

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD  
COMMISSION ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS  
Special Meeting  
Tuesday, January 21, 2020, 7:00 PM**

**1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER, 7:10 PM**

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present: Garrett Sheehan (Chair), John Johnson, John Rixon, Adam Raider (Secretary), Alberto Cortes, Kate Hamilton, Dave Pauluk. Absent: Randy Molloy.

**3. TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON**

Mr. Sheehan speculated that the task of replacing former Councilman Chris Barnes as Council Liaison may fall on Councilman Lee Gold. Mr. Raider will confirm with the Town Clerk.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Johnson moved and Mr. Cortes seconded to approve the minutes from September 17, 2019.

**5. NEW MEMBER**

The Commission welcomed its newest member, Dave Pauluk, who previously served on the West Hartford Board of Education.

**6. TRACKING OF VETERAN OBITUARIES FOR MEMORIAL DAY**

Mr. Rixon updated the Commission on this initiative, the goal of which was to read aloud the names of any West Hartford veterans who had died since last Memorial Day. Names are compiled by scanning obituaries in local newspapers and with help from several local funeral homes. Through January, Mr. Rixon stated that he had compiled 109 names. As this figure was expected to rise, the Commission agreed that it would take too long to read all the names at the upcoming Memorial Day ceremony and that we should explore other ways to honor the recently deceased. Some suggestions included handouts, a poster board at the Veterans Memorial, and listing the names on the Commission's webpage or Facebook page. Further discussion is required.

**7. HOUSE OF HEROES**

Continued discussion about the non-profit organization that sought assistance from the Commission in identifying potential candidates in West Hartford for home improvement projects. Mr. Raider reported that communication with the American Legion's Moe Fradette yielded no leads. The Commission discussed reaching out to Zoning Enforcement, Social Services, and the Elmwood Senior Center to raise awareness of House of Heroes and potentially identify veterans in need in our community.

## **8. CONNECTICUT TREES OF HONOR MEMORIAL**

Mr. Raider suggested the Commission plan an outing in the spring to the Trees of Honor Memorial in Middletown, in part to see if any aspects of the memorial could be replicated in West Hartford.

## **9. THE COMMISSION ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

Mr. Raider reported the launch of the Commission's new Facebook page, [facebook.com/westhartfordveterans](https://www.facebook.com/westhartfordveterans). Members were invited to submit photos and content.

## **10. CALENDAR FOR 2020**

Mr. Raider distributed meeting, holiday, and events calendar for 2020.

## **11. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Raider brought to the Commission's attention a request to the Town's PR Specialist, Renee McCue, from Amazon to march in the Memorial Day Parade under the auspices of their "Warriors@Amazon" program. Some Commission members expressed concerns that Amazon's participation would amount to a back-door advertisement for the company. Next steps: Mr. Raider or Ms. McCue will follow up with Amazon to get more information about who would be representing Amazon, how they would be dressed, signage carried, etc.

There was a brief conversation about possible changes to the Memorial Day Parade and ceremony, including a suggestion to conduct the ceremony during the parade, instead of after. Ms. McCue can receive these suggestions on behalf of the Town when she attends the Commission's next meeting in March.

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Raider moved and Mr. Cortes seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 PM. Next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 7:00 PM in Room 308.

Submitted by:



Adam Raider  
Commission Secretary