



TOWN OF SUFFIELD

**MEETING MINUTES
VETERANS MEMORIAL EXPANSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
April 11, 2022 6:00 p.m.
IN-PERSON MEETING ONLY**

**Location: Suffield Police Station Conference Room
911 Mountain Road Suffield, CT**

Meeting Name: Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee

By: Rebecca Sypek - Recording Secretary

Type of Meeting: Regular Meeting

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee Members Present

Dave Gauthier, Temporary Chair
Chris Matejek
Fredrick (Fritz) King
Kevin Goff
Tom Elmore
Raymond Hartford
William Moryto
David Shute

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee Members Absent

Salvatore Covino
Chris Nikolis

Also Present

Colin Moll - First Selectman
Kathy Dunai - Town Clerk
Sara Zak - Resident

Dave Gauthier called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked for a roll call identifying members present at the meeting.

Public Comment

Sara Zak introduced herself and shared that she was present at the meeting because of her interest in the discussion on Cold War veterans scheduled for today's meeting.

Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the Minutes from the Regular Meeting held on March 14, 2022. Chris Matejek asked for the below replacement to the “Finances” section of March 14, 2022 meeting minutes:

“Chris Matejek has been to meet with ACCE (Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures) and there is a will and interest in funding the expansion. The Town currently has approximately \$35,000 set aside in ACCE accounts for the Veterans Monument. As of now, there are other projects that may take precedent and the topic is still under review. More information will be provided as this process progresses.”

With that change noted, William Moryto motioned to approve the minutes and Chris Matejek seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Finances

Dave Gauthier heard that \$50,000 is tentatively in the Committee’s account from ACCE (Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures). There was mention that the existing Memorial was funded by donation so the Committee may need to be prepared to fundraise. Chris Matejek confirmed that he heard all of this as well.

Discuss Observer press release

Kevin Goff submitted the necessary information to the Suffield Observer and has not heard anything back. He will follow up with them and request, if possible, it be above the fold of the first page.

Applicant review status

The Committee has not received any responses via mail yet.

The Committee is also still waiting on a response from Roger’s Memorial on timing of engraving new names onto the Memorial. Any responses received will be shared with the group.

Discussion on honoring veterans who moved to Suffield after service

Fritz King motioned to table this discussion until a future date, William Moryto seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of honoring Cold War and peacetime veterans

In previous meetings, it was discussed whether or not all veterans should be honored in some fashion (whether by individual name or general plaque/memorial). Dave Gauthier did a lot of research on the Cold War specifically, what is considered the Cold War and where that term came from. There’s no official time span but it’s agreed upon that the Cold War generally occurred between 1945-1991.

Sara Zak noted that she has personal interest in this timeframe and the people who served then because a portion of her time serving was during the Cold War and she has lots of friends who served during that time that have not been recognized on the Memorial.

The question this Committee needs to keep in mind is that the current Memorial explicitly states that it’s a war memorial. So should Cold War or peacetime veterans be included? Does the Cold War fall under the definition of war time that the existing Memorial uses? This is the complicated task this Committee is working through and this is where a broader/more generalized plaque honoring all veterans may be added in Phase 2.

William Moryto motions to table this discussion until a future date, Chris Matejek seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and election of other officers (Treasurer, Secretary)

Dave Gauthier spoke with the Town Attorney and he recommended the Committee elect a Secretary who's job it would be to ensure that the Recording Secretary records things on time with the Town Clerk. Dave doesn't find this necessary and the Committee was in agreement.

Another note from the Town Attorney was to elect a Treasurer who would have the authority to bring requests of funds to the town. Chris Matejek volunteered for the position of treasurer since he already goes to the ACCE meetings and has already been involved in finance discussions with the town. William Moryto motioned and David Shute seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Business and Next Steps

After this meeting there may be other names approved for inclusion under the Persian War section of the Memorial; however, there is only room for one additional name and the committee may have two after tonight's meeting. That would bring the total to two for Persian Gulf and one for Korea. The Committee had previously discussed adding names to the steps of the Memorial but only adding one name to the step at this point might not look aesthetically pleasing. There may be room above the existing list of names to accommodate a few more names but Roger's Memorial would need to comment on that and determine if that's possible or not. The aesthetics and waiting to get more information from Roger's Memorial may be reason, along with others previously discussed, to delay adding names to the memorial until the deadline the Committee set has been reached vs only adding a few names in time for Memorial Day to accommodate public pressure.

William Moryto motioned to delay engraving any names to the Memorial until after the submission deadline is reached, Raymond Hartford seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None

Executive Session to discuss personal data of applicants

Executive Session to discuss eligibility of candidates started at 6:45 p.m. Executive Session was ended at 7:12 p.m. with nothing agreed upon that needed to be voted on.

A Regular Meeting of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee will be held on Monday, May 9, 2022 at 6 p.m.

Dave Gauthier motioned to adjourn, everyone seconded at 7:15 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Sypek
Recording Secretary