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**MEMORANDUM**  
Parks & Recreation Department

**TO:** A. Jerome Fletcher II, ICMA-CM, MPA, City Manager

**THROUGH:** Juliana B. Bellia, Assistant City Manager  
Sandy Pfundheller, Parks & Recreation Director *SP*  
Trish Sturgess, Assistant Director, Parks & Recreation *TS*

**FROM:** Jeff Nelson, Parks & Grounds Manager *JN*

**SUBJECT:** Veterans Park Ad Hoc Committee Meeting, March 27, 2024, Action Items

**DATE:** April 3, 2024

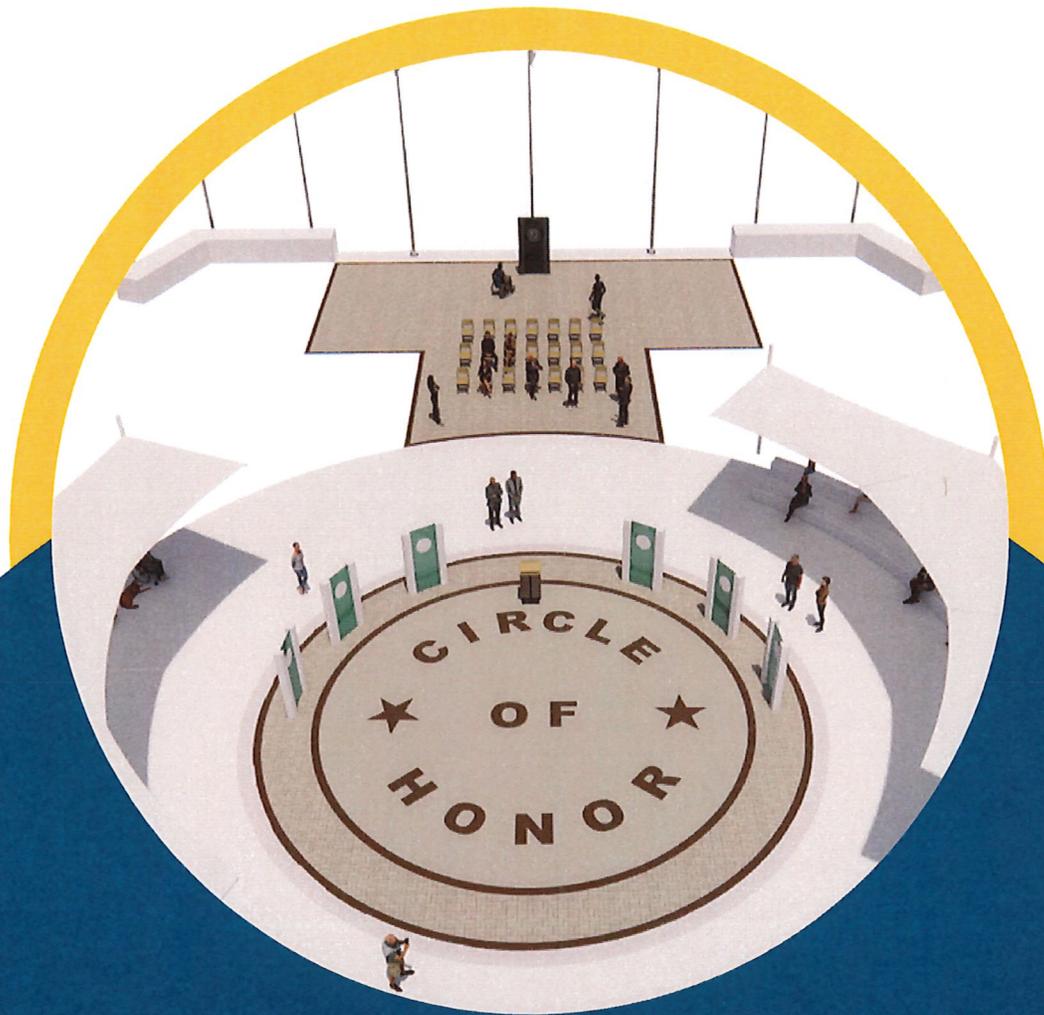
During the Veterans Park Ad Hoc Committee Meeting on March 27, 2024, the following actions were taken by the Board:

- A motion was made by Board Member Bailey, seconded by Board Member Stephens, to approve and submit the annual report. The motion carried unanimously on voice vote.
  - A copy of the report is attached for review.

Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

JN/TS/SP/JB

# VETERANS PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2023 Annual Report





# 2023

## VETERANS PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

William A. English – Chair – Public at Large

Kevin J Burris – Vice Chair – Public at Large

Donald F Bailey – Member – Amvets Post 312

David Rambo – Member – VFW Post 8203

Sergio Stephens – Member – Veteran of the Armed Services

Melodi Wilson – Member – American Legion Post 254

**The City Commission tasks the Veterans Park Advisory Committee with making recommendations regarding the planning and development of a new Veterans Park at the North Port City Center, at the location identified.**

The Veterans Park Advisory Committee shall, within one year of its first meeting, provide the City Commission with the following recommendations:

- A.** A proposed name and general concept for the design for the Veterans Park and desired amenities. This proposal shall include recommendations from community members and stakeholders;
- B.** Possible funding, sponsorship, and grant opportunities, including recommendations from community members and stakeholders;
- C.** American with Disabilities ( ADA) considerations for accessibility, shade, lighting, and other concerns;
- D.** Proposed educational, historical, and cultural opportunities;
- E.** Other ideas for design and monuments within the Veterans Park; and
- F.** Other recommendations related to Veterans Park as the City Commission may direct from time to time.

The Veterans Park Advisory Committee shall provide input and other recommendations to the Parks & Recreation Department related to initiatives to obtain funding, sponsorships, and donations for the Veterans Park's planning, design, and construction.

# 2023

## VETERANS PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee's goals for 2023 included determining a donation process that included marketing advertisements, a final design and ground breaking event, and corporate donations.

The Veterans Park Advisory Committee has carefully reviewed and considered various aspects of the planning and development of a new Veterans Park at the North Port City Center. This report outlines the committee's recommendations regarding the previously approved conceptual design, features, and considerations for the park.

### **Design:**

1. Remove raised edge around circle for complete accessibility.
2. Add etching of soldiers and an oath to the entry arch.
3. Include covered areas with space for wheelchairs as an essential part of the park's design.
4. Considered areas for donations, including benches, engraved pavers, plants, and brass plaques.

### **Fundraising and Donations:**

1. Draft a letter requesting donations and identify a recognition program for contributors.
2. Utilize the existing Tribute Program for donations.
3. Develop sponsorship area to accommodate various levels of monetary donations.

### **Special Features:**

1. Install of a "Wind Phone" in the area of the "Circle of Honor" as a place for reflection.
2. Integrate a POW memorial into the park's design.

### **Accessibility and Environmental Considerations:**

1. Include a connector sidewalk for ADA accessibility.
2. Relocate one Gopher Tortoise den onsite.
3. Retain as many native trees as possible and replace trees with native species.

The City of North Port Parks & Recreation Department has an existing Tribute Program that this committee feels serves as a way for contributions to be accepted. The program currently includes options for a tree, bench or paver donation. Staff is researching avenues to expand this program to include amenities compatible with the circle of honor.

# 2023

## VETERANS PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Veterans Park Advisory Committee fully supports the final design as presented, which incorporates the recommendations of the committee. We believe that the proposed design will create a meaningful and accessible space that honors our veterans and provides a place for reflection and remembrance. We commend the efforts of the design team in incorporating our suggestions and look forward to the successful planning and development of the new Veterans Park at the North Port City Center.

