



TOWN OF ELLINGTON RECEIVED

Ad Hoc Patriotic Committee

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

RECEIVED
MAY 11 AM 10:05
ELLINGTON
TOWN CLERK

Members

Joe Boucher
Ted C. Graziani
Sara Landon
Cheryl Samborski
Christian Sauer
Bruce Warkentin

Chairman
John Takach

Vice-Chairman
John Chandler

Secretary
Rhonda Villanova



Student Representative
Steven Villanova

April 30, 2020

Teleconference meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m.

In attendance: John Takach, John Chandler, Bruce Warkentin, Christian Sauer, Cheryl Samborski, Joe Boucher, Ted Graziani, Sara Landon, Rhonda Villanova, Steven Villanova; guests: Drew Ellis (Boy Scouts), JJ Takach, and Logan Takach

Approval of last meeting minutes: Cheryl 1st, John C. 2nd; Motion approved

New Business: Drew Ellis gave a presentation for his Life Scout Troop 96 Project Proposal regarding Flag Boxes for Ellington. Drew is working on his Eagle Rank. The three points and motivation for the project are: 1) current Flag Boxes are in poor condition; 2) Collection of the flags is not organized and there is no clear ownership of process; and 3) the Awareness level of the public regarding the collection boxes is very low. Drew's presentation included a few options for box design. The boxes would have clear signage and purpose clearly stated on them. He proposed that Troop 96 BSA take ownership of the collection process. The collections would be on a 3 month schedule and the flags would be stored with Troop 96 until proper disposal. Public Awareness could be increased through the town website, citing locations of the boxes; also, social media posts and sharing of information and possible article in the newspaper to establish the new process. Due to the shutdown, the timeline has been pushed into the summer, with a back-up of fall, 2020. There would be no cost to the Ad Hoc Patriotic Committee or the Town of Ellington. Drew would raise funds to cover the costs of the new boxes.

Bruce asked whether there were any final ideas about which box design they would use. Drew said it was not yet decided. Drew said the Patriotic Committee would get to see the final design.

John T. asked what the signage would be on the box – emblems/logos. The American Legion had traditionally collected the flags. Ted and Chris, as representatives of the American Legion, said they were fine with the BSA taking over the collection process. John C. thought it was a great idea. Ted agreed with the need to do the project and asked where the new boxes would be placed. Drew stated that he would be building four boxes and the locations would most likely be the Senior Center, Big Y, the Fire Department and Hall Memorial Library. Ted asked if there might be one placed at Crystal Lake. Drew took that under advisement. The current box locations are at Big Y and the library.

John T. suggested a contact card should be included on the box or under the lid with the Scout Master's name and phone number just in case a box is full before the scheduled pick up.

Cheryl appreciated the presentation and the project. John C. said he liked the red box option.

Alternate Memorial Day Observance: John T. said due to the current environment with the shutdown, Rhonda called him with the idea to create a video. Steven would edit and assist with putting it together. Rhonda gave a brief summary of the sources she could use for the video, which included pictures from Fred Bird, video of previous parades; she has a video of EHS' Vocal Ensemble performing the National Anthem at the Veterans' Day ceremony. Bruce had told us of the CT winner for the American Legion's Voice of Democracy winner, Ayushman Choudury. He would have been invited to read his essay at the regular ceremony. Rhonda would like to include his reading of the winning essay. Ted offered to send her the link of the website where the winning essays are currently posted. Reviewing the past programs and what parts we may want to include, Cheryl offered to ask Pastor Diggins if he might record something for the video.

Rhonda had spoken with Mike Stupinski before the meeting regarding his project on Ellington's Roll Call list. He wanted to hand it over to someone to continue and/or the Historical Society or maybe the library. Mike forwarded the document he had been working on to Rhonda to share with the group, along with copies of a picture of each of the men, except four that he was still trying to find. Rhonda will put out a request on Facebook Ellington Friends' page to see if anyone might have or be able to obtain pictures of any of those four.

Bruce offered to send Rhonda information regarding John McMahon, including a letter from the Department of the Navy and some pictures. There was discussion of whether to pick one or two people to read a background/story and additional pictures. Ted said there were two men at the Veteran Coffee House that told some stories (gave a presentation?) about their loved ones from WWII. Joe Palombizio might remember who they were.

It was decided to try to keep the video as close to 15 minutes as possible. It may not be feasible to include as much as we would like. The discussion/brainstorming continued about what to include, if possible... the MIA/POW table, Chris Davis/Lori Spielman usually read a proclamation, Pastor Diggins, John T. said his wife had pictures of the Color Guard, the Roll Call – there is usually a drum roll as the poppy's were dropped in the helmet. Rhonda would like to use the bagpipe Amazing Grace music John T. had used for the MIA/POW table from a couple years ago. The readings of Flanders Field, Gettysburg Address are fairly short; Logan's General Order could be text at the beginning over pictures. Rhonda would like to take pictures of the Boy Scouts placing the flags in the cemetery. That is taking place on the Thursday before Memorial Day at 5:00 p.m. Joe said he and Al Lewandoski usually place the crosses at the green around 6:00 the same night.

Joe Palombizio had contacted John T. on behalf of some of the CERT members, to see if the committee needed any help. The Fire Department usually helps in some way as well.

John T. had been contacted by the CT Air National Guard regarding Operation American Resolve that they wanted to do a flyover on Memorial Day anyway. The local units wanted to repeat last year's flight pattern at approximately the same time.

The committee members all agreed we would like to have a small ceremony/service at the cemetery on Memorial Day at about 11:15/11:30, for whomever could make it. We would have to follow social distancing protocol, of course.

Motion to adjourn: Cheryl 1st, John C. 2nd; motion approved

Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.; next meeting May 19, 2020, time TBD

Submitted by:

Rhonda Villanova

Rhonda
Villanova

Digitally signed by Rhonda Villanova
DN: cn=Rhonda Villanova, o=Ad Hoc
Patriotic Committee, ou=Secretary,
email=jvillanova@comcast.net,
c=US
Date: 2020.05.07 23:33:14 -0400'