**Louisiana Naval War Memorial Commission**  
Commission Meeting  
August 11th, 2022, 4:00pm  
Manship Deck at the USS KIDD Museum

**Members Present:**Robert “Bob” Hawthorne (Chairman)  
Aaron Bayham (Secretary & Lt. Governor Designee)  
Larry A. Muenzler (Treasurer)  
Joe Jenkins (Past Chairman)  
Richard “Dick” Brandt  
Earnest Buckner (LDVA Designee)  
H. Davis Cole  
David Couvillion  
Karen St. Cyr  
Roderick A. Wells

**Members Absent:**  
Christian “CJ” Kreuger (participated by phone)  
Jacob Colby Perry  
Michael D. Vicari  
John B. Wells

**Others Present:**  
Rosehn Gipe (Executive Director, USS KIDD)  
Todd Maulding (Business Manager, USS KIDD)  
Tim NesSmith (Ship Superintendent, USS KIDD)

*Elijah Otto*

*Aireale Dunn*

*Nathan Bergeron*

*Carolyn Castel (Chair, Louisiana Veterans Museum Foundation)*

*Ron Richard (Trustee)*

*Jay Little (Trustee)*

**Call to Order:** Chairman Robert Hawthorne called the Commission Meeting to order at 4:02pm. Commissioner Roderick Wells lead the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Determination of a Quorum:** Ten Commission Members were physically present, therefore there was a quorum.

**Approval of Minutes:** Joe Jenkins made a motion to accept the minutes from the previous Commission Meeting from April 28th, 2022, and Executive Committee Meetings from April 28th, 2022, and August 5th, 2022. The motion was seconded by H. Davis Cole, the motion passed without objection and all minutes were accepted.

**Executive Director Contract:** The Chairman provided some information to the Commission regarding the contract for the new Executive Director specifically regarding intellectual property rights, and that any IP created as a function of his employment at the USS Kidd will be owned by the USS Kidd, and any IP generated prior to his employment or during his employment but unrelated to the Kidd will be owned by the Mr. Stephenson. *He will bring to our attention situations which are not clear will be brought to our attention at the time for clarification.*

There was a question from the public regarding Mr. Stephenson’s previous employment. *T*he Chairman provided a brief background of Mr. Stephenson’s professional career, military experience, and naval exploration. There were no other questions from the Commission regarding the draft Executive Director contract.

Mr. Stephenson was introduced into the meeting via a Zoom call. The Chairman asked questions of Mr. Stephenson related to his interest in the position, career and extracurricular experience and potential relocation to Baton Rouge. Commissioner David Couvillion asked Mr. Stephenson about how he may approach the veteran’s museum portion of the operation, and how he may attract visitors and repeat business to the museum. There were no other questions from the Commission or the Public, and Mr. Stephenson was thanked and dismissed from the meeting.

Dick Brandt made a motion to *hire* Parks Stephenson as the Executive Director *on the terms in* the draft employment contract *previously* provided to the Commission. Joe Jenkins seconded the motion. *The Chairman asked if there were further questions or discussion from any of the Commissioners or from the public. There were none.*  All Commissioners *voted by show of hands* in favor *of the motion. T*he contract was approved for presentation to Parks Stephenson and execution by the Chairman.

**Proposed Budget Adjustments:** Treasurer Larry Muenzler presented a revised budget for the current year 2022, which reflects some additional employment expenses (relocation allowance for the new Executive Director, overlap of the two Executive Directors for cross-training in October, and approved raises). Those additional costs are more than offset by savings on utilities by improvements made to the facilities HVAC systems. The new budget reflects a $3,673 gain over the previously approved budget and to the bottom line.

Larry Muenzler made a motion to accept the revised 2022 budget as presented. H. Davis Cole seconded the motion. All Commissioners *voted* in favor, there was no objection, the motion passed, and the revised budget was accepted.

**Personnel Manual Amendments:** The Chairman provided information regarding the proposed changes to the Personnel Manual which were previously reviewed by the Executive Committee and provided to the Commission.

David Couvillion made a motion to accept the changes as proposed and *to* update the Personnel Manual accordingly. Earnest Buckner seconded the motion, and the motion passed without objection.

**Executive Director Contract (continued discussion):** Mr. Stephenson has indicated he could begin employment as soon as October 10th, 2022, while Rosehn Gipe is not scheduled to leave until October 22nd, 2022, to allow for overlap of the position and cross-training. Commissioner Earnest Buckner offered that it may be beneficial to have as much overlap of employment as possible between the existing Executive Director and incoming Executive Director. There was discussion regarding how much additional cost for overlap that the USS Kidd’s finances and budget may allow. Treasurer Larry Muenzler stated that the finances for the USS Kidd are in the best situation that they have been in the recent past, and there would be no issue with covering the two salaries for one month.

Joe Jenkins made a motion for the Commission to allow, and for the Chairman to offer, up to one full month of overlap of the two Executive Directors, to the extent that Mr. Stephenson’s schedule may allow. H. Davis Cole seconded the motion, and the motion passed without objection.

**Recognition of outgoing Executive Director, Rosehn Gipe:** Karen St. Cyr asked to publicly recognize outgoing Executive Director Rosehn Gipe, for her dedication and service as Executive Director, and the significant contributions and improvements she has made to the USS Kidd during her tenure. *All Commissioners and all others present wholeheartedly endorsed this sentiment.*

The Chairman also wished to thank the Louisiana Veteran’s Museum Foundation Trustees, and USS Kidd employees present at the meeting for their hard work and dedication to the success of the USS Kidd.

**Public Comment:** Trustees of the Louisiana Veteran’s Museum Foundation present at the meeting also asked to publicly recognize and thank outgoing Executive Director Rosehn Gipe for her service to the Foundation, *to* the Commission and *to* the USS Kidd.

**Adjournment:** The Chairman asked the Commission if there was any other business to be addressed. Seeing none, Joe Jenkins made a motion to adjourn. With no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Bayham, Secretary