

July 26, 2021

Meeting Minutes

President Shanda Vaughn rang the bell and called the meeting to order. **Jeff Spears** gave the pledge and invocation. **Gould Hagler** gave the Sunshine Report today. Club members introduced their guests in attendance today.

Announcements

President Shanda shared the upcoming meeting schedule which includes;

- 8/2/21 - Burn Foundation Steve Chalker
- 8/9/21 - Ft Gordon Update COL Shaw Pick
- 8/16/21 - College Football Kick-Off
- 8/23/21 - United Way Kick-Off
- 8/30/21 - AU Pediatric Oncology Dr. Theodore Johnson
- 9/6/21 - No Meeting-Labor Day
- 9/13/21 - Rotary Foundation Hamsa Thota

Rotarian Highlight

None presented today.

President Shanda asked everyone to please continue to contribute to the blue buckets on the table or online at mycartfund.org using the same login credentials you use with DACDB.

SAVE THE DATES

- GreenJackets Game-Friday, September 10, 2021 (game time is 7:05 pm \$25 per ticket)
- Top Golf- Monday, October 18, 2021 (11-2)
- Veterans Day Program- Monday, November 8, 2021(12:15-1:15)
- Rotary Family Christmas-Monday, December 20, 2021(12:15-1:15)
- Signature Fundraiser-Monday, February 14, 2022 TBD
- Annual Golf Tournament-Tuesday, May 3, 2022 TBD

New Member Orientation

- Tuesday, October 19, 2021 (4:30-5:30)
- Tuesday, January 18, 2021 (4:30-5:30)
- Tuesday, April 19, 2021 (4:30-5:30)

Committee Updates

Susan Jernigan, Chair of the GRSP Committee, will be meeting with her Committee on today immediately following the Club meeting.

Veterans Day Celebration

The celebration will be held on 11/8/2021. If you are a veteran or someone in your immediately family is a veteran or currently serving in the military, please email President Shanda at vaughnshanda@gmail.com with your branch of service, rank and years of service.

Paul Harris Fellow Presentation

President Shanda has pins for club members and will present them as soon as possible.

Guest Speaker/Program

Sue Parr introduced our guest speakers **Mr. Bob Young and Mr. Don Clark**, Co-Chairs of the Augusta Veterans Cemetery Project. The cemetery will be state owned and operated, but will be constructed by the Veterans Administration. Augusta is a prime location for this project because of the strong military presence here. The cemetery will honor military personnel and their spouses. Exemptions also allow for dependent children to be buried in this cemetery.

Both speakers discussed the evolution of the cemetery project and updated the group on the current status. While Mr. Young was serving as Augusta's Mayor in 2000, the idea of a cemetery honoring veterans and their families was hatched. The original plan included putting the location at Ft. Gordon, however, the terrorist attack on 9/11 caused those plans to be put on hold.

The project sat on a shelf until 2019 when Commissioner Bill Fennoy asked Mr. Young and Mr. Clark to try again. Through their efforts, the state appropriated \$1 million to the project. This amount represents 10% of the funding needed for the project and is required in order to get the Georgia Department of Veterans Services to support the project.

The group has acquired over 200 acres of property behind the Gracewood State School and Hospital off of Tobacco Road to build the cemetery. The Augusta Richmond County Commission has also agreed to fund the demolition of 35 buildings currently on the property and an access road.

The Veterans Administration will review grant requests and announce in October if this project will receive any funding in the current fiscal year. It is typical for funding to be denied the first year of the request and then reconsidered in future years. Now that the application has been submitted, it will remain in the VA system until funded or withdrawn.

It is anticipated that the cemetery will be able to hold burials in three to four years. Once fully operational, it is anticipated the cemetery will hold 750 burials per year. The facility will employ 6-8 people and operational expenses will be paid by the State of Georgia. This location will be a tremendous asset for the area since the only other locations close to us are in Columbia, SC and Milledgeville, GA. Mr. Young described it as "Augusta's Arlington".

In closing, he thanked Governor Kemp, Mike Roby with the Georgia Department of Veterans Services, and the Augusta Richmond County Commissioners for their support of this project.

The speaker for next week will be Mr. Steve Chalker who will update us on the Burn Foundation activities.

President Shanda led us in reciting the four-way test and then adjourned the meeting.