

WSP Yellow Ribbon Committee
WSP City Hall Lobby Conference Room
Tuesday, August 6, 2019
2:31-3:57 PM
Meeting Minutes

Present: **Hayley Ball**, ISD 197; **Sgt. Ralph Blystone**, ACO 2-135 Inf; **Jan Bremner**, WSP Yellow Ribbon volunteer coordinator and West St. Paul community member; **Julie Burkhardt**, West St. Paul community member; **Neil Garlock**, Mendota Heights mayor; **Missie Hickey**, WSP Yellow Ribbon volunteer; **Ed Iago**, WSP Yellow Ribbon business liaison and former WSP City Council member; **Gene Kahnke**, West St. Paul community member; **Mary Kahnke**, West St. Paul community member; **Sherrie Le**, WSP Yellow Ribbon chair and former West St. Paul assistant city manager; **Bradley Legrid**, Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans [MACV]; **Marijo McBride**, West St. Paul community member; **Brian Mielke**, Mendota mayor; **Melissa Pond-Benesh**, WSP Yellow Ribbon vice chair and Dakota County Library Wentworth librarian; **Mary Schultz**, Lilydale city administrator; **Lisa Thomas**, Dakota County Veterans Services

1. Call Meeting to Order
Sherrie Le called the meeting to order at 2:31 PM. In Shirley Buecksler's absence, Melissa Pond-Benesh took meeting minutes and notes.
2. Approve Minutes from July 2, 2019, meeting
Tabled until September 3, 2019, meeting.
3. Treasurer's Report
Secretary/treasurer Shirley Buecksler was absent. Treasurer's report tabled until September 3, 2019, meeting.
4. Old Business:
 - a. Finalize Planning for August 18, 2019, Military Appreciation Event
 - i. Food
We are planning for 140 in attendance – a mix of National Guard members, significant others, and children in a wide array of ages.
Sgt. Blystone reports the Armory has ordered hamburgers and hotdogs and will also provide ketchup, mustard, chips, and Gatorade. Will also bring 5-6 additional tables.
Jan Bremner has noted four volunteers offering to bring cold salads, two volunteers bringing bars, and one volunteer (our very own Julie Burkhardt) bringing three dozen delicious cookies (and extras for today's Yellow Ribbon meeting – thank you, Julie!).
 - ii. Groceries
Ed Iago has connected with Oxendale's to receive a significant donation of our grocery list and the remaining items to be purchased at cost (totaling \$225.49) with two respective \$100 donations from West St. Paul City Council members, Anthony Fernandez and Bob Pace, and funds to cover the remaining balance, and has also noted a donation of coffee and donut holes from Dunkin Donuts to be delivered to the Armory by Ed Iago and Gene Kahnke earlier in the morning on August 18.
 - iii. Activities and Games
The Armory will be providing various sporting equipment (footballs, soccer balls, softballs). There will also be Giant Jenga and, for children, a bounce house (with extension cord and needing access to outlet).

The foot golf course will have equipment there.

Volunteers Missie Hickey and Theresa O'Neil will also bring assorted games, such as a ring toss, a gunnysack game, BINGO, etc.

iv. Food Volunteers and Tasks

09:30 – Sherrie Le will arrive at the West St. Paul Sports Complex (1650 Oakdale Avenue) to unlock and begin setting up

10:00 – Grillers and food begin arriving. Ed Iago and Gene Kahnke will be bringing groceries, along with bringing the donation from Dunkin Donuts to the Armory. Volunteers will be dropping off cold salads and desserts at the WSP Sports Complex.

11:30 – Serving volunteers should arrive and check in with volunteer coordinator Jan Bremner.

12:00 – Begin serving National Guard members and their families and volunteer help.

12:45/13:00 – Cleanup from lunch and transition into games and activities.

v. Games and Activities Volunteers and Tasks

Jan Bremner and Missie Hickey will come up with a list of adults' and children's games and activities to share at the event.

WSP Royalty will assist with games.

Shirley Buecksler to assist with bounce house.

South Metro Fire may bring fire engine.

vi. Cleanup & Concerns

Committee members and volunteers remaining at event to help with cleanup.

While the legitimate concern of security was brought up, especially in light of recent events, we are reassured there are many National Guard members who are also peace officers, medics, and first responders who are prepared to deal with urgent situations, should any arise.

b. Continued Merger Discussions

i. Board within Steering Committee & Officer Positions

For 2020, Sherrie Le will step into the role as past chair, Melissa Pond-Benesh and Neil Garlock as co-chairs, Mary Schultz as secretary, and remaining in the following positions: Shirley Buecksler as treasurer, Ed Iago as business liaison, and Jan Bremner as volunteer coordinator.

ii. Action Plan

Sherrie Le has been working with Mike Windsperger to update the action plan to include all four cities – Lilydale, Mendota, Mendota Heights, and West St. Paul – in preparation for the merger.

iii. Process for Gubernatorial Proclamation

The action plan will need to be approved before the official gubernatorial proclamation for the creation of Northern Dakota County Beyond the Yellow Ribbon.

iv. Financial Agent and Financial Institution.

Because Neighbors Inc. is our financial agent, the merger and subsequent name change will have to be approved, along with the updating the incoming officers and for the potential transfer of accounts to another financial institution, by the Neighbors Inc. board at their regular quarterly meeting.

5. Liaison Reports

a. County and Military Resources Updates

- i. Lisa Thomas shared that requests from South St. Paul resident veterans may be coming soon; requests will be sent to the yellowribbon@weststpaulmn.gov email, checked regularly by Ed Iago and to be forwarded to Sherrie Le at her new email, sle4108@gmail.com.
 - ii. Brad Legrid reported MACV has been awarded a substantial National Guard Grant to help provide direct support services for those military-connected individuals who do not meet the official federal and state standard definitions for veteran status. With this funding, MACV will be able to assist individuals who have received eviction notices or who need utility payment assistance to prevent homelessness, and who may need direct financial assistance in getting out of a situation of homelessness.
 - b. Business/Fundraising Update
 - i. Ed Iago has put in much work securing donations for the August 18 appreciation event (reference note 4.a.ii.), along with potential upcoming donations from the Minnesota Auto Dealers Association, Arctic Glacier (formerly North Star Ice), and Energy Solutions. Ed Iago has also requested that representatives from Lilydale, Mendota, and Mendota Heights please share their respective communities' business contacts with him for outreach and potential fundraising opportunities.
- 6. New Business
 - a. Congratulations are in order to Mary and Gene Kahnke for being recognized at the July 31, 2019, Dakota County Beyond the Yellow Ribbon meeting for their longtime service and dedication to military-connected individuals and families in our community. Thank you so much, Mary and Gene, for all you have done and continue to do!
- 7. Next Event Sunday, August 18, & Next Meeting Tuesday, September 3, 2:30 PM
The next monthly meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 3, from 2:30-3:30 PM, at the West St. Paul Municipal Center administrative conference room.
- 8. Adjourn
Meeting adjourned at 3:57 PM.

Submitted August 7, 2019
Melissa Pond-Benesh, vice chair