

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
VETERANS MEMORIAL EXPANSION COMMITTEE**

AUGUST 8, 2022

6:00 P.M.

**Suffield Police Station Conference Room, 911 Mountain Road, Suffield CT
In-Person Meeting Only**

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee Members Present:

Dave Gauthier, Chairman
Fredrick (Fritz) King (7:00 p.m. departure)
Kevin Goff
David Shute (6:05 p.m. arrival)
Sal Covino
Tom Elmore

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee Members Absent:

William Moryto, Vice Chairman
Chris Nikolis
Raymond Hartford
Chris Matejek, Treasurer

Mr. Gauthier called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and asked everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

None

Approval of the minutes from the Regular Meeting held on July 11, 2022

Mr. Gauthier suggested the group hold off on approval of the minutes of the July 11, 2022 Regular Meeting. All were in agreement.

Discuss timeline/schedule

- 4 names currently need to be engraved for Veterans Day
- Dave Gauthier and Chris Matejek are scheduled to meet with Rogers Memorial this Wednesday to discuss the engraving – timeline should be nailed down at that meeting
- Approval for Phase 2 requirements and application needs to be completed
- Looking to have a design by spring 2022
- Discussion ensued regarding the importance of getting the plans in front of contractors very soon in order to ensure delivery within desired timeframe

Applicant review status

- 7 applications were received for individuals whose names were already on the memorial

- 1 applicant should have a star – **Mr. Gauthier** noted that the individual’s name is already on the memorial, however, on his application it was indicated that he died as a result of his service (cancer due to Agent Orange) - currently working with spouse of deceased veteran to get appropriate documentation
- 2 other applicants need to be reviewed in Executive Session

Mr. Gauthier expressed his desire for all members to be in attendance prior to making any decisions on the Phase Two requirements. He suggested rearranging the order of the agenda this evening to follow a logical order and still provide an opportunity to discuss Phase Two.

Kevin Goff motioned and Tom Elmore seconded to move agenda item #7 “Discuss and approve Phase Two Requirements” to follow agenda item #9 “Discuss and approve honoring Cold War and peacetime veterans.” Motion passed unanimously.

Discuss and approve honoring veterans who moved to Suffield after service

Discussion ensued among the members with regard to honoring veterans who moved to Suffield after service. **Mr. Shute** expressed concern about a conflict of interest in this area as four members of the group will be directly affected by any decisions made on this particular subject. **Mr. King** explained his viewpoint on voting and feels he is going to make a decision on how this will impact the residents of Suffield and not necessarily himself. **Mr. Gauthier** reviewed the criteria discussed thus far.

A separate monument to honor veterans by name who made Suffield their home after active duty

- Veterans name must not be on another memorial in the municipality listed on their service records with the exception of Suffield. (Bridges, Post Offices, etc...)
- Veteran must be a current primary resident of Suffield and living in Suffield for a number of years still to be determined.
 - The group discussed Southwick’s criteria which required the veterans to be a current primary resident for 40 years which they all feel is too lengthy.
 - **Mr. Gauthier** introduced a caveat he had found within the Southwick materials.... “Or moved to Suffield within “x” years of discharge and lived in Suffield the remainder of their life.”
 - A twenty (20) year residency requirement was discussed and all considered it to be reasonable.

Different scenarios were brought up and discussed with each member providing their input and interpretation of how it might or might not fit the criteria being considered. Overall, the most important aspect is that the individual veteran has made a commitment to the town of Suffield. No decisions will be made this evening as all are in agreement that the entire group should be in attendance, however, it was stressed that until these decisions are made the application cannot not be properly structured.

Discuss and approve honoring Cold War and peacetime veterans

- **Mr. Gauthier** noted that it had been determined, but not voted on, that a plaque will be made to honor all veterans who served during peacetime. This plaque will have an inclusive message but not specific names.

Discuss and approve Phase two requirements

Mr. Gauthier explained to the group what he had done since the last meeting of the commission with regards to dates of war to include in order to determine eligibility on this particular monument. Required documentation was discussed.

Mr. Gauthier also discussed “non-combat loss” wording that he had pulled from the Southwick documents. The group conferred on this topic, provided input and examples of individuals who would be eligible for this type of designation and discussed whether or not it seemed plausible to include such individuals. These qualified individuals would be identified by name. A vote will be taken at a separate meeting, but all were in agreement that it was a good idea.

Discuss Preliminary Design

Mr. Gauthier updated the group on discussions and meetings he has had with the town’s Planning and Zoning Department over the last month. He also presented a site plan for all to review. The group had a lengthy discussion regarding rules and requirements for placement, building materials, shape, size, visibility, number of names to be accommodated and how each member is envisioning the finished product. ADA compliancy was also brought up for consideration. According to Mr. Gauthier the Building Official and the Town Engineer have been involved in discussions and have provided guidance and it was agreed that although there has been guidance provided there are still many aspects of the towns requirements to be reviewed.

Other business and next steps

None

Mr. King left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment

None

Executive Session to discuss personal data of applicants

Mr. Shute motioned to enter Executive Session at 7:00 p.m. to discuss personal data of applicants. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session ended at 7:24 p.m. with no action taken.

Mr. Elmore motioned to adjourn at 7:24 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen O. Lambert
Substitute Recording Secretary