**LOUISIANA NAVAL WAR MEMORIAL COMMISSION**

Minutes of Commission Meeting

June 10, 2015

4:00 p.m.

Members present:

* Mike McNaughton
* Robert Hawthorne
* Joe Jenkins
* Hans Sternberg
* Kenneth Kimberly
* Kyle Kennedy
* Karen St. Cyr
* Bobbie Pugh
* Leonard Sedlin

Members absent:

* Rudolph Bourg
* Richard Brandt
* Franklin Foil
* Henson Moore

Others present:

* Alex Juan, Executive Director
* Tim NesSmith
* Lynn Ridley (daughter of Commissioner Pugh)
* Camera man and reporter from Channel 2

Call to order: At 4:00 o’clock p.m. the meeting was called to order by the Chairman, Joe Jenkins. The roll was called. After a short delay, he led in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Chairman announced that a quorum was present.

Agenda: The Chairman asked for approval of the agenda. On a motion duly made and seconded the Commission unanimously approved the agenda.

Inspector General’s Report: The Chairman stated that this was the main purpose of the special meeting. It was sent out Friday to Mr. Drummond and was not initially sent to the Commission. We were not given advance notice because the Commission was not cited. However, the Commission office made copies available to the Commission members electronically as soon as a copy could be obtained. Chairman Jenkins stated that the investigation and report has and will be helpful to the Commission because it has called attention to some procedures which needed attention. The report was very complimentary of our present staff for the manner in which they have responded.

The Chairman then requested advice on the question of whether the Commission should seek restitution from Mr. Drummond for the monetary items cited in the Inspector General’s report. He personally did not think it practical to do so, but asked the Commission for guidance. Commissioner Sternberg asked whether the items cited in the report would have been approved by the Commission at that time had it been asked to do so. Commissioner Kennedy expressed his displeasure at having not had a chance to review the report before it was released as had been promised. He also expressed concern that Mr. Drummond had not been personally interviewed as part of the investigation. Chairman Jenkins pointed out that Mr. Drummond had responded through written interrogatories and that his attorneys had responded. Chairman Jenkins stated that it seemed to him mostly lack of documentation. Commissioner Sedlin pointed out that however one characterizes it, from an accounting standpoint what happened was wrong. Chairman Jenkins urged that we look to the future and stated that we have corrected all of the problems cited by the IG and have greatly increased our programming for children and for veterans. We had over 250 classes of various kinds last year and approximately 11,500 children experienced the museum and the ship last year. Approximately 860 attended during a recent free Sunday, and we average 600 most Sundays when the weather is good. Commissioner McNaughton pointed out that the IG’s report in effect gave the present operation a clean bill of health and included no recommendations for further action. He has never seen that in such a report before. The present staff should be complimented. Commissioner St. Cyr reminded the Commission that Mr. Drummond served this organization for well for over 30 years. She also asked that we review our governance and bylaws at the next meeting, particularly as to funding. Commissioner Sternberg stated that he was the first chairman of the Commission. He has seen nothing to indicate that Mr. Drummond acted other than in good faith. Commissioner Pugh pointed out that the IG looks for proper paperwork. In her opinion Mr. Drummond’s acts were of omission, not commission. Commissioner Sedlin stated that he served on the Commission for 12 years prior to his present term. In his opinion, the report is the report and he does not take lightly the lack of documentation.

Commissioner Sternberg moved that the Commission not pursue restitution from Mr. Drummond for the monetary items mentioned in the Inspector General’s report. Commissioner Hawthorne seconded the motion. After discussion about the wording of the motion, Chairman Jenkins called for a vote by show of hands. There were 6 yeas and 2 nays. The Chairman declared that the motion passed.

The Chairman then urged the Commissioners to focus on the positive things. We should focus on our mission and be leaders, including raising funds to support the operations.

Fourth of July report:

The Chairman announced that the next item of business was the upcoming 4th of July celebration.

The Executive Director reviewed plans for the celebration and praised the staff for what they have done. She has reduced the budget and scope of activities. The present budget is $42,000 and $20,000 for our share of the fireworks. Miss USA will be involved. Activities will be from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. She still needs about $9,000 to break even and asked Commission members for ideas. She also cautioned the Commission that we are entering a slow tourism period. We still have maintenance issues which must be addressed. She is particularly proud of the increase in veterans’ activities. She still needs names of potential sponsors for these and other events. She also stated that she has received great support and encouragement locally, nationally, and internationally. She asked the Commission to be united in efforts to support our mission

Announcements: Commissioner Sedlin stated that the strategic planning sub-committee is working toward a presentation to the Commission at its July meeting with the hope of having a plan ready for adoption in December. He is very pleased with the support being given by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

Commissioner St. Cyr stated that the agenda for the next meeting should include receipt and discussion of the report from our auditors for 2014.

Chairman Jenkins advised the Commission that the pending nominations to fill vacancies on the Commission were still in the Governor’s office. Commissioner Sedlin pointed out that the terms of several serving Commissioners expire in November of this year and these need to be filled in addition to those pending. Presumably, the nominating committee will first determine which of those Commissioners wish to be re-nominated.

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 5:30 p.m.

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 Robert A. Hawthorne, Jr., Secretary