



TOWN OF SUFFIELD

**MEETING MINUTES
VETERANS MEMORIAL EXPANSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
July 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, Chairman
Chris Matejek, Treasurer
Fredrick (Fritz) King
Kevin Goff
David Shute
Raymond Hartford
Chris Nikolis

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee Members Absent

William Moryto, Vice Chairman
Salvatore Covino
Tom Elmore

Also Present

Colin Moll - First Selectman

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

None

Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the Minutes from the Regular Meetings held on April 11, May 9 and June 13, 2022. Kevin Goff motioned to approve the minutes and everyone seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Finances

Nothing to add and nothing has changed since the last meeting.

Discuss timeline/schedule

Dave Gauthier reminded the Committee that this coming Veterans Day is the goal to have Phase 1 complete.

Based on last meeting's discussion, Veterans Day 2024 is the goal to have Phase 2 complete. Which means September timeframe is when he hopes to have something to go out requesting names. Then a design will need to begin to be drafted at some point after that.

Kevin Goff asked if the Committee is assuming funding will be in place or should there be an expectation that fundraising will be needed? Dave said the Committee will probably know more about costs after a preliminary design is drafted, hopefully the town would give more of a budget in the meantime, but that is to be determined.

Applicant review status

The Committee got their first application sent in via mail; however, this man never got his DD214 so Dave Gauthier gave him the instructions to begin the process of getting it. Once the Committee gets his DD214 and confirm he is approved, this man's name would fall under Korea. Dave will follow up with him and hopefully he'll get all the documentation needed.

Discuss Phase Two requirements

Dave Gauthier revised Phase 2 requirements and handed them out to the Committee. He simplified the requirements from last meeting slightly and confirmed/adjusted the dates that cover each War.

Last meeting the option to add "Other Armed Conflicts" and specify the place a veteran served was discussed. This specificity wasn't used in Phase 1 so the question is: Does the Committee want to get that into the weeds or just put the names of people under the War timeframe instead of specific places they served? If the Committee decides to go this route, they would also need to determine what conflict areas would be applicable and which wouldn't. Dave's thought is to not include anything referencing "Other Armed Conflicts" since Phase 1 didn't specify that and other surrounding towns don't go into that specificity either but is open to discuss it further at a later date if someone came to the Committee with a compelling argument to include any other Armed Conflict by named.

Ray Hartford agreed with Dave but mentioned that this should be strongly advertised so that people are sure to be aware.

Fritz King agreed that until someone makes a compelling argument, the Committee should follow a similar model to Phase 1.

Kevin Goff then asked if maybe the new monument should be separated by date ranges vs War dates? Fritz also offered the idea of including their specific conflict next to names, but this would add a lot of cost and take up a lot of space.

Dave said that he's estimating the Committee will get somewhere between 150-200 names based on national averages. What are the chances that this small group of people would feel strongly about wanting to specify where specifically they served? This is why he's more in favor for listing the Iraq and Afghanistan War and anyone who fits under those timeframes would be eligible, regardless of where they actually served.

Fritz and Dave Shute then stated that Phase 2 should include or be open to discuss any names of those who served in a conflict from April 12, 1991 on. Their thought was to see who the Committee hears from and determine what conflicts to accept at that time. However, the Committee agreed to base the criteria of Phase 1's War/Conflicts listed based on what was listed in Title 38 USC, so should this be the Committee's precedent until someone comes questioning why other conflicts aren't included?

Alternatively, Phase 2's "titles" for the monument could be "Other Armed Conflicts after April 12, 1991", "Afghanistan War", or "Iraq War", and on the application the applicant can specify where they want their name listed on the Memorial. Again, if the Committee chooses to go this route, they'll need to specify which conflicts they'll approve at some point.

This will be motioned on at the next meeting.

Discussion on honoring veterans who moved to Suffield after service

This was discussed at the last meeting as well. Dave Shute mentioned that a requirement should be that your name can't be on any other monument, which will require leg work to be verified at the time of application by the Committee. This can be explicitly stated on the application.

This will be motioned on at the next meeting along with deciding a number of years residency requirement.

Discussion of honoring Cold War and peacetime veterans

This will be discussed and motioned on at the next meeting and would just be a general plaque honoring all those who served during peacetimes.

Other Business and Next Steps

For Phase 1, the Persian Gulf has two names to be added but only one spot on the Memorial... Who should be deciding what names go where? There's one space at the bottom and potentially additional room on the bottom if Rodger's Memorial can accommodate it or, alternatively, put the 2nd name on top. Multiple members agreed that this should be dependent on what Rodger's Memorial can do but there is a hierarchy of placement preference.

Dave Gauthier also asked how to go about starting to get a preliminary design going for Phase 2. Chris Matejek said that it depends on the cost because of town regulations, since it would be town money paying for the preliminary design, but he suggested we go to Rodger's Memorial first since the town already has worked with them. Chris will reach out to him on that as well. Dave Shute asked if we could potentially get free designs but with all the ADA compliance changes that need to be done to the existing design, that could be complicated, but if the Committee could at least come up with a general idea that would certainly be helpful.

Before engravings can go out, some Committee members need to stay late to approve applicants. This will be handled after the meeting and if any questions arise, they can be voted on at the next meeting.

Public Comment

None

Executive Session to discuss personal data of applicants

Executive Session was not needed for this meeting.

A Regular Meeting of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee will be held on Monday, August 8, 2022 at 6 p.m.

Dave Gauthier motioned to adjourn, everyone seconded at 7:27 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Sypek
Recording Secretary