



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, January 28, 2020

Council Session

Item G-18

**#2020-33 - Approving Support of Establishment of a State
Veterans Cemetery**

Staff Contact: Jerry Janulewicz

Council Agenda Memo

From: Jerry Janulewicz, City Administrator

Meeting: January 28, 2020

Subject: Resolution of Support for Establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery.

Presenter(s): Jerry Janulewicz, City Administrator

Background

During the current session of the Nebraska Legislature, Senators Quick and Brewer introduced LB911 which provides for the establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery in Grand Island on lands to include the Nebraska State Veterans Home Cemetery located at the intersection of Capital Avenue and Webb Road. Currently, the only Nebraska State Veterans Cemeteries are located in Box Butte and Sarpy Counties. Creation of a State Veterans Cemetery in Grand Island is supported by the Hall County Board of Commissioners and by a group of Veterans advocates, who are requesting that the City Council and Mayor express support for the establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery through adoption of a resolution of support.

Discussion

State veterans cemeteries are typically developed utilizing grant funds made available to states by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Project grants are not considered until the state has acquired title to the lands to be developed and have appropriated the necessary matching funds required by the grant. In addition to these basic requirements, the VA typically will require sufficient cemetery area to accommodate the projected burial needs for a minimum of 20 years, and include necessary parking, assembly, and other areas necessary for a properly functioning cemetery. Thus, the area that comprises the current cemetery is not sufficient for a State Veterans Cemetery. Additional lands from the City will be required by the State before submitting a cemetery development grant application to the VA. If LB911 is enacted, City administration will engage in discussions with the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs to determine the desired area to be conveyed for the cemetery and the terms of any such transfer.

Alternatives

It appears that the Council has the following alternatives concerning the issue at hand.
The Council may:

1. Move to approve
2. Refer the issue to a Committee
3. Postpone the issue to future date
4. Take no action on the issue

Recommendation

City Administration recommends approval of the Resolution supporting the establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery in Grand Island.

Sample Motion

Move to approve the resolution.

RESOLUTION 2020-33

WHEREAS, LB911 before the Legislature of Nebraska, One Hundred Sixth Legislature, Second Session, was introduced by Senators Quick and Brewer; and

WHEREAS, if enacted, LB911 directs the Director of the Nebraska Department of Veterans Affairs to negotiate with the City of Grand Island for acquisition of lands for the establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery and to seek grant funds for development of the same; and

WHEREAS, a State Veterans Cemetery in Grand Island would consist of the existing Nebraska State Veterans Home Cemetery and additional abutting lands sufficient in size to qualify for development grant funds from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the members of the City Council and Mayor of the City of Grand Island desire to express their collective support for the establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery at the site of the former Nebraska State Veterans Home Cemetery.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA, that the City Council and Mayor of the City of Grand Island hereby supports the establishment of a State Veterans Cemetery at the site of the former Nebraska State Veterans Home Cemetery.

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Adopted by the City Council of the City of Grand Island, Nebraska, on January 28, 2020.

Roger G. Steele, Mayor

Attest:

RaNae Edwards, City Clerk

Approved as to Form	☐ _____
January 24, 2020	☐ City Attorney