

LOUISIANA NAVAL WAR MEMORIAL COMMISSION

Minutes of Commission Meeting

June 8, 2017

4:00 p.m.

Members present:

- Richard Brandt
- Robert Hawthorne
- Joe Jenkins
- C.J. Krueger
- Henson Moore
- Robert Schilling
- Leonard Sedlin
- Hans Sternberg
- John Wells
- Roderick Wells

Members absent:

- Lane Drake
- Franklin Foil
- Kyle Kennedy
- Bobbie Pugh
- Homer Rodgers
- Karen St. Cyr
- Michael Vicari

Others present:

- David Beard
- Tim NesSmith
- Terri Planchard
- Andrew Daire
- Hank Doughty
- Larry Muenzler
- Mitch Verma
- Brad Bongiovanni
- Fritz Embaugh

Call to order: At 4:00 o'clock p.m. the meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Henson Moore, who asked Commissioner Shilling to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda: The Chairman asked if there were any additions to the agenda. There were none.

Minutes. The Chairman asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the last meeting. On a motion made by Commissioner Jenkins and duly seconded, the minutes of the last meeting were approved unanimously.

Commission Committees. The Chairman announced the following committee chairmanships:

- Nominating – Jenkins
- Long Range Planning – Sedlin
- Hall of Honor – Schilling
- Veterans Advisory – R. Wells
- Events and Volunteers - Krueger
- Finance – Vicari
- Maintenance – Lane Drake
- Personnel – Executive Committee

The chairman encouraged each Commissioner to volunteer for one or more committees. He encouraged chairmen to add members to their committees as needed and to include non-Commission members as appropriate. He also stated that all committee meetings are open to all Commissioners.

Commissioner Sedlin pointed out that protocols for the Hall of Fame were adopted many years ago and are on file. The staff confirmed this.

Where Are We --- Where Do We Go from Here? The Chairman mentioned that we will have a time for this type of discussion at each meeting, so be prepared with thoughts and ideas for future meetings.

Finance report. The Chairman gave the report in the absence of Mike Vicari, the Treasurer. He called attention to financial statements. After comments on the financials he complimented the staff on their initiative in recognizing the opportunities to bring El Galeon here and making it happen with only one month' lead time. The Executive Director reported that we sold 5,700 tickets for \$17,765 and \$16,000 in gift shop sales. Expenses were \$2,800+/- . He also explained that

the ramp they built will go to a group which helps disabled veterans. The Chairman asked that the staff study how those statistics compare with the same time last year.

Strategic Plan. Commissioner Sedlin started the discussion by pointing out that the document before the Commission is really to get us to a point where we can finalize a plan. The study is built around three goals previously approved by the Commission: 1) education; 2) veterans advocacy; and 3) preservation. It includes proposals and estimates by teams of experts who have volunteered their expertise to address needed updates to the existing building, immediate IT needs, and marketing. They are in attendance and he called on each of them to make comments and address questions.

- Larry Muenzler – He was the primary draftsman and urged the Commission to adopt the report, address deferred needs of the present building, and seriously plan to replace the building in time. The main constraint at the present time is the building. Projected cost for a new building, including soft costs is \$23,000,000 so that is in the future.
- Fritz Embaugh – He is an architect, engineer, and contractor. His recommendations are what he feels are essential to address immediate needs of the present building. He was pleased to be able to get evaluations of the major systems at no cost to the Commission.
- Brad Bongiovanni – He briefly outlined his experience working with other museums and with the Navy. His first step would be gathering intelligence from Commission members and staff, visitors and others. He would then design something which would be cost effective in promoting our message or messages and what would be our “product(s)” in business terms.
- Mitch Verma – He has made several proposals over a year’s time to address our IT needs and passed out another proposal which has his proposal in phases. He urged that we move forward immediately and included in his proposal a 12 month financing plan. The gift shop needs are the first which should be addressed, then infrastructure, wireless inside, and then wireless outside. Chairman Moore asked about the web site to facilitate marketing and on-line sales. Mitch and Brad agreed that this would be a joint project and is needed, but is not in his current proposal.
- The Chairman then thanked Mitch, Brad, Fritz and Larry for their extremely valuable input and for their contributions of time and expertise on behalf of the Commission. He then stated that he is determined that the report be

adopted during his chairmanship and asked the Commissioners for their reactions to the report.

- Commissioner John Wells stated that he liked the report. The idea of a Gulf historic ships trail will work and he has some ideas. Our ship is the “hook” for our museum so we need to stick with a naval theme. He sees opportunities with youth groups and others. As to the veterans section, the VA is set up to do some of the things suggested in the report so we should not offer legal or health clinics.
- Commissioner Jenkins interjected that he always considered the education function aimed at children.
- Commissioner Hawthorne pointed out that we have facilities which can be used and contacts with the public which can and should be used to assist veterans groups and to educate the public as to veterans issues but that we should not compete with other groups which offer consultants and counseling. We need to keep on mission and do what we can do best.
- Commissioner Moore agreed that we should and could educate the public.
- Commissioner Schilling pointed out that others are helping veterans with benefits but that we could provide a venue and sponsor events for veterans not being provided by others.
- Commissioner Sedlin pointed out that we would need staff to do some of the things which have been mentioned.
- Commissioner Jenkins interjected that the IT upgrades are the first things we should do.
- Commissioner Moore pointed out that once we define our mission, BRAF will help us implement it including staff.

Commissioner Krueger moved that we approve the IT proposal and implement it. Commissioner John Wells seconded the motion. Commissioner Krueger suggested that we try to get a portion of the local occupancy tax like New Orleans does with the WWII Museum. Other discussion followed. Commissioner Sedlin moved adoption of the entire Strategic Plan Recommendations. This was ruled out of order because of Commissioner Krueger’s pending motion. Commissioner John Wells then moved that Commissioner Krueger’s motion be tabled. His motion to table was seconded and unanimously adopted.

Commissioner John Wells moved adoption of the IT portion of the report. Commissioner Krueger seconded. The Chairman explained that the Commission apparently wishes to consider the report in sections so we will do so. The question was called. There was no more discussion. The Commission adopted the motion unanimously.

Commissioner John Wells then moved that the Preservation section of the report be adopted. Commissioner Brandt seconded and the motion was unanimously adopted.

Commissioner John Wells moved that the Marketing section of the report be adopted. Commissioner Brandt seconded. The motion was unanimously adopted.

Commissioner John Wells moved that Education and Advocacy sections of the report be deferred for clarification and perhaps some restating in light of the comments made at this meeting. Commissioner Brandt seconded and pointed out that the steps outlined in this section are not time-critical. The motion was unanimously adopted with Commissioner Schilling abstaining.

The question of the marketing section was brought up. Commissioner Sternberg asked what would be the cost to get the marketing started. Brad Bongiovanni said it would be less than \$10,000.

Commissioner Jenkins pointed out that the Executive Committee could consider and take action on both the IT and marketing proposals and moved that the Commission direct the Executive Committee to do so. The motion was duly seconded and unanimously adopted.

Other business. Commissioner Krueger asked about the status of the video project. She suggested exploring the possibility of a video game featuring the Kidd instead. Chairman Moore explained that the video would be an “introductory” video for visitors as part of the theatre renovation.

Executive Director’s report. The Executive Director briefly reviewed the visitation and financials. He is working on planning and funding the theatre renovations and mentioned that Hank has encountered a person in that business as a possible donor for the audio and video equipment. He is working on the Fourth of July and Spirit of 45 events to make them more profitable. He is working on the City grant and still needs funding for the WWI exhibit.

Announcements.

- Next Commission meeting changed from October 12 to **October 19, 2017** at 4 p.m. at the Museum.
- Last meeting of 2017 is **December 14** at 4 p.m. at the Museum.
- Commissioner Sedlin urged that Commissioners e-mail to him any suggestions for refinements to the Strategic Plan Recommendations.
- The Chairman stated that staffing projections for the future will be needed for our presentation to BRAF. The Executive Director stated that those are ready and will be presented to the Executive Committee.

Public Comments. The Chairman asked if there were any comments from the public. There were none.

Adjournment: The Chairman asked if anyone had further business for the Commission. He received no response so he adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

Robert A. Hawthorne, Jr., Secretary