

Wakefield Veterans Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 18, 2018

Call to Order

Chairman Jay Pinette called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm in the First Floor Conference, Wakefield Town Hall, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call

Members present were Chairman Pinette, Secretary Pam Hart, members Don Hart, Richard Pearson, Bill Walsh; VSO Hector Erinna.

Recognized guests included Boy Scout Joshua Polischuk, Wakefield resident and US Navy Veteran Phil Corsey, Wakefield resident and Rolling Thunder Member Mike Siragusa.

Old Business

Discussed were updated plans for the proposed Eagle Scout project to improve the memorial at Paddy's Heights. Suggested were having a local tree removal company donate wood chips for the desired pathway; use of a town Bobcat for needed excavation work; benches; approaching the local cement company for poured slabs for the benches; estimated bench cost of \$900; pro and cons of including a stone retaining wall; contacting the Wakefield Garden Club for plantings. Suggested was contacting Mark Sardella to publicize this project and approaching area restaurants as a means of fundraising, as well as contacting Home Depot and Lowes for help.

The Town Council and VAB support this project. The DPW maintains Paddy Heights but it is not clear who really owns the site.

All plans for this project needs approval for the Town Council, Boy Scouts of America and Veterans Advisory Board.

Joshua needs to have this projected completed by his 18th birthday in August to qualify for his Eagle Scout Badge.

Chairman Pinette will contact Sheri Dalton to have this item put on the Town Council agenda.

New Business

Chairman Pinette will see that all future Meeting Minutes are presented to Sheri Dalton.

Discussed was bringing the Vietnam Moving Wall to town. Guest Mike Siragusa of the Massachusetts Chapter Rolling Thunder offered his thoughts on such an undertaking. Discussed was the size and placement of the wall, time of year, necessary volunteers, crowd control, deposit, application and cost, among other things to consider. Secretary Hart asked whether t-shirts could be sold with proceeds to go towards the Veterans Relief Fund. It was suggested members familiarize themselves with the Vietnam Wall website.

VSO Report

Wakefield residents Tom and Judy Gordon met with Hector and generously donated \$1000 in Market Basket Gift Cards to be distributed to local veterans. The Town of Saugus has roughly 85-112 clients utilizing its Veterans Food Pantry each month, many more than Wakefield.

Unfinished Business

Hector motioned to delay discussion on the Board's Mission Statement, seconded by Pearson. Motion passed.

Melinda offered her son's help in inventorying the town's monuments. Tom Collins will be contacted regarding this.

There will be a delay on the project/planning list.

A short discussion was held on what size the Board should be. It was mentioned that the Saugus Veterans Council exists solely to provide for town ceremonies and parades, where the Melrose Veterans Advisory Board is more active in other events including school visits, Honor Trips to Washington, DC, etc. Chairman Pinette expressed a desire to have Wakefield's VAB more closely mirror that of Melrose, rather than Saugus' council.

Prior to the closing of meeting, members were reminded of the next day's Veterans Food Pantry.

Motion to Adjourn by Richard Pearson, seconded by Don Hart. Motion passed, meeting closed at 7:40 pm

Next meeting: Jan. 15, 2019

Minutes submitted by: Pam Hart

Minutes approved by: Jay Pinette