



# TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

## VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

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Meeting Minutes - October 20 , 2020

Meeting Attendees – Dan Benjamin, Paul Cancelliere, Melinda Cook, Marion Dennehy, Rob Ettinger, Jackie Millinor, Jay Pinette, Kristi Yentile , VSO Dave Mangan

Absent: Brian McCoubrey (called), Michael Owen (called), Sean McGrath, Rick Pearson

Item 1: Chairman Pinette called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM

Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance conducted by all attendees

Item 3: VSO Report from VSO Dave Mangan - there has been some attrition with Chapter 115 clients coming off the program. Additional unemployment benefits have caused some clients to become ineligible for exceeding the program income limits. The impact of additional stimulus benefits for unemployed clients has created some of the turnover. This will bear watching as future stimulus programs (if any) are released. The monthly Veterans Food Market continues with clients picking up their food at the Wakefield Senior Center. The Wakefield Food Pantry has also contributed toiletries and other goods for the clients.

Item 4: VAB Board Officers/Job Descriptions - the proposed job descriptions were forwarded to all VAB members prior to the meeting. The positions were reviewed and some minor text changes were proposed and adopted. The revised descriptions will be circulated to the board and will be reviewed again in November. After a brief discussion, the board agreed to proceed with the positions of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Clerk. Motion made by the chair and seconded by the VSO. Vote was unanimous.

Item 5: Election of VAB Officers: No members expressed an interest in holding any of the VAB positions. Chair agreed to continue in the position. The board agreed that the positions would be for terms of two years.

Item 6: Veterans Day 2020 – per direction from the Town Administrator, no indoor ceremonies will be allowed in observance of Veterans Day as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. In addition to re-running presentations of the town's Veterans Day observances held prior to 2020, WCAT is willing to provide air time for taped sessions pertaining to Veterans Day from townspeople for Veterans Day. VSO Mangan and member Cancelliere will follow up with Barbara Worley at WCAT for potential sessions. Discussions were had pertaining to possible outdoor venues and content for Veterans Day ceremonies. The Wakefield Choral Society will not be available. The chair will reach out to Mr. Bankert at WMHS to see if a soloist for the National Anthem and a trumpeter for taps would be available. No firm decisions were made for Veterans Day plans. Additional off-line discussions will have to take place in the coming weeks.



Item 7: Wreaths Across America (WAA) - The VAB will now serve as the local coordinator for the Wreaths Across America event to be held on Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at Forest Glade Cemetery. The board will work in conjunction with Mr. Fazio from the DPW/Cemetery Department. A few of the current VAB members have participated in past WAA events. The board will have to begin a "get the word out campaign". We will place content in *The Daily Item* and on social media. We will also have to create printed flyers, etc. Dan Benjamin created these last year. We have over 400 wreaths to consider for Wakefield. We have some carryover from last year already on the books. Dan and Dave believe that the Reading Vietnam Veterans chapter will be making a cash donation. More to follow.

Item 8: Other Business – Dan Benjamin reminded the board that the anniversary of the Beirut Marine Barracks bombing is on October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Item 9: The chair adjourned the meeting at 8:25 PM

Submitted by: Jay Pinette