings. SSG Blystone said the FRG and others will become involved closer to the August deployment. He suggested members of the Yellow Ribbon come to the August 18th event to meet and talk with families. Legrin said he can be there, also.

Thomas said they recently had a couple of guest speakers from NARI Cares. Their mission statement on their website reads, "*NARI Cares is committed to assisting Minnesota homeowners and organizations in need by performing affordable repairs or remodeling projects that will improve the lives of those less fortunate.*" They are local builders and volunteers who can come out and do small projects. Their website is: <https://www.narimn.org/pages/nari-cares-committee>. Contact information is 612-332-6274 and beatrice@narimn.org.

Le said we have an 86-year-old resident whose home has mold. The City's Building Official tried to work with his insurance company but found that he had no insurance. It was found that the mold was due to leaking water. St. Paul Regional Water Service refused to pay for any damage.

Thomas said there are no veteran records for this individual. She submitted another request for him three months ago but has not heard back. She said that NARI will still work with him, even if he is not a veteran.

Windsperger mentioned the May 22nd Joint Community Forces Conference. Le, Pond-Benesh and Buecksler will be attending the Conference at Bethel University.

Iago said he asked NARI for information he can take to the Army prior to deployment. He said NARI has a lead time of about two months so we would need to plan ahead. Iago said this wouldn't work for code violation issues.

Iago said we need to schedule a date for a booth at the Dakota County Fair (August 5-11). Thomas said to contact her if West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon would like to have a booth. She said the Veterans Administration also has a booth. She will forward dates to Le of when other agencies are having their booths.

Windsperger said that Military Appreciation Day is Tuesday, August 27, at the State Fair. There are two shifts available for volunteers at the booth there. Volunteers would need to pay for their own parking but if he knows ahead of time, he can get free passes for them.

Windsperger said the assessment or annual checklist for Yellow Ribbons is now just a conversation between YRROC and the Yellow Ribbon Chairs. The conversation includes a checklist and action list combined. After they go through it together, Windsperger said he will write it up and put together a report by area (Metro), which will then be combined into one large report to the State. The timeline is the end of July (report for June 2018 to June 2019). He said we can also talk about where we are at with the merger at that time.

Legrin said they received support from Governor Walz and the Commissioner of Housing. He has finalized their 'Ask' of what they need for housing and will send it to the Commissioner.

B. Business/Fundraising Update

Iago said he has signed up some service providers, including:

Camelot Cleaners
948 Smith Avenue
West St. Paul
651-457-2909

They clean American flags for funerals, free of charge

Just Paws Pet Salon
1201 South Robert Street
West St. Paul
651-451-0303

Discounts on dog grooming to veterans on a one time basis. Call for information.

Clean Drainz by Bob and Son, LLC
CONTACT BY PHONE ONLY *
651-307-6872

Free evaluation of problems. Will provide discounts on repair. Amount of discount will vary depending on problem.

Dunkin' Donuts & Baskin Robbins
1224 South Robert Street
West St. Paul
651-207-5593

Financial support and will discount specific requests (i.e., party cakes) by 20%. They will also give 10% discounts to all veteran purchases.

All requests must come in to the above parties from the Yellow Ribbon network after having been vetted by the County. The exception to this is Dunkin' Donuts military discount which they will advertise directly. Dunkin' Donuts has requested that they're **full name and address be** printed on any items we publish.

* The address for Clean Drainz is confidential. For mailing, contact Chair Le for their address.

Iago is also working with Navy Island Plywood and Southview Animal Hospital. He said that former Mayor Mike Bazan is the uncle of Mrs. Joe Mauer and was able to get some signed baseballs.

Iago said he added an informational sheet to the Yellow Ribbon folder for businesses with employees who are veterans and may need assistance.

6) New Business

A. Veteran's Tabs Request

Le said she assisted a veteran get his car tabs; however, they were for his daughter's car that he is purchasing from her. It brought up a problem that Chair Le may not always be available for requests.

B. Volunteer Retained for Heavy Work with Stipend

C. Discuss Possible Summer Appreciation Event for Guard Unit

D. Memorial Day Promotion Ideas Digital Sign, South-West Review, NDC4

Flags will be up on Robert Street. A message will also be on the digital sign on Highway 52 to read, "West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon wishes veterans a happy Memorial Day. Thank you for your service." The billboard requires a two day turnaround. Iago said that most people don't realize that the Yellow Ribbon exists, so we need to get the word out.

Le said an article will be submitted to the South-West Review.

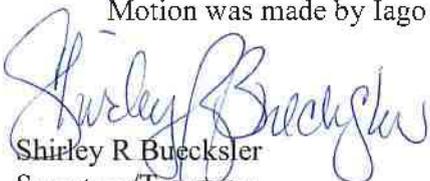
NDC4 needs three weeks lead time, so we could do something for Veteran's Day instead of Memorial Day. SSG Blystone asked if we could do video clips with families and broadcast on their cable channels. A piece could also be done to gain more volunteers, as well as to describe the merger.

7) Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Yellow Ribbon meeting is scheduled for 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 4, 2019.

8) Adjourn

Motion was made by Iago and seconded by Mettner to adjourn the meeting at 3:40 p.m.


Shirley R Buecksler
Secretary/Treasurer