



# City of Green Meeting Minutes Veterans Advisory Commission

***October 1, 2024     /     5:00 pm     /     CAB***

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## **I. Call to Order**

Tim Freeman called to order the regular meeting of the Veterans Advisory Commission at 5:03 p.m. on October 1, 2024.

## **II. Pledge of Allegiance**

## **III. Roll Call**

Present: Tim Freeman, Carl Mickelson, John Carter, Christine Sedensky, Jarrod Suffecool

Also Present: Mike Elkins, Administration Liaison  
Justin Speight, City Council Liaison  
Hunter Hannaman, Student Municipal Representative  
Johanna Gooding, Division Secretary  
Valerie Wolford, Director of Communications

## **IV. Approval of Minutes**

a) Minutes from the September 4, 2024, meeting were approved.

## **V. Citizen Comments – None.**

## **VI. Administrative Reports – None.**

## **VII. Unfinished Business –**

a) **Commission Rule on Chair/Vice-Chair Term Limits** – T. Freeman asked M. Elkins about the correct terms for the Chair and Vice-Chair so there may be a vote. M. Elkins explained some boards and commissions run their officer positions differently. It is up to this Commission as to what they feel comfortable with and what the Commission can function with from his experience. Carl Mickelson motioned to go with annual terms for the Chair and Vice-Chair. J. Suffecool

seconded the motion. T. Freeman then stated he would like to amend the motion to incorporate the term to also include the remainder of 2024. C. Mickelson stated he accepted that amendment without objection. All were in favor of this motion. C. Mickelson inquired about and T. Freeman asked if anyone had any further discussion about multiple terms. Conversation ensued to include M. Elkins and J. Speight, which J. Speight recommended no term limit. T. Freeman then stated the motion is to establish term limits of one year. C. Sedensky voted to table the discussion. T. Freeman declared the motion defeated and tabled for now.

- b) **Military and First Responders Football Game on September 6, 2024** – T. Freeman thanked the City of Green and Green Schools for recognizing this Commission at that game (September 6, 2024). T. Freeman stated the cadets were absolutely amazing at the game, wherein T. Freeman and C. Mickelson accepted the flag. T. Freeman went on to commend J. Speight for doing an excellent job with the students (cadets) as well. C. Mickelson also complimented J. Speight, specifically mentioning last year's Veterans Day.
- c) **Yearly Meeting Calendar Proposal** - T. Freeman addressed revisiting the calendar meetings. He asked if there were any conflicts in schedule, to where J. Carter and C. Sedensky added comment and conversation ensued. T. Freeman then suggested a start time of 5:30 p.m. as a result of that discussion. Conversation ensued. T. Freeman then proposed to drop the Wednesday alternative and have the meetings on the first Tuesday of every month. C. Sedensky seconded the motion. All were in favor. T. Freeman then made a motion for the monthly meetings to be held at 5:30 p.m. in lieu of 5:00 p.m. J. Suffecool seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion was then carried.
- d) **Ohio Sunshine Laws – Justin Speight** – T. Freeman asked if anyone had any questions on this topic. C. Mickelson asked if this is actually the City of Green Law Director's interpretation of the court findings to which J. Speight confirmed and summarized the law. He noted the Veterans Commission falls under an advisory authority commission therefore, it does not fall subject to the sunshine laws. C. Mickelson stated he wanted to have a clear understanding in the event the Commission met off site.
- e) **2024 Veterans Day Itinerary** – T. Freeman asked the other Commission members if they had viewed last year's video, to where the members stated they did and C. Mickelson was present at the event. T. Freeman stated M. Elkins was an excellent host at the previous year Veterans Day event and has agreed to do it again.

M. Elkins believes the Mayor's intent is to recognize the Veterans Advisory Commission members at this year's Veterans Day Ceremony. M. Elkins then introduced Communications Manager Valerie Wolford, whom he stated is very helpful and instrumental in putting together the Veterans and Memorial Day Ceremonies. She also handles all the communications that go out from the City. M. Elkins stated Commander Richard Scritchfield will be a guest speaker at the upcoming Veterans Day Ceremony.

V. Wolford gave a background history of how the Veterans Day events are put together. She stated one of the choirs from Green Local Schools will likely be at the event. There are several factors involved of whether there will be a guest speaker, and who that will be. V. Wolford added the Veterans Commission will be recognized as the first in Green and what their message is moving forward. The intent on Veterans Day is to thank Veterans. She likes to keep the event to about 30 minutes, which she feels is a good length.

T. Freeman inquired about the weather and if the event is usually indoors or outdoors. V. Wolford stated depending on the weather, the event may be held inside due to temperature, winds, rain, etc. Younger children and seniors also play a factor in that decision. It has been about five years since the event has been held outdoors.

C. Sedensky inquired if this event is separate from what is done in the school. V. Wolford and J. Speight stated that was correct. J. Speight stated the ROTC starts in the high school with a breakfast for Veterans. This is more so for the student body's relatives. Afterwards, there is a brief ceremony at the school. Following the ceremony, everyone is encouraged to go over to the city ceremony. V. Wolford stated the ROTC and the Green Fire Honor Guard perform together. If the event is held outside, the ROTC will put up the flags. J. Speight added the ROTC has also presented flags at the high school ceremony as well.

M. Elkins addressed T. Freeman with his earlier question regarding how often the event is held indoors. M. Elkins stated the event started November 11, 2010, and seven of those thirteen years have been indoors, adding to consider the factors mentioned earlier by V. Wolford that can affect the ceremony. V. Wolford stated the Queen of Heaven allows the City to hold the event indoors when needed and the City schedules it that way every year as a backup location. She stated there have been more in attendance before when there is a choir, as parent and grandparents like to come and watch their children. The average attendance is between 100-200.

C. Sedensky asked if there was a newsletter that can be send out to nursing homes to notify them of the event. V. Wolford stated the Mayor goes out to assisted living facilities, such as Green View, to invite them. V. Wolford further stated those facilities will also hold their own events. J. Speight added they (GHS JROTC) go mobile and visit approximately four nursing homes they are invited to and perform a special Veterans Day ceremony for them.

T. Freeman addressed the subject of promoting the event and people to invite mentioning Facebook, Instagram, and other platforms. V. Wolford stated there are different media avenues that are used. Conversation ensued on these topics.

T. Freeman inquired what the Commission can do further to lend assistance for the upcoming Veterans Day event. V. Wolford stated for the Commission being present and greeting can help, should they choose to volunteer. They can also lend their influence on those they know to attend by spreading the word to attend. M. Elkins added that word-of-mouth is the best way to let others know of the event. J. Carter requested when the flyer is completed, to send it to him so he can distribute it at his place of employment. He stated there are a lot of veterans there. T. Freeman asked that everyone think of ways by the next meeting to promote the event and have suggestions that can be made to the city for discussion.

J. Speight addressed the upcoming Veterans Day itinerary. A topic that was mentioned from a protocol perspective is the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem being back-to-back. Also addressed was the topic of the Pledge of Allegiance not being in the Veterans Day event, which would follow suit in the Memorial Day event where the Pledge is not recited. Discussion ensued on this topic.

V. Wolford discussed The Witness Tree and Warriors Journey Home at the Veterans Memorial, the meaning of it, and what is done. She suggested inviting someone from this organization (Warrior's Journey Home) to come to the next meeting. J. Carter stated he will attempt to get someone to attend, as he works with this at his job. J. Suffecool also suggested mentioning this at the Veterans Day Ceremony, which will be taking place at noon.

V. Wolford notified the Commission there is a magazine called Salute Magazine that will be mentioning this Commission in it. She asked to obtain a photograph of the Commission at the end of the meeting so she can send it to the magazine.

J. Speight also let the Commission know they can get a subscription to this magazine for free.

- f) J. Speight addressed the topic of flag folding vs. flag passing in regard to the Memorial Day Ceremony and Veterans Day Ceremony. He stated at the Memorial Day ceremony flag folding is typically done. At the Veterans Day ceremony, a flag passing is done. Conversation ensued on this topic.

C. Sedensky inquired of why there are taps or placement of the wreath on Veterans Day, as this is symbolic of someone who passes. She also inquired as to why this is not part of Memorial Day. Conversation ensued on this topic as well.

The Commission asked for review on possibly changing flag passing to flag folding and possible omission of taps from the Veterans Day Ceremony.

M. Elkins discussed the transition of when the American Flag is raised and Veterans are asked to stand and be recognized. Conversation ensued with C. Sedensky and C. Mickelson on the omission of taps and the wreath placement at the Veterans Day Ceremony. J. Suffecool additionally asked for clarification of flag folding and flag passing at the Veterans Day Ceremony and whether there would be enough time to make those changes. J. Speight stated the cadets will have enough time to prepare for those changes in the upcoming ceremony. J. Speight further commented that if the event is held inside, they could always do a POW ★ MIA presentation. Conversation ensued on further ceremony details.

V. Wolford stated that taking out some other items would leave more time for the guest speaker. C. Mickelson clarified the following to be removed: pledge of allegiance, wreath ceremony, and taps. The flag folding is to change to flag passing. All members confirmed. J. Speight confirmed with M. Elkins that there is nothing being done with the flags if the event is indoors. C. Mickelson inquired if somewhere in the itinerary The Warrior's Journey Home will be mentioned. M. Elkins stated it will in the Mayor's remarks at the end.

#### **VIII. New Business –**

- a) **Summit County Veterans Service Commission** - C. Mickelson inquired as to whether the Summit County Veterans Service Commission could make a presentation to this Commission and Green Council to identify Veterans Services available to veterans as part of their video archive and some other possible different methods of presentation. Conversation ensued on this topic.
- b) **Fund Raiser for WWII Monument** – T. Freeman stated this is a topic the city has asked the Commission to review. It (WWII Memorial) is a beautiful brick

construction. The Parks Department has asked of a way to incorporate a brick or asphalt pathway to access it. Pictures were shared with commission members that show a couple of ways of how this can be accomplished for access. Conversation ensued of how this could be accomplished. M. Elkins stated he will email a rendering of what the connection to the monuments could look like. Conversation ensued more on information for the monument as Phase II.

- c) **Subcommittees – Reference Memo September 19, 2024** – T. Freeman wanted to address: his vision of what the commission could incorporate and contribute to the city, share ideas with the Mayor; C. Mickelson’s items in his presentation; organization of events in addition to Memorial Day and Veterans Day; and additions to the website with links for veterans to help them find resources available to them. He also asked other members to come up with further ideas and plans.
- d) **MAPS Air Museum Event – October 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>** - J. Speight announced that on October 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. the MAPS Air Museum is having a Veterans Resource Fair. There are a lot of resources and information at this event.

#### IX. Adjournment -

T. Freeman adjourned the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Tim Freeman, Chair

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Date

ATTEST:

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Johanna Gooding, Secretary

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Date