



MEETING MINUTES
ADVISORY MILITARY and VETERANS LIAISON COMMITTEE
MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2021 – 6:00 P.M.
ONLINE – ZOOM WEB CONFERENCING
NORWALK, CT 06851

1. **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** the meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jeff DeWitt.

2. **PUBLIC FORUM:**

a. None.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

a. Present (6): Jeff DeWitt, Chair; Irene Dixon, Mayor Rilling's Staff; Leon Breault, Veteran At-large; Howard Dixon, Veteran At-large; Brian Griffin, Norwalk Chamber of Commerce (by phone) and new Veteran At-large Paulo Barros.

b. Absent or excused (4): Orlando Aquino, Community Health Center; Deanna D'Amore – Health Department; Matt Seebeck, Veteran At-large; Fred Wilms, Financial Services Chair; Bryan Rooney, Veteran At-large.

c. **A reminder**, there are vacancies for Vice Chairman and a legal advisor. In addition, there is one vacancy for an At-Large veteran who is interested in getting involved.

4. **COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COMMENTS:** The chairman thanked all committee members. It's been great to get some major projects done in 2020 and 2021. Looking forward to continued success in 2022.

5. **OLD BUSINESS:**

a. (REPEAT) A physical binder or book of veterans' resources in the City of Norwalk is being finalized. There is a collection site for documentation online until a resource document can be built or published online. UPDATE: The Google Drive for the committee is the repository for much of what has been collected to date and the shell of a physical binder was started months ago. Continuing to work on the content. Matt Seebeck and Fred Wilms both gave their thoughts on the way forward. This remains the #1 priority for the committee. UPDATE: The committee has a list of 458 veterans in Norwalk that was provided by the Tax Assessor's office. The list is now two years old. We will ask for an updated list. There are some people missing from the list also. (OPEN)



b. **OUTREACH:** Irene Dixon continues to funnel veterans in need to the committee and we appreciate her help in that regard. A common theme from residents is the desire to donate motorized chairs and hospital beds. Priority is given to the Disabled American Veterans in the past, and we'll continue to use them in the future.

c. **MILITARY AND VETERAN REGISTRY: (REPEAT)** Creation of a veteran registry in Norwalk has been requested to the IT Department in City Hall. A link was sent to IT and they have been asked about the feasibility of duplicating what the State of Pennsylvania has already done. It's difficult to know who the Military residents are. It would be great to know who they are so we can help in times of need and thank them for their service also. **(OPEN)**

<https://www.dmva.pa.gov/veteransaffairs/pages/outreach-and-reintegration/pennsylvaniaveteransregistry.aspx>

d. **PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NORWALK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:** A database of veteran owned businesses in Norwalk has been started. This would give those business owners a chance to get together to share best practices and ways to market themselves in the city, as well as to participate in larger Chamber events throughout the year. See attachment 1 to these minutes for the list as of 9/16/2021. **(OPEN)**

e. **CEREMONIES AND HONORS SUB-COMMITTEE:** The Ceremonies & Honors Committee held a successful Veterans Day program which drew a large audience. At their last meeting on December 13, they have agreed to take on three new ceremonies for the city: D-Day (June 6), POW/MIA Day (3rd Friday in September), and Pearl Harbor Day (December 7). **(OPEN)**

f. **PURPLE HEART MONUMENT:** The process to add a Purple Heart Monument to honor Norwalk's combat wounded in Veterans Park is complete. A vendor was chosen and Recreation & Parks will work with them on placement. Early to mid-Spring 2022 is the target timeframe. **(OPEN)**

g. **VIETNAM PLAQUE AT THE SHEA-MAGRATH MEMORIAL:** The addendum to the Vietnam War plaque at the Shea – Magrath memorial has been installed. Coordination with surviving family members will be needed to have an event where the plaque is unveiled. As of today, the family members of Larry Thorne haven't been located. Captain Joseph Brown has two daughters in California and a sister in Connecticut. They are open to an unveiling event but would like to see better COVID-19 numbers. **(OPEN)**

h. **FUTURE MONUMENTS IN VETERANS PARK:** A concept of building out the brick sidewalk that leads into Veterans Park from Seaview Avenue has been informally discussed. The concept would involve placing a monument for every war Norwalk residents have served in. The idea is to start with the Revolutionary War and add 1 or 2 per year until it's completed. This could take 5-10 years. Funding will be a priority. Bricks could be sold through a website such as fundraisingbrick.com, with a part of the proceeds going to pay for new monuments. Public-

Private Partnership could also be a method to build out this “Monument Walk” or “Veterans Walk.” A park named “Veterans Park” should contain more that is related to veterans. **(OPEN)**

i. Future meetings. In planning for 2022, it was thought to keep the meetings to quarterly. After review of events slated for 2022, it’s a smarter decision to go back to monthly meetings (see New Business). The new schedule is: 1/10, 3/14, 4/11, 5/9, 6/13, 9/12, 12/12. **(CLOSED)**

5. NEW BUSINESS:

a. The Wall That Heals (TWTH), a $\frac{3}{4}$ scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC, has approved Norwalk for the 2022 tour. Norwalk is scheduled for June 2-5, 2022. The trailer will arrive in town on either May 31 or June 1. The City of Norwalk is the “named host” of the event. This means all the resources of the city will be available as planning and execution proceed. Many thanks to Mayor Rilling for approving the fee to be paid from city funds to host TWTH. The first planning meeting will be 12/22/2021, 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. **(OPEN).**

6. GOOD OF THE ORDER:

a. The American Legion, VFW and other organizations related to the veteran community will be very busy in 2022. See Attachment 2 to these minutes for a calendar of events.

7. ADJOURNMENT: the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

8. NEXT MEETING: January 10, 2022, 6:00 p.m., via Zoom.

Attachment 1

Veteran owned businesses that have replied to the Chamber of Commerce questionnaire

DVB Commercial Realty, LLC

Law Office of Miklos P. Koleszar

THF Tax Solutions, LLC

Integrate4IT

Jack T Wolf LLC

RON AARONS

PRiME, LLC

Chamber

Seaport Electric

Ray Rumer, Realtor, Berkshire Hathaway Home Services New England

Omni Natural LLC

Web Realty Company

Attachment 2

JANUARY

Friday, January 14, 2022: Knights of Columbus Veterans Dinner, St. Ann's, 16 Hendricks Avenue, Norwalk, 5:00-9:00 p.m.; veterans are free

-- link for more information and for tickets: <http://www.assembly100.org/events/2nd-annual-veterans-recognition-dinner/>

FEBRUARY

Thursday, February 3, 2022: Four Chaplains Day

Wednesday, February 23, 2022: National Iwo Jima Memorial Ceremony, 1 Iwo Jima Way, New Britain, CT

MARCH

Sunday, March 13, 2022: St. Patrick's Day celebration, live music, corned beef and cabbage, 1:00-4:00, American Legion.

Tuesday, March 15, 2022: American Legion birthday

Friday, March 25, 2022: Medal of Honor Day

Tuesday, March 29, 2022: National Vietnam War Veterans Day

APRIL

Sunday, April 3, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

MAY

Sunday, May 1, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

Sunday, May 15, 2022: Cemetery visits, starts at 10:00, City Hall parking lot

Sunday, May 15, 2022: Veterans Memorial Ceremony, Calf Pasture Beach, 12:30 p.m.

Monday, May 30, 2022: Memorial Day Parade

Tuesday, May 31, 2022 or Wednesday, June 1, 2022: The Wall That Heals arrives in Norwalk

JUNE

Thursday, June 2 through June 5, 2022: The Wall That Heals, Veterans Park

Monday, June 6, 2022: D-Day, 6:00, American Legion

Sunday, June 12, 2022 (2nd Sunday): Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

Tuesday, June 14, 2022: Flag Day and Army Birthday

Sunday, June 26, 2022: PTSD March, time and details TBD

Monday, June 27, 2022: PTSD Awareness Day

JULY

Monday, July 4, 2022: Independence Day

Sunday, July 10, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

Wednesday, July 27, 2022: National Korean War Armistice Day

AUGUST

Sunday, August 7, 2022: National Purple Heart Medal Day, 12:00, Veterans Park, wreath laying

Sunday, August 7, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

SEPTEMBER

Sunday, September 4, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

Sunday, September 11, 2022: Patriot Day

Friday, September 16, 2022: POW/MIA Recognition Day, 6:00, American Legion

Sunday, September 18, 2022: Air Force birthday

OCTOBER

Sunday, October 2, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

Sunday, October 8, 2022: VFW team in Alzheimer's Walk, Calf Pasture

Thursday, October 13, 2022: Navy birthday

RECURRING MEETINGS

2nd Tuesday, Legion Auxiliary, 7:00

2nd Thursday, VFW Post 603, 7:30

3rd Tuesday, Legion Post (vets), 7:00

3rd Thursday, Sons of the Legion, 7:00

NOVEMBER

Sunday, November 6, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

Thursday, November 10, 2022: Marine Corps birthday

Friday, November 11, 2022: Veterans Day

Sunday, November 27, 2022: Christmas Tree Lighting, 5:00, American Legion

DECEMBER

Sunday, December 4, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

Tuesday, December 5, 2022: Veterans Memorial Committee meeting, 7:00, American Legion

Wednesday, December 7, 2022: Pearl Harbor Day; 9:00, City Hall

Saturday, December 10, 2022: Army – Navy game