



MEETING MINUTES
ADVISORY MILITARY and VETERANS LIAISON COMMITTEE
MONDAY, MAY 10, 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 (4):* Jeff DeWitt, Chairperson; Paulo Barros, Norwalk Chamber of Commerce; Fred Wilms, Financial Services Chair; Chuck Kriewald, Veteran At-large

b. *Absent or excused (7):* Irene Dixon, Mayor Rilling's Staff; Leon Breault, Veteran At-large; Matt Seebeck, Veteran At-large; Howard Dixon, Veteran At-large; Bryan Rooney, Veteran At-large; Deanna D'Amore, Health Department; Orlando Aquino, Community Health Center.

c. **A reminder**, the Vice Chairman position is open. In addition, there is now one vacancy for an At-Large veteran who is interested in getting involved.

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. **(OPEN)**

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

b. **PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NORWALK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:** At-Large member Paulo Barros and Chairman DeWitt met with Brian Griffin from the Chamber of Commerce regarding a veterans sub-committee of the Chamber of Commerce. Paulo Barros is a member and is going to start the meetings through breakfasts, after hours meetings, and more.



UPDATE: the survey was sent again on 5/10/2022 to identify veteran owned businesses.
(OPEN)

The registration form for veteran owned businesses is here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Whsfvex3Aooj5FTqaM9ldmTwst0LSid7ktOa0k3emfY/edit?usp=sharing>

c. **VETERANS MEMORIAL SUB-COMMITTEE:** The Veterans Memorial Committee is in the planning stages for events in May. They are cemetery visits May 15, 10:00 a.m. (meet at City Hall), the Veterans Memorial Ceremony May 15, 12:30 p.m. (Shea-Magrath Memorial @ Calf Pasture Beach), and the Memorial Day Parade on May 30th. The Grand Marshal for this year's parade will be Dan Caporale, a longtime contributor to veteran organizations in Norwalk. They are also planning the first annual D-Day Ceremony, June 6th, 7:00 p.m., American Legion.
(OPEN)

d. **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. They are Hughes & Chapman Monument Company, 96 Main Street, Route 25, Monroe CT 06468. They will receive the stone by the end of May. June 2022 is the target timeframe for installation. **(OPEN)**

e. **SOLDIER'S AND SAILORS MONUMENT:** Fred Wilms spoke about the unkempt condition of the [Soldiers & Sailors Monument](#) at Martin Luther King Drive and Washington Street. He is going to find out who maintains the monument and explore what it would take to move it to Veterans Park. Fred Wilms recommended contacting David Westmoreland from the Norwalk Historical Society to partner with them to create storyboards / placards for each of the monuments. Jeff DeWitt contacted Irene Dixon on 4/28 and again on 5/11 about the cost involved in moving the Christopher Columbus statue in 2020 and use that work as a template to move the Soldiers and Sailors Monument. Historically, that location may have been the center of life in South Norwalk and no longer is. The goal is to move it to a more visible and well travelled area – Veterans Park. **(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:** Fred Wilms recommended speaking to the mayor about including the concept in the capital budget in future years.

g. **THE WALL THAT HEALS:** The Wall That Heals (TWTH), a ¾ 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 at Veterans Park on May 31st at approximately 1:30 - 2:00 p.m. American Legion Post 12 is the “named host” of the event. The next meetings will be 5/11 & 5/18 at the American Legion and 5/25 at Veterans Park. **(OPEN)**

5. NEW BUSINESS:

a. The committee spoke about restructuring to make it more veteran centric. While the initial stages of the committee’s existence really benefited from having experts from Finance, Legal, Housing, Health, and Business, each of those entities can be called on to provide advice, as needed, versus being committed to attending every meeting. Jeff DeWitt will distribute the existing by-laws for review by the members. **(OPEN)**

b. Chuck Kriewald spoke about the number of veterans in assisted living facilities around Norwalk. Jeff DeWitt will draft 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. **(OPEN)**

6. GOOD OF THE ORDER:

a. None

7. ADJOURNMENT: the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

8. NEXT MEETINGS: The meetings for the rest of the year are: June 13, September 12, and December 12. Chairperson DeWitt would like to have the meetings in-person from now on. Many thanks to Paulo for offering a conference room in his place of business at 25 Van Zant Street. He offered it for future meetings as well, however, City Hall is a more centrally located place. When they allow meetings again, we should have the meetings there.

Attachment 1

MAY

May 13-15, Fallen Heroes Memorial honoring Global War on Terrorism veterans, American Legion Post 16, Shelton
Saturday, May 14, 2022: Knights of Columbus Veterans Dinner, St. Ann's, 16 Hendricks Avenue, Norwalk, 5:00-9:00 p.m.; veterans are free. Tickets are at <https://knights-of-columbus-assembly-100.square.site/>
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.
Saturday, May 21, 2022: Armed Forces Day
Saturday, May 21, 2022: Flag placement ceremony, 9:30, St. John's Cemetery, 223 Richards Avenue, Norwalk
Monday, May 30, 2022: Memorial Day Parade, 10:00 start
Tuesday, May 31, 2022: The Wall That Heals arrives at Veterans Park at approximately 3:00 p.m.

JUNE

Wednesday, June 1, 2022: BMHS JROTC awards, American Legion, 5:30 p.m.
Thursday, June 2 through June 5, 2022: The Wall That Heals, Veterans Park
Monday, June 6, 2022: D-Day Commemoration, 7:00, 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 5k, time and details TBD
Monday, June 27, 2022: PTSD Awareness Day

JULY

Monday, July 4, 2022: Independence Day
Sunday, July 10, 2022 (**2nd Sunday**): 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 (tentative)
Sunday, August 7, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, American Legion

SEPTEMBER

Sunday, September 4, 2022: Flag Ceremony, 11:00, **Veterans Park**
Sunday, September 11, 2022: Patriot Day
Friday, September 16, 2022: POW/MIA Recognition Day Commemoration, 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

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 Commemoration; 9:00, City Hall
Saturday, December 10, 2022: Army – Navy game

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

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