



MEETING MINUTES
ADVISORY MILITARY and VETERANS LIAISON COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2022 – 6:00 P.M.
25 VAN ZANT STREET
NORWALK, CT 06851

1. **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** the meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jeff DeWitt.

2. **PUBLIC FORUM:**

a. None

3. **ROLL CALL:**

a. Present (7): Jeff DeWitt, Chairperson; Paulo Barros, Norwalk Chamber of Commerce; Chuck Kriewald, Veteran At-large; Matt Seebeck, Veteran At-large; Michelle Nye, Veteran At-large; Leon Breault, Veterans At-large; Irene Dixon, Mayor Rilling’s Staff

b. Absent or excused (7): Howard Dixon, Veteran At-large; Bryan Rooney, Veteran At-large

4. **COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN COMMENTS:** None

5. **OLD BUSINESS:**

a. **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 again to the City of Norwalk IT Department on January 11, 2022, and they have been asked about the feasibility of duplicating what the State of Pennsylvania has already done. Recommendations to their form were made in the e-mail to make it more Norwalk-centric. UPDATE: this is on hold until the City of Norwalk website overhaul is complete. **(OPEN)**

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

b. **PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NORWALK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:** Paulo Barros is going to look at scheduling some meetings in both an in-person and hybrid delivery. The goal will be to create more engagement with veteran owned businesses. **(OPEN)**



c. **VETERANS MEMORIAL SUB-COMMITTEE:** The Veterans Memorial Committee is planning the Veterans Day commemoration to take place at City Hall on Friday, November 11th, at 9:30 a.m. **(OPEN)**

d. **PURPLE HEART MONUMENT:** The Purple Heart Medal monument has been installed at Veterans Park. The bench to accompany has been delivered (as of 10/26). The goal is to have it installed by Veterans Day. A formal unveiling ceremony will be held by mid-December. Date TBD. **(OPEN)**

e. **SOLDIER'S AND SAILORS MONUMENT:** the [Soldiers & Sailors Monument](#) at Martin Luther King Drive and Washington Street is unkempt. Moving it elsewhere such as Veterans Park, is cost prohibitive (\$40,000). The committee will find out which taxing district is responsible for the maintenance of the grass around it. An e-mail was sent to the Norwalk Historical Society on 10/26 to partner with them to create storyboards/placards for the monument. **(OPEN)**

f. **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 all wars 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 portion 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." Norwalk has 4 monuments: [Battle of the Rocks](#) (France St & Adams Ave), [Flax Hill "Cannonball"](#) (Hillside & Elmwood Avenue), [Liberty Tree](#) (Sunset Hill/East Ave), [WWI](#) (Town Green). **UPDATE:** the committee should speak to the mayor about including the concept in the capital budget in future years.

g. The by-laws need to be rewritten. The structure of the committee should be more veteran-centric. If expertise from a specific area is needed, those entities can be contacted to attend a meeting. Jeff DeWitt and Matt Seebeck will lead this effort. **(OPEN)**

h. Chuck Kriewald has spoken about veterans in assisted living facilities around Norwalk. Jeff DeWitt drafted a letter from the MVLC to give to each of the facilities, encouraging them to inform the MVLC who the veterans are so regular visits can be established. This will also help the City of Norwalk ensure there is representation by veterans at wakes and funerals. HIPAA concerns may prevent full disclosure, however, a simple list with first name, last name initial, branch of service, and years of service would be a great start. **(OPEN)**

5. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Paulo Barros spoke about "Caring for Seniors" located at 25 Van Zant Street. Jessica Edwards is the point of contact. It's a place for senior citizens to go during the day and spend time with each other. Her focus is also on homeless veterans and making sure they're fed and if they need a shower, provide one. **(OPEN)**

6. GOOD OF THE ORDER:

a. The City of Norwalk is in the process of applying for grant money to address suicide awareness and prevention. Jeff DeWitt and Matt Seebeck attended their first meeting. Jeff DeWitt introduced an idea to include students from the Norwalk Community College nursing program in that process. The city has asked that we hold off on growing the effort too much before the details are defined. **(OPEN)**

7. ADJOURNMENT: the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

8. NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is December 12 at 6:00. The goal is to meet in person again at City Hall. The details of doing that are still being addressed.

//SIGNED//

Jeff DeWitt

Chairman, Advisory-Military & Veterans Liaison Committee

City of Norwalk

Attachment 1 – events through the end of the year

NOVEMBER

Sunday, November 6, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, **Veterans Park (co-hosted with the Norwalk Exchange Club)**

Thursday, November 10, 2022: Marine Corps birthday

Friday, November 11, 2022: Veterans Day, ceremony starts in City Hall at 9:30 a.m.

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 Commemoration; 9:00, City Hall

Saturday, December 10, 2022: Army – Navy game

RECURRING MEETINGS

2nd Tuesday, American Legion Auxiliary, 7:00

2nd Thursday, VFW Post 603, 7:30

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

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

For Marine Corps League meetings and information, call
203-866-9302