

**West St. Paul
Beyond the Yellow Ribbon
Minutes of April 2, 2019**

1) Call Meeting to Order and Introductions

Chair Le called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chair Sherrie Le
Committee Members:
SSG Ralph Blystone
Secretary/Treasurer Shirley Buecksler
Ed Iago
Mark Juelfs
Gene Kahnke
Mary Kahnke
Marijo McBride,
Jesse Mettner
Melissa Pond-Benesh

Also Present: Dustin Rockow, Dakota County Veterans Services
Mike Windsperger, Yellow Ribbon Regional Outreach Coordinator
for Central Minnesota

2) Approve Minutes of March 5, 2019

Motion was made by McBride and seconded by Iago to approve the minutes of March 5, 2019, as presented.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.

3) Treasurer's Report

Buecksler provided the Treasurer's report for the Committee, which is attached to the minutes as part of the record.

Account Activity since the March 5, 2019 Meeting:

- Oxendale's sent a check from customer donations in the amount of \$631.00
- Tapemark sent a check for a donation in the amount of \$5,000
- Both checks were deposited on March 25, 2019

Current Balances:

- Checking: \$7,678.48
- Savings: \$6,189.00

Buecksler asked the Committee for approval to transfer funds from checking to savings. The Committee agreed to leave \$2,000.00 in checking and transfer any amount above that to savings.

Iago said that South Robert Street Business Association holds a balance of \$1,000.00 for Beyond the Yellow Ribbon to use. Buecksler will add this to the Treasurer's report for tracking.

4) Old Business

A. Recruitment of Volunteers to Assist Veterans

Chair Le said volunteers are needed to mow lawns, babysit, clean, etc. Iago said he knows someone who can do snow removal, lawn maintenance, and other labor. Iago will set up a meeting with him.

Chair Le said volunteers are also needed to assist military spouses during deployment, such as moving large items. M. Kahnke said that Dakota County has a list of volunteers on their website to choose from including contacts for them. She suggested contacting Lisa Thomas directly or call the office at 651-554-5601.

B. West St. Paul Beyond the Yellow Ribbon - Facebook

Chair Le said there is a page set up for West St. Paul Beyond the Yellow Ribbon on Facebook but that it has not been updated since 2014. On April 16, Chair Le will be meeting with other Cities. Once we figure out which Cities we will be merging with, Chair Le said there will be members from each of those Cities on the Committee. She added that there may be someone interested and experienced with Facebook from this new group.

C. Upcoming Merger Meeting, April 16

Chair Le said she has had conversations with South St. Paul regarding a veteran who needs assistance. She said information came from the VA in St. Cloud who contacted Mike Windsperger and that they are seeking confidentiality regarding this veteran's name. Windsperger said he will contact either the St. Cloud VA or the Dakota County Veterans Service Center for more information.

Currently, this South St. Paul veteran is receiving WIC (Women, Infants and Children) assistance for their baby. They need diapers, wipes, baby boy clothes, gas vouchers, etc. Sizes needed are:

Diapers size 2 and 3
Boy clothes 12 months and up
Wipes
Bottles
Nipples 6 month and 12-18 month sizes

Pacifier 0-6 month size
Liquid glycerin
Sippy cups
Gas cards for getting to medical appointments

Chair Le suggested purchasing items and bringing them to Dakota County where the veteran can pick them up. She said we can purchase a \$100 value gas card from Pace's, which will only cost \$50 for the Yellow Ribbon. She added that South St. Paul will assist with funding but that South St. Paul Yellow Ribbon didn't respond to this request. She said they do not have funds to assist veterans. Until they merge with West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon or get funding to help veterans, the West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon has been assisting South St. Paul veterans.

Iago asked if the County has vetted this person. Windsperger said they have already dealt with the County so their name hasn't come up. He added that both parents are veterans and they recently had a vehicle accident and one of them is still recovering.

Chair Le asked the Committee how much should be spent to help these veterans. Iago said Target is a partner and he will also check with Cub to see if the Yellow Ribbon has credit on account yet.

Pond-Benesh suggested a \$50 gas card.

McBride said the West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon has helped several families from South St. Paul, even assisting one family a few times. She said if we can help, we shouldn't distinguish just because they don't live in West St. Paul.

Iago asked Windsperger to find out how much the family needs. Iago proposed a minimum of \$250.00.

The Committee agreed on \$250.00 for items beyond diapers and wipes from Cub and gas from Pace's.

5) Liaison Reports

A. County and Military Resources Updates

The County Yellow Ribbon meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on April 24 at the Northern Service Center but there hasn't been a regular presence at Dakota County Yellow Ribbon meetings from West St. Paul. Iago said he will attend future meetings. M. Kahnke said she will attend the next meeting to say farewell.

B. Business/Fundraising Update

Iago said he is working to see if businesses are interested in offering military discounts. He said that not many businesses attend the South Robert Street Business Association meetings, about 20 each time. He said he will prepare a different

program letter for them to respond with a yes or no regarding the discount program. Iago said he reminded them that they are doing this for both veterans and their businesses.

Iago said he met with Chair Le and Burkhardt to lay out a brief sales kit to take into businesses when meeting with them and leave it for them to use as an informational piece. Chair Le suggested using folders with documents inside. She asked Dan Nowicki to complete the new folders by April 16. She also said it can be done sooner if it is a sticker and not printed directly onto the folder. Iago suggested it be the name and photograph only. Chair Le said it could be done by the end of the week.

Chair Le made some edits to Iago's letter prior to the meeting. The Committee reviewed and edited the document. Iago said he would like to see the document shorter in order to be able to sell it. He suggested adding the Red Bull logo to the top of the second page. He also said his original draft had wording from the National Guard's website. He said a photo of a vet should be at the bottom. Iago will redraft the letter and send it out to everyone.

Chair Le said the final version will be put in the folder for Iago to bring out to prospective community partners and service providers, as well as at the April 16 meeting.

6) New Business

A. West St. Paul Yellow Ribbon Booth at Harmon Park Festival, May 18

Chair Le described the Harmon Park Festival. Nowicki is creating a banner for the Yellow Ribbon booth. Both Chair Le and Iago will be there. Chair Le said she will set up prior to 2:00 p.m. and then staff the booth from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 or 6:00 p.m.

Rockow said he will bring some handouts to include at the booth.

Iago said he would like to bring a flag from City Hall to use at the booth. The Committee was in agreement.

B. Upcoming Yellow Ribbon Conference

Joining Community Forces Event
May 22, 2019, 7:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Bethel University, St. Paul

Chair Le, Pond-Benesh and Buecksler will be attending. Iago said that he may decide to go, as well.

7) Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Yellow Ribbon meeting is scheduled for 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 7, 2019.

8) Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:43 p.m.

Shirley R Buecksler
Secretary/Treasurer