



# TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

## VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

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### **Meeting Minutes – April 18, 2023**

Meeting Attendees – Paul Cancelliere, Dan Benjamin (& Lois), Rob Ettinger, Joe Dellolio, VSO Dave Mangan, Marion Dennehy, Marc Young

Absent: Kristi Yentile, Sean McGrath, Michael Owen, Bill Curran

Special Guests: Dale Findlay (will be joining VAB in May)

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:33 PM

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Conducted by all attendees

**Approval of March Meeting Minutes:** Motion by Marion to approve minutes, and second by Marc. Vote was unanimous for approval.

**VSO Report:** Wakefield Veterans monthly Food bank will be held tomorrow April 19<sup>th</sup> behind the Senior Center for those who have registered for the program. The Greater Boston Food Bank delivers the product to Melrose Memorial Hall and the Volunteers assemble the goods from Stoneham, Wakefield, Saugus, and North Andover. We have currently 27 participants and the count is growing. The Wakefield Food Pantry also contributes paper supplies and toiletries to the program as well.

There is a Lacrosse game being held on April 26<sup>th</sup> at Landrigan Field Hemlock Rd Wakefield Pregame time and ceremony will be at 6 pm. The Wakefield Warriors will be VS the Wilmington Wildcats. The game is being dedicated as a “Salute to Service” for our Veterans currently enlisted serving and those who will serve our nation. Tim Johnson the coach of the Wakefield High School Boys Lacrosse team is asking that all Veterans and Gold Star families attend so they can be honored during this event. We will be accepting donations that will be packed by the Wakefield HS Boys Lacrosse program and shipped directly to our service men and women who are overseas. Items in need are: Toothbrushes Toothpaste Mouthwash Powder Shampoo/conditioner Deodorant/Antiperspirant Baby wipes Granola bars/Chewing gum/pocketable snacks/Non-perishables Black boot socks All donations can be dropped off at Wakefield Town Hall or brought directly to the game.

Under Chapter 115 of Mass. General Laws, the Commonwealth provides a uniform program of financial and medical assistance for veterans and their dependents. Qualifying veterans and their dependents receive necessary financial assistance for food, shelter, clothing, fuel, and medical care in accordance with a formula that takes into consideration the number of dependents and income from all sources.

Maximum Income number in family 1. \$2,265, 2. \$3,052

Maximum assets not counting home or vehicle: Single \$8,400, Married \$16,600



As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, The Pact Act letters have gone out to any Veterans or surviving spouses who in the past were denied compensation for service-connected issues up to and including death. For clarity on this issue please contact the office and I can give you a more definitive explanation if you qualify.

The coffee social was held Saturday April 15th at the Senior Center Converse St. We had 20 ppl attend and our guest speaker was Victor Santiniello from the Assessor's office to answer questions on the tax abatement and information on the Circuit breaker program for seniors. Paul Cancelliere the Veterans Advisory board Chairperson was also in attendance and raised awareness of the Memorial Day program at the Galvin middle school and the flag placements at the lakeside and Forest Glade Cemetery. More information to follow at the May VAB meeting.

**Our next Veteran Coffee social will be held on May 20<sup>th</sup> here at the Senior Center 30 Converse St. from 10 am to 12 noon.** We will be sharing information on several Veteran outreach programs as well as information on the PACT ACT.

The Past is Prologue Essay Contest invites students ages 11-12, 13-15, and 16-18 to compete within their age group to write an essay about a specific battle closely identified with an American military cemetery or monument overseas, managed by the American Battle Monuments Commission. The American Battle Monuments Foundation (ABMF) is an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization and the official partner of the American Battle Monuments Commission. [abmc.gov](https://www.abmf.org/past-is-prologue-essay-contest/) 2023 DEADLINE TO SUBMIT ESSAYS AND PRIZES AWARDED Submit your essay no later than midnight (MDT) on May 31, 2023 Winners will be announced by October 2, 2023 PARTICIPANTS The contest is open to students ages 11-18 who compete against others in their age group. (Must be no older than 18 on the essay submission deadline, May 31, 2023.) Public, private, parochial, charter, military, and homeschoolers welcome! Only essays written in English will be considered. <https://www.abmf.org/past-is-prologue-essay-contest/>

For appointments for Veteran Services, please contact me with any questions you may have regarding on going benefits or submission of new benefits. We are located downstairs at the Senior Center, 30 Converse St. Wakefield and is by appointment only

Veteran Services hours of operation:  
Monday, Wed. & Thursday. 8 am – 2 pm

Holidays on Monday hours will be Tues. Wed. and Thursday 8 am -2 pm  
Voice mails are checked seven days a week. 781-246-6377

**Veterans Advisory Board Member Term Approvals announced (Welcome new VAB members):** Will be done at May meeting

**Veterans Outreach (Dan Benjamin):**

- Met with WMHS Guidance Team Monday, March 27, 2023 "Leadership Opportunities"
- "Salute to Service" LAX Game April 26 WMHS vs. Wilmington at 6:00pm
- WMHS Memorial Day Assembly Friday May 26, 2023 (Service Flags)

**Veteran's Corner – Wakefield Daily Item Articles:** Thank you, Marion!! Veterans Discount programs. The Past is Prologue Essay Contest . A list of Veteran's Activities for month of May.

**Report about April 4, 2023, Digital "Veterans Conversation" hosted by Rep. Lipper-Garibaldian (Dan, Marion, Paul):** Paul updated the VAB on the conversation. Wished there was more time dedicated to questions. Impressive panelists.

**Memorial Day 2023 program:**

- Monday May 29, 2023 at 1pm
- Guest Speaker Andrew Biggio, US Marine who served in Afghanistan, and Iraq, author of "The Rifle" The theme is "gratitude."
- Troop 701 will post and retire colors
- Memorial Day Wreath – put one in front of WW II memorial, and one in front of Veteran's Field (Vote to add 2<sup>nd</sup> wreath - motion Marion, seconded by Dan – vote was unanimous)
- Chaplain is Pastor Douglas Dry, Wakefield First Baptist Church
- Will close first door to auditorium, and pass the memorials, and enter into the 2<sup>nd</sup> door WCAT will record
- Audio will loop 21 stories of the 106 fallen as people will walk by – looking for volunteers to read, and WCAT will record
- Flags are available – will place at Lakeside Cemetery Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> of May at 3:00, and at Forest Glade on Friday May 26<sup>th</sup> at 3:00

**D-Day June 6th 79th Anniversary**

**Flag Day June 14 – Boy Scouts Troop 701 Ceremony on the Upper Common behind the War Memorial:** Encourage members to attend – usually at 6:00pm behind the WW II memorial

**Thank you to Sean McGrath and Michael Owen for serving as members of the Veterans Advisory Board.**

**Other Business:** VAB discussion about awareness of students about careers in military, and how to support that. Also, for reappointed and new members, received a handbook, read it. Do the ethics training and get sworn in.

**Adjournment:** Rob moved, and Dave seconded a motion to adjourn. The vote was unanimous. The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rob Ettinger, Secretary, VAB