

Point of Honor memorial vandalized

October 20, 2022



The Crescent City Council on Monday shared condolences and support to those hoping to rebuild a part of the Point of Honor memorial dedicated to Hmong veterans which was recently destroyed by being ripped off its foundation and shattered.

The obelisk which specifically thanks the Hmong and Laotian veterans who assisted the United States in what has been called “The Secret War” was destroyed after dark over the weekend. Police have no leads as to who might have committed the vandalism, but it’s been speculated it would have to have been a group of people due to the weight of the granite memorial.

The monument featured an inscribed stone dedicated to the Hmong who fought as U.S. allies during secret campaigns into Laos and Cambodia. The secret fighters boosted U.S. military efforts in the Vietnam War. Many Hmong refugees resettled in America after the war.

The damage to the Hmong obelisk was too extensive to fix, therefore it will have to be re-made, according to officials.

Police Chief Richard Griffin expressed dismay at the Hmong section of the memorial being targeted.

“We’re considering it a hate crime,” he said. “While these kinds of things are hard to solve and I’m not making any promises, we will call for special circumstances if we find who did this.”

Councilor Blake Inscore echoed the chief’s dismay and offered help in restoring the memorial.

“We may have some funds we can offer to assist in rebuilding this for our community.” Mayor Jason Greenough shook his head in dismay at the destruction of the memorial and all vowed to rebuild it.

There was also discussion about putting in a camera and streaming images as well as lights in order to prevent further vandalism.

The Point of Honor was dedicated in July of 2019 at the corner of Front Street and Highway 101 in Crescent City. The monuments obelisks are seven foot tall and made of granite with 41 names on a wall of those who gave their lives from the community.

The cost of the Point of Honor was \$175,000 including \$20,000 for maintenance costs, which may be used to replace the vandalized obelisk.

Meantime, veterans’ groups plan to begin fund raising to replace the Hmong monument at the Point of Honor.

The Crescent City Council also heard from GRI Consulting, which was hired to evaluate roads in the city and told council one third of the city’s streets are in what they call “fair” condition which means the streets are still OK but need upgrading.

“We need to jump into action before it gets expensive,” according to consultant Lindsi Hammond.

She suggested surface treatment now to save money on future treatment if the roads fall into disrepair.

Hammond also informed council that a quarter of the streets are in poor condition and need repair at a greater expense.

She offered several possible options from maintaining the streets in current condition at a cost of roughly \$250,000 per year or go in and fix the backlog of streets at a current cost of \$7.5 million. She told the council if they wait, that amount will go up to closer to \$18.7 million.

Councilors praised Measure S, which increased sales tax by 1% generating roughly \$1.3 million for general use like street repair. The measure passed in 2020 and it gives the council flexibility for projects like road repair.

Next steps will be a workshop to decide road priorities.

The Council, meeting as the Housing Authority, also agreed in its Monday meeting to offer up to 30 vouchers for Crescent City unhoused residents to occupy the Legacy which is being converted from a motel to permanent housing.

The Legacy is a Del Norte County owned property which is being converted into permanent occupancy.

The city's voucher program will assist in funding as it shows the building is needed and will have full occupancy.

Inscore described issuing the vouchers as a win/win.

"It provides us an opportunity to place people and show that we have a need that's being met," he said.