



TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes – September 21, 2021

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

Absent: Melinda Cook, Brian McCoubrey, Sean McGrath

Item 1: Call to order: Chairman Pinette called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM

Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance: conducted by all attendees

Item 3: Review/Approval of June and August 2021 VAB Meeting Minutes: Motion by Rob, and second by Paul to approve the June and August meeting minutes. Vote was unanimous.

Item 4: VSO Report: from VSO Dave Mangan – The 9-11 remembrance at the Veterans common was received well by the community.

Sponsorship opportunities regarding the Vietnam Era Veterans Roll to Washington next year in September to visit the memorials and the Wall will be coming soon as the committee prepares to send out donor cards and information regarding the process for applications.

Wakefield Veterans monthly Food bank continued thru the summer months and in collaboration with the Wakefield food bank and the Greater Boston food bank - the 19 recipients are very grateful.

The Chapter 115 program has been lowered by 2 recipients who have now received Veteran Administration compensation substantial enough to no longer require the assistance of 115.

Had several requests for folks seeking out their DD 214 discharge papers over the summer and have had little success from the Military records center in St. Louis as they are still processing burial benefits and that has been the priority. They have, however, merged the National guard and Reserve discharge documents to the Milton facility however the only way to get them is to call they are not accessible online.

Still looking for dd 214 for the parents of a Marine Veteran who lives in Maine whose son was interned at the Puritan Lawn cemetery during the summer for burial benefits and a grave marker. I have faxed, mailed, and reached out to Quantico Va. With no success as of yet. I have contacted Congressman Seth Mouton's office and they are going to expedite this search and contact the family in Maine to assure them that we have not forgotten them.

Had one homeless Veteran reach out to my office during the summer who I had placed with the Save team and the West Roxbury VA for further care.

COVID booster shots at the VA have not as of yet been authorized, but I will keep a watchful eye to let our Veterans know once they are available.



The Office of the Adjutant General sent a notice that that service connected death due to Agent Orange will no longer receive the Medal of Liberty offered to Massachusetts Veterans, but will be developing this year a Medal of Valor for those who qualify.

We have had several A&A applications come thru the office and one that got approved for a pension to assist in some of the cost for home health care. Although it is not a large sum of money it helps offset the cost.

Aid & Attendance is for Wartime veterans and their surviving spouses, 65 years and older who may be entitled to a tax-free benefit 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.

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

Item 5: Veteran's Corner Article: Upcoming articles will pertain to programs we have coming up. In next day, Jay will draft article on Veteran's Banners Program for this month. Articles don't have to be monthly, can be more frequent. Other future topics may include Chapter 115 benefits, Veteran's Discount program, Women's program, Property owner benefits for disabled vets, Gold Star families - 20% or more).

Item 6: Veteran's Day Planning: Mr. Maio is of opinion (as-of today) that we should be able to hold a ceremony inside the Galvin. Masks, etc, to be determined. Jay to be unavailable on the date of the ceremony. Guest speaker will be Tommy Lyons – Chairperson of Medal of Honor convention recently held in Boston. Run school activities (music, etc) through Mr. Bankert. Need to identify a Master of Ceremonies. Need to reach out to Derek Robinson at Honey Dew for coffee at post-ceremony collation (if held).

Item 7: Coffee Social Discussion: VAB voted in August to restart these meetings. Starting in October. Will do quarterly thereafter, for now. Need to reach out to Quapanawitt Yacht Club to see if they can host – Kristi to reach out to Bonnie. 2nd Saturday of every month. October 9th. Eric Jeter reached out to Jay to get involved again. Dave Mangan to provide a brief presentation on various benefit programs (Chpt 115, Service-connected disability, Property tax benefits, education benefits). Derek Robinson at Honey Dew will donate coffee and donuts for the socials. Mike, Jackie, David and Kristi will drive this program.

Item 8: Veterans Field Memorial Project: Jay discussed with Mr. Maio and Mr. Fazio recently – both on board. Mr Fazio has some thoughts on the gardening/maintenance going forward – maybe the Garden Club could maintain? Placement in centerfield (outside fence) near flag pole. A generous benefactor will fund the project. May not need to go through Town Council for approval without town funds. We should meet with them to keep them informed on plans. Dan Benjamin, Joe and Brian will head the project for the Board. If costs allow, we will light up sign. Shoot to complete for Memorial Day 2022.

Item 9: Veterans Banners Program: Mr. Maio wants us to push forward with the program. We need to reach out to families in Wakefield to get photos and info of their veteran's so we have banners for Veteran's Day – submit to VSO's office, or VAB email address. Deadline for submissions Oct 15th. Jay to check on lead time with T Stop (making banners). Need to get banners to DPW by 1st of November. Banners to be labeled "Wakefield's Veterans". Banner with name, rank, service, conflict (if any).

Item 10: Other Business: Lois Benjamin of ADA Committee will be liason to VAB. Previous Wakefield VSO, Hector Erinna, passed away recently.

Item 11: Adjournment: Paul moved, and Dave seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 PM

Submitted by: Rob Ettinger, Wakefield VAB Clerk