



TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes – February 15, 2022

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

Absent: Sean McGrath, Michael Owen

Special Guest: Colleen Getty, Room to Write

Item 1: Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM

Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance: conducted by all attendees

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

Item 4: VSO Report: Wakefield Veterans monthly Food bank will be held Wednesday February 16th and we will 19 recipients. We have started sending them the monthly list from The GBFB as they have been duplicating some items.

We currently have 10 chapter 115 participants in Wakefield. We have begun a campaign of community awareness by sending messages on both the Senior center monthly bulletin, and the Veterans Coffee social newsletter as well as providing flyers to various locations at the Library, the US Post office and the Senior center. We will also be sending some information to WCAT to run during the monthly community service segment of this program.

We have processed five new disability claims through the VA for compensation. Many of the claims have been outsourced to private agencies for examinations and sometimes take several months to respond to applicants.

I have reached out and invited General Magurn program coordinator for the “Medal of Liberty” out of Hanscom field to be our guest speaker for Memorial Day services but have not heard back.

On March 29th, Vietnam Veterans Memorial Day, the Dockside Restaurant Main St. Wakefield will be sponsoring a fund raiser to help raise money for the Roll to DC campaign for up to 15 Wakefield Veterans to take an all-expense trip to Washington on Sept. 11, 2022. The Dockside will be donating 10% of the days business sales towards the fund raiser. They will also be raffling off several gifts donated by area businesses including books of scratch tickets. The applications for the Veterans who qualify for the invitation will be available at the McCarthy senior center Veteran service office after March 5th. Please call if you have any questions 781-246-6377.

The Veteran Service office continues to reach out to the community for any Veteran who may need our assistance from navigating for benefits, to agencies who can give them support in many areas. Please call the office for further information if needed 781-246-6377.

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



Item 6: Veteran's Writing Project: Colleen Getty was present to discuss this topic. She said this connection to the VAB started when Dan had asked her about Senior and Veteran writing programs. The program aims to make writing more popular (don't focus on grammar, etc). They did an event at Brightview recently that was well received. This discussion with the VAB is the first step, exploring working with us/Veteran's. Colleen has some ideas. Maybe not just workshops, also bring published Veteran writers in to talk to the group to offer inspiration. Room to Write.org. One of Colleen's colleagues, Linda, was at the most recent coffee social. Dave talked to Judy Luciano, and they would offer up the Senior Center to host an event. The VAB could advertise the event to the community. Next steps: Seek veterans that interested? Set a date? Choose other times of day (not just morning at coffee social). Aiming to start April-ish. April 9th coffee social?

Item 5: Veteran's Corner Article: Dave will put an article in on the Veteran's Discount program listing the participating businesses in time for March. Jay may put a more general article in for February.

Item 7: Coffee Socials – Review / Recap of February 12th Social: Was very good, well attended. Victor from the Assessor's Office was great. March 12th is date for next social. Dave to put out a newsletter on the coffee socials about a week before the next social.

Item 8: Veterans Field Memorial Project: Dan trying to set up meeting for Sardella signs to finalize. Started discussing ideas on how the dedication ceremony might run. Mehreen Butt (liaison to the Board from Town Selectpersons) and Jonathan Chines came by the coffee social to discuss. Council of Clubs (Knights, Elks, CCC, WSC) may pay for landscaping around the sign. Mr Fazio had some ideas on the landscaping. Need to coordinate with him.

Item 9: Memorial Day 2022 Planning: Jay seeking the priest from Most Blessed Sacrament to be member of clergy. Speaker - Dave still pursuing General Magurn. If he's not interested, Dave will find us another General. Jay will reach out to past participants to let them know we plan to have an event. Jay to ask Eric Sherman if there are any other pavers to be dedicated at the ceremony.

Item 10: Wakefield Tax Exemptions: covered in Item 7

Item 11: Board Turnover: Melinda and Dan's and Jay's terms are up at end of April. Jay to retire. There was a posting in the paper for 3 positions. Next month we should consider Board officer positions.

Item 12: State Grant Program: Bronze plaques at the high school? Move to new HS? Maximum of \$15k in funds. Need to get town signed-off to contribute 50% of the funds.

Item 13: Other Business: March 29th is National Vietnam, Veteran's Memorial Day. 50th Anniversary pins, etc were created. Should we plan something for Wakefield? We only have 2 weeks to decide and to order the pins. Try and coordinate with monthly meeting of Vietnam Vets in Wakefield on March 29th.

Item 14: Adjournment: Marion moved, and Brian seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 PM

Submitted by: Rob Ettinger, Wakefield VAB Clerk