



MEETING MINUTES
ADVISORY MILITARY and VETERANS LIAISON COMMITTEE
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2020 - 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 6:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jeff DeWitt.

2. **PUBLIC FORUM:**

a. None.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

a. Present (5): Jeff DeWitt, Chair; Irene Dixon, Mayor Rilling’s Staff; Leon Breault, Veteran At-large; Fred Wilms, Financial Services Chair; Orlando Aquino, Community Health Center.

b. Absent or excused (6): Bryan Rooney, Military Outreach and Deputy Chair; Larry Cafero, Legal Services Chair; Deanna D’Amore – Health Department; Brian Griffin, Norwalk Chamber of Commerce Howard Dixon, Veteran At-large; Matt Seebeck, Veteran At-large.

4. **CHAIRMAN COMMENTS:**

a. See Section 5.

5. **OLD BUSINESS:**

a. (REPEAT) Guidelines for a “Veterans Advocate Award” have been drafted. Design and criteria for the award were sent to the mayor’s staff. Still in need of a nominee for 2nd Quarter (Apr, May, Jun). **(OPEN)**

b. (REPEAT) Physical binder 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 is now the #1 priority for the committee. **(OPEN)**

c. (REPEAT) Larry Cafero provided a list a few months ago of 1,800+ people in Norwalk receiving a tax credit due to their veteran status or a deceased family member who was a veteran. It is the goal of this committee and core to what we want to accomplish, to begin to introduce the



committee to them and make sure they understand we are available to help or find help for them should they need it. We spoke about using a bulk mailing permit as an option. **(OPEN)**

e. (REPEAT) The Bridgeport office of the Connecticut VA is still interested in moving to Norwalk. Space in the Health Department is being remodeled at this time to host them. This committee hopes that project moves forward soon. Irene Dixon updated the committee on the progress **(OPEN)**

f. (REPEAT) Creation of a veteran registry in Norwalk is being 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. Irene Dixon will follow up with the IT Department who are quite busy these days. **(OPEN)**

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

h. (REPEAT) A database of veteran owned businesses in Norwalk would be great to have. Creating a veteran-owned business registry through the Chamber of Commerce is the recommendation. The goal would then be to create a Veterans Chamber as a subcommittee of the larger Chamber. 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. **(OPEN)**

i. (REPEAT) Research into the 250+ veterans with ties to Norwalk who died during wartime service, is ongoing. Turned down by three publishers because the work was “too local”, there is a web page: <http://norwalkctheroes.org>. There are also some bonus pages for Norwalk Police and Fire Departments as well as a page in tribute of the 19 Connecticut residents who died as a result of the attack on Pearl Harbor. **(OPEN)**

6. NEW BUSINESS:

a. All in attendance were in agreement to bypass the December meeting. The Chairman will explore options for 2021 to include changing the frequency to quarterly meetings. More to come. **(OPEN)**

7. GOOD OF THE ORDER:

a. Despite COVID-19 restrictions and the impact on life in general, the committee had some major accomplishments this year. Those include the Hometown Heroes Banner Program, Purple Heart Day recognition of recipients and having Norwalk designated a Purple Heart City, and the project in paragraph 5i above. Much of what is remaining may have to wait until COVID-19 is well behind us and we can return to some state of normalcy.

b. See Attachment 1 for information about Military to Machinist employment opportunity in Southwest Connecticut and other VA opportunities.

c. Veteran statistics for Bridgeport – Stamford – Norwalk metro area: 3% with veteran status, 2,096 total, 1998 male, 98 female; 251 WWII, 244 Korea, 944 Vietnam, 272 Gulf (1990s), 318 (Gulf 2001-). Half the rate of Connecticut: 5.8%, 165,029.

8. MILITARY AND VETERAN RELATED EVENTS AROUND NORWALK

NOVEMBER 2020

- 1: Veteran of the Month Flag Raising Ceremony, American Legion Post 12, 60 County Street (11:00 a.m. with reception following)
- 4: A-MVLC Ceremonies & Honors Committee meeting; American Legion (7:00)
- 6: Vets Rock, Mohegan Sun (12:00-6:00)
- 10: US Marine Corps birthday (1775)
- 11: City of Norwalk Veterans Day event at Veterans Park weather permitting or City Hall if raining. (10:30 a.m.) **Norwalk is the only city in Connecticut designated a regional site for Veterans Day observances by the Veterans Administration**
- 12: Norwalk Public Library Zoom “Norwalkers Come Together to Honor Our Veterans”.
<https://norwalkpl.org/Calendar.aspx?EID=24113&month=11&year=2020&day=12&calType=0>
- 12: Mulvoy-Tarlov-Aquino VFW Post 603 Monthly Membership Meeting, 60 County Street (7:30)
- 17: Frank C. Godfrey American Legion Post 12 and Auxiliary Unit 12 Monthly Membership Meetings, 60 County Street (7:00)
- 19: Sons of the American Legion Squadron 12 Membership Meeting, 60 County St (7:00)
- 26: Happy Thanksgiving
- 29: American Legion Christmas Tree Lighting with caroling and a visit from Santa Claus. (5:00)

DECEMBER 2020

- 6: Veteran of the Month Flag Raising Ceremony, American Legion Post 12, 60 County Street (11:00 a.m. with reception following)
- 7: Pearl Harbor Day. Event at City Hall to be announced.
- 10: Mulvoy-Tarlov-Aquino VFW Post 603 Monthly Membership Meeting, 60 County Street (7:30)
- 15: Frank C. Godfrey American Legion Post 12 and Auxiliary Unit 12 Monthly Membership Meetings, 60 County Street (7:00)
- 17: Sons of the American Legion Squadron 12 Membership Meeting, 60 County St (7:00)

JANUARY 2021

- 14: Mulvoy-Tarlov-Aquino VFW Post 603 Monthly Membership Meeting, 60 County Street (7:30) **Also the 100th anniversary of the chartering of Post 603 in Norwalk.**
- 19: Frank C. Godfrey American Legion Post 12 and Auxiliary Unit 12 Monthly Membership Meetings, 60 County Street (7:00)
- 21: Sons of the American Legion Squadron 12 Membership Meeting, 60 County St (7:00)

9. ADJOURNMENT: the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

10. NEXT MEETING: **to be announced.** Likely by Zoom web conferencing again.

Attachment 1

Military to Machinist Program: <https://www.workplace.org/military-to-machinist/>

Virtual Veterans Day events: <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/80496/organizations-offer-national-level-veterans-day-virtual-events/>

Veterans Day discounts: <https://www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/80347/veterans-day-2020-discounts/>

Veterans Zoom with Tracey School: on Nov 11th and Nov 12th; lunch waves go from 11:05 to 12:45; they are asking for 20-minute blocks; contact pentak@norwalkps.org if interested in participating.

VetBiz Entrepreneurship Training for Vets: <http://sba.gov/nbsvw>