



TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes – November 14, 2023

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM

Pledge of Allegiance: Conducted by all attendees.

Attendance: In attendance – Paul Cancelliere, Rob Ettinger, VSO Dave Mangan, Dale Findlay, Marc Young, Dan Benjamin, Bill Curran, Joe Dellolio Absent: Chris Olsen, Marion Dennehy, Kristi Yentile Special Guests: Town Councilor Chines (Chair), Town Councilor Ed Dombroski, Town Councilor Mike McLane (Vice-Chair), Julie Scott (4 Central Street).

Review/Approval of September and October Meeting Minutes-vote required: Motion by Dale, to approve September minutes (subject to one change suggested by Paul), and second by Joe. Vote was unanimous for approval. Motion by Dale, to approve October minutes, and second by Rob. Vote was unanimous for approval.

Members of the Public may Speak: none in attendance

VSO November 2023 Report and Veterans Coffee: The Veterans monthly food and dry goods support program will be held tomorrow, November 15th behind the senior center from 10 am to 12 noon. All 27 applicants have been notified.

If any Veteran, spouse, or immediate family member of a Veteran would like to participate in this program, and to be included in the drive thru and pick up, please call our office for further information 781-246-6377

The products are offered through the Greater Boston Food bank and the Wakefield Food Pantry. There is a selection of meats, vegetables, and canned goods as well as dry goods.

The next Veterans coffee social will be held on Saturday December 16th at the Senior Center 30 Converse St. Wakefield downstairs in the cafeteria from 9:00-10:30. Immediately following the social we can head over to the Forest Glade Cemetery for the Wreath laying. Please come and share some of the highlights of the proposed “Hero Act-Fact” Sheet being offered by the Healy-Driscoll Administration. I have the two-page report available in my office for anyone wishing to review it or you can visit the mass.gov web site.

The Veterans Breakfast on November 7th at the Senior Center sponsored by the Bear Hill Rehabilitation center was a tremendous success. The turnout was very good, and the Veterans sat and shared many stories and were able to talk to several of our political representatives.

The many events that took place last week from the Galvin middle school to the Woodville school, as well as the Veterans Day ceremony at the Galvin on Saturday the 11th were tremendous. From the speakers (Thank you both Paul Cancelliere and Bob Vincent) to the medal recipients Mr. Martin Venus and Mr. Chester Lee both Korean War Veterans, and Sue Umphrey who received the medal of Fidelity. She is the wife of Stephen Umphrey a Vietnam Veteran who succumbed to a service-connected death.



As I have mentioned each month Under Chapter 115 of Massachusetts General Laws the Commonwealth provides a uniform program of financial and medical assistance for veterans and their dependents.

Qualifying veterans and their dependents receive necessary financial assistance for food, shelter, clothing, fuel, and medical care in accordance with a formula that takes into consideration the number of dependents and income from all sources.

For appointments for Veteran Services, please contact me with any questions you may have regarding on-going benefits or submission of new benefits. We are located downstairs / rear entrance at the Senior Center 30 Converse St. Wakefield and is by appointment only.

Veteran Services hours of operation:

Monday, Wed. & Thursday. 8 am – 2 pm

Holidays on Monday hours will be Tues. Wed. and Thursday 8 am -2 pm

Voice mail is checked seven days a week at: 781-246-6377.

Wakefield Town Councilor Chines and Councilor McLane to present for discussion

Proposed Policy: Use of Flag Poles on Town Property (see attached): Councilor Chines opened the discussion, talking through the recent history that got us to where we are today. Councilor McLane and Chines have been discussing proposed changes to the Town Flag Policy with other members of the Town Council. However, the Town Council have not officially taken it up or voted on it yet. In fact, it may not be the final draft. Councilors McLane and Chines seek feedback from the VAB as the drafting continues. They walked the VAB through this latest draft, highlighting significant changes from the current policy.

Julie Scott had some suggested comments. She believes only 3 flags should be flown (US, POW/MIA, Commonwealth of Mass) by the Town. She had appreciation for the addition of service flags, being flown in front of the Americal Civic Center. She discussed the history of this town memorial. She believes the Americal Division Flag should fly on the 2nd flagpole, year-round. She believes the service flags should be permanently on display in multiple places (schools, Town Hall, Public Safety buildings, etc.) Not just one set that travels around town. Councilor Chines discussed potential purchase of the Americal Division Flag (23rd Infantry Division) for the Town.

Dale thinks the Town allowing any flags (pride, service, etc) other than the 3 mentioned earlier is a problem that could cause the Town Policy to be challenged by others seeking to fly their own affinity flags.

Additional discussions occurred about the draft policy by various members of the VAB and Councilors McLane and Chines, and Councilor Dombroski.

Bill motioned, and Dale seconded to NOT fly the service flags at the Americal Civic Center (or elsewhere in town). Vote was unanimous.

Member's Report (around the horn): Deferred until December VAB meeting

Items for Discussion:

- **Veteran's Day 2023 Sustain/Improve** – Deferred until December VAB meeting

- **Wreaths Across America – Forest Glade Cemetery FB Posts** – Agenda item not taken up

Secretary's report: none

Vice-chair's report: Absent

Chair's report: none

Upcoming events:

- Wreath Day Saturday, December 16, 2023, at 12:00pm at Forest Glade Cemetery
- Four Chaplains Day Saturday, February 3, 2024, at 9:00am at the Four Chaplains Monument Temple Emanuel
- Memorial Day, Monday May 27, 2024,
- Flag Day, Friday, June 14, 2024, at 7:00pm at the Memorial

Town Council Liaison's comments: None in addition to his remarks on the Flag Policy

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at 6:30 pm (via Zoom)

Matters Not Anticipated for Agenda (Any Voting matters not anticipated necessitating action by the Veterans Advisory Board) – None

Adjournment (motion to adjourn): Motion to adjourn by Bill, seconded by Dan to adjourn. Vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 8:18pm.

Respectfully submitted: Rob Ettinger, Secretary, VAB