



MEETING MINUTES
ADVISORY MILITARY and VETERANS LIAISON COMMITTEE
MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2022 – 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 6:06 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jeff DeWitt.

2. **PUBLIC FORUM:**

a. Chuck Kriewald; no comments made. In his introduction he shared that he is a Vietnam Veteran with one tour with the 25th Infantry Division. He had a long career in the industrial security business to include Pinkerton, a private security contractor. Chuck expressed interest in becoming a member of the committee.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

a. *Present (5):* Jeff DeWitt, Chairperson; Irene Dixon, Mayor Rilling's Staff; Leon Breault, Veteran At-large; Paulo Barros, Norwalk Chamber of Commerce; Orlando Aquino, Community Health Center.

b. *Absent or excused (5):* Matt Seebeck, Veteran At-large; Fred Wilms, Financial Services Chair; Howard Dixon, Veteran At-large; Bryan Rooney, Veteran At-large; Deanna D'Amore, Health Department;

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. **(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, longtime contributor to veteran organizations in Norwalk. They are also planning a ceremony on D-Day, 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. June 2022 is the target timeframe for installation. The stone that will become the monument is on its way from India. **(OPEN)**

e. **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. [Major Larry Thorne](#) has no living relatives in the United States. [Captain Joseph Brown](#) has two daughters in California and a sister in Connecticut. The unveiling of the plaque will be tied in with the Veterans Memorial Ceremony on May 15th. **(CLOSED)**

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).

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 in town on either May 31 at

approximately 3:00 p.m. American Legion Post 12 is the “named host” of the event. The next meetings will be via Zoom on April 13th and in-person on April 27th in the upstairs hall of the American Legion at 6:00. **(OPEN)**

h. 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. **(OPEN)**

5. NEW BUSINESS: None.

6. GOOD OF THE ORDER:

a. Leon Breault spoke about National Guard honor guards and the history of their involvement in events around Memorial Day and beyond. Orlando Aquino mentioned there is an Army recruiting office close to Norwalk that would likely appreciate an opportunity to get involved with posting colors at events and more. Jeff DeWitt spoke about Arlington National Cemetery being hallowed ground and Memorial Day events there. Collectively the committee agreed that as a city and a committee, that honor our residents who died during wartime service and all veterans is and incredibly important part of our mission.

b. Orlando Aquino has accepted a new position in Norwalk. While he is leaving the Community Health Center, he will continue to work in Norwalk and would like to stay on with the committee. We wish him much success in his new job!

7. ADJOURNMENT: the meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

8. NEXT MEETINGS: The meetings for the rest of the year are May 9, June 13, September 12, and December 12. Chairperson DeWitt would like to have the meetings in-person from now on. Details TBD for May 9.

Attachment 1

MAY

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