



City of Green
Meeting Minutes
Veterans Advisory Commission

November 5, 2024 | 5:30 pm | CAB

I. Call to Order

Chair Tim Freeman called to order the regular meeting of the Veterans Advisory Commission at 5:30 p.m. on November 5, 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
Johanna Gooding – Division Secretary

Public Comments: Reverend John Schluep, Warriors Journey Home
Melanie Williamson, Warriors Journey Home

IV. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the October 1, 2024 meeting were approved after noting a date correction.

V. Citizen Comments

Guest Presentation: Warrior's Journey Home

- a) Reverend Schluep presented on Warrior's Journey Home, a program aiding veterans' mental health and spiritual recovery. Highlights included:
 - i) **The Witness Tree:** A symbolic event held from November 1–11 to honor veterans affected by mental health issues, including PTSD and moral injury. (Green's Witness Tree is located in Veterans Memorial Park)

- ii) **Program Scope:** Services include monthly support circles, prayer, and purification rituals aimed at healing veterans.
- iii) **Future Collaboration:** Discussion on incorporating the Witness Tree into the city's Veterans Day ceremony.

VI. Unfinished Business

a) Veterans Day Ceremony Itinerary

- i) **Date & Time:** November 11 at 10:45 AM, weather permitting, held outdoors.
- ii) **Commission Participation:** Commission members requested to arrive by 10:35 AM for recognition during the Mayor's opening remarks.
- iii) **Witness Tree Integration:** Proposal to integrate the Witness Tree into the Veterans Day ceremony, potentially after the flag ceremony.

b) Community Outreach and Engagement Goals

- i) **Support for Military Families:** Suggested creating a family readiness group for families of new enlistees (GHS students), local reservists and National Guard members.
- ii) **Military Career Fair Expansion:** Proposed a community-wide career fair to support individuals considering military service. Mr. Speight suggested relocating the scheduled Military Career Fair from Green High School to Central Park's Community I. Mr. Speight requested the Veterans Advisor Commission attend the fair.
- iii) **Veteran Input Survey:** Commission members discussed developing an on-line survey to gauge local veterans' needs, including their interest in attending future events.
- iv) **Funding Initiatives:** Exploring options for paver sales and other fundraising activities to support Veterans Memorial enhancements, specifically, a hard surface walkway to the WWII replica memorial within Veterans Memorial Park. Suggestions included leveraging Eagle Scout projects for installation.
- v) **Bricks and Banners:** Continuation of paver sales and potential addition of memorial banners as funding sources.

VII. New Business –

- a) **Veterans Resource Fair:** Commission discussed organizing a veterans fair to provide direct access to local resources and benefits information.
- b) **Effective Communication:** Commission members discussed having a regular presence in the city's Our Town newsletter informing veterans and their families about support services and events.
- c) **VA "Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents, Survivors, and Caregivers":** The three URLs below provide access to the VA "Federal Benefits for Veterans,

Dependents, Survivors, and Caregivers” pamphlet that outlines the benefits to which veterans and their families may be eligible.

The first URL accesses a webpage that allows the visitor to download the pdf file of the referenced document.

https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.va.gov%2Fopa%2Fpublications%2Fbenefits_book.asp&data=05%7C02%7Cjgooding%40cityofgreen.org%7Cde339f85093c42f6f9fd08dcff262674%7Ce9a7a1518e9a4450925806671bbc24fb%7C0%7C1%7C638665786601864048%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIlwLjAuMDAwMCIslIAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoiTWFpbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=kOlR94rpBoVTeqaT68%2BDknTh6yNK4OC%2BcbYl0H%2FNz%2F4%3D&reserved=0

The second URL opens the referenced document for direct viewing on the government website.

https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.va.gov%2Fopa%2Fpublications%2Fbenefits_book%2F2023_Federal_Benefits_for_Veterans_Dependents_and_survivors.pdf&data=05%7C02%7Cjgooding%40cityofgreen.org%7Cde339f85093c42f6f9fd08dcff262674%7Ce9a7a1518e9a4450925806671bbc24fb%7C0%7C1%7C638665786601885424%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIlwLjAuMDAwMCIslIAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoiTWFpbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=buK%2BRHw4NxaKIGV8qUrz6MtJk1TFb6gtlWdUAGeGSoc%3D&reserved=0

The third URL accesses a webpage from which printed copies of the referenced document can be purchased for \$10.00 each.

<https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbookstore.gpo.gov%2Fproducts%2Ffederal-benefits-veteransdependents-survivors-and-caregivers-2023&data=05%7C02%7Cjgooding%40cityofgreen.org%7Cde339f85093c42f6f9fd08dcff262674%7Ce9a7a1518e9a4450925806671bbc24fb%7C0%7C1%7C638665786601894466%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIlwLjAuMDAwMCIslIAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoiTWFpbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=pumvfh%2Baa5kpDEcWaXElqDecgqs3Czf%2B5xSZOQ4Yvw%3D&reserved=0>

Copy each URL as it appears above and paste it into a web-browser address bar to access the desired web page.

After reviewing the document, you can reach out to the Summit County Veterans Service Commission (SCVSC) at 1060 East Waterloo Road, Akron, Ohio 44306 or check their web-page

<https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.vscsummitoh.us%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cjgooding%40cityofgreen.org%7Cde339f85093c42f6f9fd08dcff262674%7Ce9a7a1518e9a4450925806671bbc24fb%7C0%7C1%7C638665786601902746%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIlwLjAuMDAwMCIslIAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoiTWFpbClslldUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C60000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=LOWm2XigSNRdjEvV3mWr86PA5eYTFD02bc3bLjGdX78%3D&reserved=0> for

additional details.

VIII. Other Business

- a) **Community Meeting for Veterans:** Proposal to host a "Veterans Night" to gather feedback from veterans directly.
- b) **Public Attendance at Meetings:** The Commission aims to increase community presence at meetings.

IX. Adjournment -

Tim Freeman adjourned the meeting at 6:59 p.m.

APPROVED:

Tim Freeman, Chair

Date

ATTEST:

Johanna Gooding, Secretary

Date