



MEETING MINUTES
ADVISORY MILITARY and VETERANS LIAISON COMMITTEE
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2020 - 6:00 P.M.
125 EAST AVENUE, FIRST FLOOR LOUNGE
NORWALK, CT 06851

1. **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** the meeting was called to order by Jeff DeWitt at 6:02 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jeff DeWitt.

2. **PUBLIC FORUM:**

a. None.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

a. Present (4): Jeff DeWitt, Chair; Bryan Rooney, Military Outreach and Deputy Chair; Deanna D'Amore – Health Department; Matt Seebeck, Veteran At-large; Dan Caporale, Veteran At-large; Leon Breault, Veteran At-large; Larry Cafero, Legal Services Chair; Howard Dixon, Veteran At-large; Irene Dixon, Mayor Rilling's Staff.

b. Absent or excused (5): Fred Wilms, Financial Services Chair; Bob King, Labor and Business Relations Chair; Juliet Taylor, Veteran At-large;

c. Resigned (1): Don Overton, Veteran At-large – due to employment commitments in Washington DC.

4. **CHAIRMAN COMMENTS:**

a. (REPEAT/UPDATE) An application was submitted to the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Fund (VVMF) to have the [Wall That Heals and Mobile Education Center](#), a ¾ scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC, return to Norwalk. Norwalk has been approved. More to come from VVMF as they control the calendar and publicity. *Update: the city has determined that their insurance doesn't over an event like this. Current business rules for use of city property is for the hosting entity to carry the insurance and name the city as an "additional insured". As of January 7, 2020, it was determined that American Legion Post 12's insurance does cover an event. After review by the committee, a formal announcement will be made.*

b. November 2019: Had a discussion with Bryan Rooney (*Deputy Chair*) regarding New Canaan's Veteran recognition signage along their main street. It is brought to this committee as an idea to look into for future events in the City of Norwalk. Fred Wilms recommended along Memorial Day parade route. Some discussion on how to select Veterans. Recommended rotation of names.



UPDATE: January 2020 -- A research book is near completion documenting all of the names on the plaques in Norwalk who died during wartime service in WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and OIF - OEF. In the first round of identifying the people for the banners Chairman Jeff DeWitt recommends the committee identify some of those 256 names who paid the ultimate sacrifice, to be honored with banners. This would be for the first round only. Possible locations would be East Avenue near City Hall or Town Green, Calf Pasture Beach near Shea-Magrath, or Seaview Avenue near Veterans Park. The banners would look similar to those in attachment 1. The program can be expanded in future years where residents can purchase banners on their own under the program and the city selects the site where the banner will be flown. This is a very preliminary plan. Advice, consent, and approval will be requested from Recreation and Parks and the Common Council once the details of the plan are finalized. **(OPEN)**

c. A lengthy and spirited discussion took place regarding the future of this committee becoming the umbrella entity in Norwalk regarding veteran services, outreach, and ceremonies / events. Larry Cafero identified the need to involve all entities in future discussions on business rules, organization structure, etc. He feels and the committee is in agreement that there are many people around Norwalk with long and commendable service to the city that should be involved in the discussions. The deliverable from these meetings is a plan to present to Mayor Rilling and ultimately the Common Council on the outcome for their direction. Jeff DeWitt has a short meeting scheduled with Mayor Rilling the second week in January to discuss preliminarily what the new structure will look like and the benefits. NOTE: there is no intent to dissolve any existing organization, committee, or responsibility. The goal is to have one entity for anyone in the city to work with regarding services, outreach, and ceremonies / events. At present, there are three which is inefficient. Meetings outside of this committee's regularly scheduled meetings will need to be publicized. **(OPEN)**

5. REPORTS:

a. Larry Cafero – had a very productive meeting with Brian Griffin from the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce regarding partnering with the A-MVLC on programs to enhance the visibility of veteran owned business and more. An invitation will be extended to Brian Griffin and anyone else he would like bring, to attend the next meeting on February 3, 2020.

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. (REPEAT) Bryan Rooney continues to look to action specific items as evidence of committee's work. Bryan presented at last month's meeting starting a program where medical, legal, business entities in town receive a "Gold Star Stamp" which would indicate the entity is veteran friendly. Presented sample for review (*See Attachment C*) Recommended using Mayor's letterhead as part of recognition. Discussion on criteria which needs to be further developed and established. **(OPEN)**

b. (REPEAT) Fred Wilms opened discussion on the physical binder discussed at the start of the formation of our committee for veterans' resources in the City of Norwalk. 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.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- a. See paragraph 4c.

8. GOOD OF THE ORDER:

- a. None

9. MILITARY AND VETERAN RELATED EVENTS AROUND NORWALK

JANUARY 2020

9: Mulvoy-Tarlov-Aquino VFW Post 603 Monthly Membership Meeting, 60 County Street (7:30)

14: BMHS ROTC Pass In Review and Inspection, 9:45 a.m. show time, 10:00 start

21: Membership meeting for American Legion Post 12 and Auxiliary Unit 12, 60 County St (7:00)

23: Sons of the American Legion Squadron 12 Membership Meeting, 60 County St (7:00)

10. ADJOURNMENT: the meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

11. Next meeting is Monday, February 3, 2020, 6:00 p.m., 1st floor lounge.

ATTACHMENT A

Veterans Resource Guide

The City of Norwalk and surrounding areas offer a host of programs that veterans can take advantage of. These various programs are great resources that can help improve a veteran's physical health, mental health, social health and more. Additional information for each program can be found on that facilities website.

Healthcare and Mental Health Resources

Norwalk Community College offers short term counseling services to Norwalk Community College Veteran students. Referrals are also provided to students when necessary. To qualify for this counseling you must be currently enrolled as a student at the College. For more information please contact 203-857-3342 or email cmiller@norwalk.edu.

The Stamford VA outpatient Clinic located on 1275 Summer Street Suite 102 Stamford, CT 06905-5315 provides general internal and mental medical care to veterans.

Services include:

- Care for chronic and immediate health concerns
- Preventative medical care
- Physical Exams
- Diagnostic laboratory testing
- General X-rays
- Limited immediate pharmacy services
- Mental health services

To enroll mail a completed application, a copy of your DD-214, and your discharge papers to:

VA Connecticut Healthcare System
950 Campbell Avenue
West Haven, CT 06517

The American Family Care (AFC) has recently contracted with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Eligible veterans can now utilize the treatments that the Norwalk AFC Urgent Care provides including treatment for nonemergency symptoms including flu like symptoms, sprains, ear pain, painful urination, bumps, and bruises, and mild skin irritation. Diagnostic services including X-rays, some lab testing, and vaccinations are covered when determined to be a requirement of treatment. Flu shots are also covered. To check eligibility please contact your local VA medical facility by phone or in person. For more information please click [here](#).

Aspen Dental created a Healthy Mouth Movement. This movement provides dental care to veterans and people in need. A campaign, Day of Service, was launched through the Healthy Mouth Movement that allows the Aspen Dental Dentist and teams to provide urgent dental care

services like fillings, repairs, and extractions. Other services like exams and routine cleanings are also provided all free of charge to veterans. The Day of Service is held annually. The Norwalk Aspen Dental office located on 652 Main Ave, participated in the 2019 Day of Service. The 2020 Day of Service and participating locations are to be announced.

The Veterans Affairs Vet Centers, are community-based counseling centers that provide a range of social and psychological services to eligible Veterans, active duty members, and their families. Individual, group, marriage, and family counseling is offered and also referrals when necessary. The closest Veterans Center to Norwalk, located in Connecticut is on 457 North Main Street 1st Floor Danbury, CT 06811. For more information please contact the Danbury Vet Center at 203-790-4000 or visit [here](#).

The VA Connecticut's Errera Community Care Center (ECCC) serves veterans struggling with mental health and/or substance abuse disorder, homelessness, and/or aging. Rehabilitation services are also provided to veterans. Errera Community Care Center is located on 114-152 Boston Post Road, 2nd floor West Haven, CT 06516. Additional services are listed below.

Human and Social Services Resources

The VA Connecticut's Errera Community Care Center's (ECCC) multidisciplinary mental health professionals also provide additional services including vocational programs, housing programs (subsidized to non-subsidized, and supported to non-supported), homeless outreach and advocacy, case management programs and wellness activities. Another program that is available to veterans is the Vet to Vet self-help program where veterans help other veterans to cope with their mental health illnesses, overcome substance abuse, and other issues that they may face in their day to day life. The program has veteran-run meetings that are not attended by program staff. Veterans that are homeless or are risk for becoming homeless that are honorably discharged and meet the minimum active duty requirements, are eligible for Healthcare for Homeless Veterans services and also for the Grant and Per Diem Program. There are currently two homeless clinics. Locations and hours are listed below, appointments are not necessary. For additional information on any of ECCC's program please contact 203-479-8000 or click [here](#).

West Haven Clinic Hours: 7:30AM-10:00am, Monday-Friday
1:30pm-2:30pm Tuesday-Friday
Errera Community Center, 114-152 Boston Post Rd.
West Haven, CT

Newington Clinic Hours: 8:30AM-11:00AM, Monday-Friday
Newington VA Campus
555 Willard Avenue
Newington, CT

The *Homes for the Brave* Veterans Service Center located on 665 Park Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604 provides any Veteran experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless with immediate basic needs, assistance and referrals to housing, vocational services, and other supportive services. The Veterans Service Center also runs programs including life skills, computer classes, employment workshops, opportunities to interface with federal legislators and time spent with therapy dogs. For more information please call 203-338-0669 or email info@homesforthebrave.org. Drop in appointments are available Monday through Friday, 8:30AM to 4:30PM.

The Cohen Veterans Network provides high-quality mental health care that is available to all post-9/11 veterans, including National Guard and Reserves, and military family members regardless of discharge status or role while in uniform. The nearest location is on One park Ave, New York, NY 10016. In order to make services more readily available to veterans that are not local, the Cohen Clinic now offers telehealth for clients who are unable to go to the clinic. Telehealth is face-to face video therapy. Your video conferencing appointment is confidential.

Services Include

- Care for depression
- Anxiety,
- Post-traumatic stress disorder,
- Sleep problems
- Adolescent behavioral issues
- Relationship and family stress
- Transitional challenges

To see if CVN Telehealth is right for you, call 833-CVN-VETS or fill out an online form [here](#).

Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), a program through The WorkPlace funded by the U.S Department of Veterans Affairs, works to end homelessness within the veteran population. SSVF assists veteran families at risk of becoming homeless to maintain their housing and to re-house families that have recently become homeless. Services also include case-management services, assistance in obtaining benefits, and emergency financial resources. The WorkPlace's office is located on 350 Fairfield Avenue, Bridgeport, CT. For more information please contact 1-866-683-1682 or visit their [website](#).

The *Open Door Shelter* located on 4 Merritt Street, Norwalk, CT 06854 provides shelter, food, case management services, treatment services, transitional planning for short and long term goals, subsidized housing, education, employment, and a path towards independence and success

to anyone in need. For more information please contact 203-866-1057 or email info@opendoorshelter.org.

Department of Veterans Affairs Mobile App

The *CTVeterans* mobile app from the Department of Veterans Affairs, is available for Apple and Android users. This app provides Connecticut Veterans and residents with access to crisis assistance by text, online chat, or phone. The app also provides additional resources including an interactive map of Veterans clinics and hospitals.

The application will allow users quick access to:

- Crisis Assistance by Phone, Text Message and Online Chat
- Veterans Benefits and Services
- Healthcare and Hospitals
- Housing
- Business and Jobs
- Supporting a Veteran
- Flag Status
- Connecting with DVA on Social Media

Banking discounts for US Military personnel

To thank you for your commitment, service and sacrifice, we provide the following benefits exclusively for active and retired US Military personnel.

WebsterOne® Relationship Checking¹

- No monthly fee
- No minimum balance requirement
- Free WebsterOne® Checks²
- Free WebsterOne® Savings³
- ATMs with no Webster fee and rebates of the ATM fees charged by other banks, including International ATMs

Business Loan Benefits⁴

- Discounts may be available to military personnel or veterans who own a business or are looking to start a business through the SBA Patriot Express program

\$500 Mortgage Rebate⁵

- Great rates and fast service come standard. But military personnel receive an exclusive \$500 rebate at the closing.

Home Equity Rate Discounts⁶

- 0.25% rate discount when you make automatic loan payments from a Webster checking account
- 0.25% rate discount on Home Equity Loans or Lines of Credit

Who is eligible?

Any person serving on full-time or part-time active duty in any U.S. Armed Forces, including Reserves or National Guard is eligible to receive these benefits; as is any retired veteran.

What identification is needed?

You must present a valid military ID, proper discharge papers, or show VA proof of payment to open your account.

To learn more, please talk to a Webster banker, visit WebsterBank.com, or call 800.325.2424.

¹ WebsterOne® Relationship checking: minimum opening deposit of \$50 required. Normally there is a \$16.95 (or \$14.95 with direct deposit) monthly service charge, if combined monthly average balance of \$4,000 in checking, savings or money market accounts, or \$20,000 in combined deposit (checking, savings, CDs or money market) or home equity balances is not maintained. Webster will not charge any fees for checking withdrawals at non-Webster ATMs and will rebate you if another financial institution charges you a fee for using its ATM. Product features are subject to change at any time. These fees will be waived as long as you meet the eligibility requirements outlined above.

² Shipping and handling fees apply.

³ WebsterOne® Savings: Minimum opening balance is \$5. Monthly service charge is \$5 but it will be waived if you maintain a \$300 minimum daily balance OR are under age 21 or are 65 or more. Must have a WebsterOne® Checking account or account will default to a Webster Value Savings account interest rate.

⁴ Business loans and lines of credit are subject to the normal credit approval process. Some applications may require further consideration and/or supplemental information. Requires a Webster business checking account which must be opened prior to loan closing and which must be used for auto deduct of payment. Webster business checking and SBA guaranteed products may be subject to additional terms, conditions and fees.

⁵ \$500 rebate will be issued at the time your mortgage loan is closed. Offer is valid for 1-4 family owner occupied properties only. All loans are subject to credit approval.

⁶ All loans and lines of credit are subject to the credit approval process. An interest rate reduction is available on several lending options when automatic payments (ACH) are set up from a Webster Personal Checking Account. If at any time the ACH payment is removed from the account, the interest rate would increase by the same amount as the initial discount given. Certain restrictions apply. Offer cannot be combined with offers from Webster or its affiliates. Ask an associate for details or call 1-888-4Webster for a list of the current discounts available.

These offers are effective as of December 1, 2018 and may be withdrawn at any time.



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The City of Norwalk

PRESENTS THIS

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

TO

Business Name Here

IN RECOGNITION AND SINCERE GRATITUDE FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE AND
COMMITMENT TO THE SUPPORT OF VETERANS, SERVICEMEMBERS, AND THEIR
FAMILIES. THE CITY OF NORWALK THANKS YOU.

Given under my hand this 8th day of July 2018

Harry W. Rilling
Mayor
City of Norwalk

Jeff Dewitt
Chairperson
Military and Veterans Liaison Commission

ATTACHMENT C



ATTACHMENT D
STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER
287 West Street
Rocky Hill, CT 06067



Thomas J. Saadi
Commissioner

November 7, 2019

Mr. Jeffrey DeWitt
28 Holiday Drive
Norwalk, CT 06851

Dear Mr. DeWitt:

Thank you for taking the time to honor and nominate Thomas Charles O'Connor for induction into the 2019 Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame. Your extensive research and documentation of the many accomplishments and selfless service of your nominee is a tribute to both you and the individual.

Unfortunately, your nominee was not selected from the many very worthy and impressive nomination packets received this year.

I would like to invite you to resubmit your nominee for consideration for the 2020 induction class. We will maintain your nomination on file until next year's selection process. However, in order to officially resubmit your nominee for the 2020 class you must complete and send in a new nomination form along with any additional information you may wish to provide. I would like to point out that special attention and thought should be given to the narrative section explaining why you feel your nominee is worthy of this high honor with an emphasis on what they have done after serving in the military for their communities. Executive Committee members rely heavily on these narratives to evaluate and rate each nomination.

Only through the active participation of citizens like you who are familiar with the tremendous public service our distinguished veterans continue to perform in their communities can we appropriately honor their contributions. Your interest in this distinctive honor truly makes a difference for our state.

Again, thank you for supporting the Veterans Hall of Fame and all of our Connecticut Veterans.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Saadi
Commissioner

ATTACHMENT E

Question: How does the City of Norwalk / The Norwalk Chamber enhance and expand Veteran Services within the City of Norwalk?

Create a "Veterans in Business Network". The sole intent of this network is for Veterans to support each other in their pursuit of their respective civilian careers.

Who: Veterans (any service) living or working in the greater Norwalk area.

What: Veterans in business supporting each other.

When: TBD- one meeting per quarter.

Where: TBD- Norwalk Chamber, American Legion, Colony Grill

Why: Provide a network of Veterans to Veterans for the purpose of positively influencing each other's civilian careers.

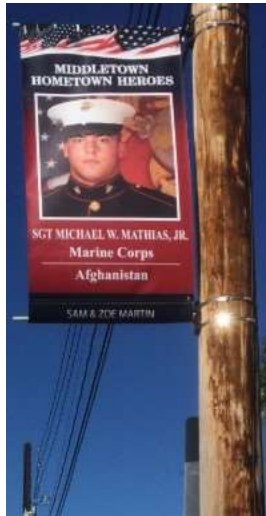
Focus of this networking group-

- Help support Veteran Entrepreneurs and Veterans who are either just entering or in the civilian workforce.
- Assist veteran owned businesses register with System for Award Management (SAM).
- Provide guidance and direction to other veterans.
- Align potential investors to Veteran Owned Businesses.
- Provide returning vets a positive network for insight into furthering their civilian careers.
- Networking with trustworthy, values oriented and driven.

Coarse of Action-

- Send an announcement letter (via email & facebook) that outlines the intent of the group.
- Create Facebook group where interested veterans could receive communications.
- Schedule an initial meet an greet in a Veteran Friendly Venue
 - Gather contact information of attending veterans
- Schedule a second event where network members could volunteer to speak to the group about how their service enhanced their civilian careers.

ATTACHMENT G



Initial banner + bracket combination would be \$65 for and 18x24" banner.

Source 1: <https://www.uptime.com/pole-banners.html>

Source 2: <https://www.display-wholesale.com/Street-Pole-Banner-Brackets-30-with-30-x-60-Vin-p/PSP30P60.htm>

Source 3: <https://www.displays2go.com/P-16143/Light-Pole-Banner-Brackets-Resistant-Wind-Rain>