



# TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

## VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

### **Meeting Minutes – May 18, 2021**

Meeting Attendees – Dan Benjamin, Paul Cancelliere, Rob Ettinger, Jay Pinette, Kristi Yentile, Marion Denehy, Brian McCoubrey, VSO Dave Mangan, Jackie Millinor, Melinda Cook, Michael Owen, Joe Dellolio

Absent: Sean McGrath

**Item 1: Call to order:** Chairman Pinette called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM

**Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance:** conducted by all attendees

**Item 3: Review/Approval of April 2021 VAB Meeting Minutes:** Motion by Jay, and second by Marion to approve the April meeting minutes. Vote was unanimous.

**Item 4: VSO Report:** from VSO Dave Mangan – Food bank for Wakefield is Wednesday May 19th. Wakefield food pantry has once again donated dry goods to go along with the Boston Food Bank donations. We currently have 17 recipients.

We currently have 14 clients on the Chapter 115 program in Wakefield. The Chapter 115 Benefits Program is run by the Massachusetts Department Veterans' Services (DVS). DVS runs the program in partnership with local Veterans' Service Officers (VSOs). The Program provides financial aid for food, shelter/housing, clothing, and medical care to veterans and their dependents who have limited incomes. If you know of any Veteran or Veteran spouse who may require our services, please let them know of this program. The web site for further information is: <https://www.masslegalhelp.org/disability/state-veterans-115>

We have Received several "Thank you" notes from Wakefield citizens for both the Memorial Day banners and the Veteran parking spot at the town hall.

Aid and Attendance applications are coming in at a workable pace. We have three that are being worked on at this time. Aid & Attendance is for Wartime veterans and their surviving spouses, 65 years and older, may be entitled to a tax-free benefit called Aid and Attendance provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs. The Benefit is designed to provide financial aid to help offset the cost of long-term care for those who need assistance with the daily activities of living such as bathing, dressing, eating, toileting, and transferring. Please contact my office for additional information.

Had two calls this week regarding ramp installations for Disabled Veterans. The company I have recommended based on outstanding reviews is "Stairlift & Ramp Headquarters". I have the flyers at the Senior center with all of the information. I have also contacted them regarding a Veteran Discount offer and they will be getting back to us soon.

Motion by Jay, and second by Paul to accept the VSO's report. Vote was unanimous.



**Item 5: Veteran's Corner Article:** The next article to be published will be drafted and shared by Jay. Topics include Memorial Day, Banners, the Veteran-only Parking Spot and Flagging of Graves.

**Item 6: Wakefield Veterans Discount Program Update:** VSO Mangan provided an update, along with Kristi. Paper Store in Reading and Dockside (both locations) joined with 10% discounts. Kristi said we got 6 more businesses to participate from the latest email blast.

**Item 7: State Grant Program:** Current year deadline has passed. The Board endeavors to actively work with the Town to get a line item in the 2022 Town budget and on submitting a proposal next year (the grant program is awarded annually). A subcommittee was formed (chair-Melinda, Jackie & Paul add'l participants) to pursue this program for 2022.

**Item 8: Memorial Day 2021 Program:** Have all flags. Wreaths on order with Kendall Flowers (Beth Goodchild). Flagging veteran graves at Lakeside on Monday and Forest Glade on Friday. Rep. Mouton will be sending his District Director. Brian to confirm that WCAT will provide speakers / equipment. Jay to bring lectern. Need to finalize who will read the names of the fallen heroes.

**Item 9: Proposed Project to Erect Veterans' Field Memorial and Flagpole:** Jay mentioned this project again to Mr Maio. He would like to do this project in conjunction with the rededication of the tennis courts/pickle ball courts. Dan provided the Board with more history of the site. The Board will move this to the top of the priorities list after Memorial Day.

**Item 10: Main Street Banners:** The banners have been largely well received by the Community. Marion mentioned that Joe Bellavia's dad was very appreciative.

**Item 11: Veterans' Parking Space at Town Hall:** The Town Council approved the parking space. Jay will follow-up on the exact plan to install it.

**Item 12: Other Business:** Jackie volunteered to draft the June Veteran's Corner article commemorating Women Veterans Day.

**Item 13: Adjournment:** The Chair moved, and Marion seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 PM

Submitted by: Rob Ettinger, Wakefield VAB Clerk