

Meeting Minutes – May 7, 2022

Meeting Attendees – Paul Cancelliere, Marion Denehy, VSO Dave Mangan, Joe Dellolio, William Curran

Absent: Sean McGrath, Kristi Yentile, Michael Owen, Robert Ettinger, Daniel Benjamin

Special Guests: None

Item 1: Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM

Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance: Conducted by all attendees

Item 3: Introduction to new board members: New Veterans Advisory Board member, William (Bill) Curran was introduced and welcomed by all attendees.

Item 4: Review/Approval of April 2022 VAB Meeting Minutes: Motion by Paul, and second by Dave to approved. Vote was unanimous.

Item 5: VSO Report: Wakefield Veterans monthly Food bank will be held Wednesday May 18th and we will have a total of 21 recipients.

We now have 13 chapter 115 participants in Wakefield. The support checks will be disbursed for pick up at the senior center on June 15th - mailing takes an additional 3 days for receipt.

The Wakefield HRT (High Risk Team) contacted my office on Wednesday regarding a homeless Veteran who was getting released from the hospital and who will be requiring detox. I connected them to the Emergency shelter for Veterans at 17 Court St., the SAVE team and the Vache program along with the Veterans Northeast Outreach center who can assist him in getting housing. I also connected them to the Veterans Northeast Outreach Center who communicated with them in getting placement.

There has been an increase in Veteran's applying for VA benefits, spousal burial benefits, Aid and Attendance, Dependent indemnity compensation, upgrades in compensation due to medical issues, new applications from Veterans seeking assistance. I have been covering the Melrose Veterans Services as the director has stepped down, as well as supporting the new VSO in Saugus and in some cases answering calls from the Stoneham office. I have been charged with working an additional day until the position can be filled. My new hours of operation are Mon. – Thurs. 7:30 am – 1:30 pm.

We had a Wakefield Marine Veteran, Mary O'Leary who turned 100 years old, and who resides at the Pearl St. residence in Reading now and we awarded her with a proclamation from both Governor Baker's office and Congressman Seth Moulton's office on the 16th of May.

The monthly Veteran coffee social was held on Saturday the May 24th at the Quannapowitt Yacht club and we shared some of our military experiences as well as Information on the upcoming Veterans Freedom Fishing trip out of Lynn in July. We made handouts and contact information available. I also shared information on the Medal of Liberty that many Mass. families are not aware of for killed in action Veterans given posthumously to the families of fallen soldiers.

Once again thank you to Honey dew Donuts for their generous contribution of coffee and donuts. The next social gathering will be on September 10th at 10 am the second Saturday of

the month. We will be breaking for the summer months. Please submit any talking points to the VSO office.

As mentioned in last month's report, Marion Dennehy has agreed to be our guest speaker for Memorial Day. As the Gold Star chairperson, she will bring awareness to the community of the value and sacrifices so many Veterans have contributed to our nation's freedom making the ultimate sacrifice. She will bring a worthy attornment to the event. Also I will be making the awareness of the Medal of Liberty to the audience for fallen soldiers families posthumously for their sacrifice. We will have on hand Mr. John Peach who will be receiving the "Medal of Liberty" in honor of his brother Chester Peach who was killed during WW2 as a gunner on the USS Hancock in the South Pacific.

We currently have 15 committed Wakefield Veterans signed up. All CORI reports have been submitted and the itinerary is being set up and will be sent out to the applicants once it is finalized.

As always 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, to any qualifying Veterans or spouses for the Massachusetts Chapter 115 program. Please call the office for further information 781-246-6377.

Item 6: Memorial Day 2022 Planning and Coordination: Girl Scouts are verified as being able to post and retire the colors at the Memorial Day ceremony being held at the Galvin Middle School on Monday, May 30th at 1 PM. The American Legion will lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Bankert leading the way for the playing of taps and the singing of the National Anthem. The Boy Scouts will be displaying 1 reef at the Senior Center. Rob Ettinger will be leading the reading of the names of Wakefield residents who have lost their lives in U.S. Wars and will be asking for volunteers to read as well. The Medal of Liberty will be presented to the Peach family for approximately 4 minutes with pictures following the presentation. Also discussed the reveal of the flags at Forest Glade Cemetery on 27 May and the Lakeside Cemetery on 23 May, both at 4 PM.

Item 7: Coffee Social: Next coffee social will be on Saturday, September 10th at Wakefield Quannapowitt Yacht Club.

Item 8: Flag Day: Waiting on confirmation that the Boy Scouts will be conducting the retiring of old American flags. Proposal by Paul to present a small American flag cake at town hall to both commemorate the Army Birthday and Flag Day on Tuesday, June 14th at 8:30 AM. Marion volunteered to participate.

Item 9: Veterans Field Memorial Project: Funding is available but not much to update on this project.

Item 10: Announcement of resigning member: Paul announced the Brain McCoubrey will be resigning from the VAB effective May 17th. Board members acknowledged and thanked him for his dedication to the VAB and the town of Wakefield.

Item 11: Veterans Corner Articles: Paul presented ideas of possible future topics such as the new branch of the military, the Space Force, and Space A being available for veterans for travel out of Hanscom AFB or Westover AFB. Bill Curran presented the topic of the recent deployment of the 1-101st Field Artillery Regiment out of the Massachusetts and Vermont Army National

Guard that involved the evacuation of Afghanistan and combat support in Iraq. Motion to approve the Veterans Corner Articles to be added to the Daily Item by Paul, motioned passed with a unanimous vote.

Item 12: State Grant Program: Looking for a timeline for future actions on this grant. Discussions were made to fix the hands of the stone sculptures of Soldiers Monument and the repair/replacement of cannons. Possible future topic of discussion for the Veteran's Corner Articles.

Item 13: Other business. Wounded Warrior Motorcycle Ride will be riding through the town on May 22nd.

Item 14: Next Meeting: Next meeting will be June 21st at 6 PM on Zoom. There will be no meeting in the month of July. Next meeting after July will be August 16th.

Item 15: Adjournment: Paul moved, and Dave seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 PM.