



TOWN OF SUFFIELD

**MEETING MINUTES
VETERANS MEMORIAL EXPANSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
August 14, 2023, 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
Fredrick (Fritz) King
Raymond Hartford
Kevin Goff
Tom Elmore

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee Members Absent

Chris Nikolis
Salvatore Covino
William Moryto, Vice Chairman
David Shute

Dave Gauthier called the meeting to order at 6:01 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 May 8, June 12, and July 10, 2023. Kevin Goff motioned to approve the minutes, and Fritz King seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Tom Elmore abstained since he was absent for some of the meetings.

Discuss the extent of additions and changes to Veterans Park

Nothing really has changed from prior meetings. Dave Gauthier spoke with Roger's Memorials and said they will submit a design proposal in the coming weeks. Once the design is approved, the actual quote for installation and such will need to go out for bid.

Kevin Goff asked if this design proposal would just be for the memorial expansion itself, not other changes to the Veterans Park. Dave said yes. There will need to be lighting and walkway updates but that isn't something Roger's Memorials would handle.

Overall, the total project may need to be done in phases, but this step of the project is solely getting a design for the memorial structure itself.

The total project has been agreed to have two 7 ft memorial structures with bases, on the Main St. side of the existing memorial, with pathways and lighting.

Kevin brought up the concern about needing to get a budget, quote, and design plan for the walkways, lighting, landscaping, and any other changes that would need to be made due to the new memorial. Dave recommended going back to whoever did the work initially and ask them for an estimate for the changes and, if it's a reasonable budget, it shouldn't be an issue. Once the designs are finalized within this Committee, they'll need to go to a few different town Commissions for approval before moving forward.

There was then discussion to clarify the initial scope of work assigned to the Committee by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion and approval of Policy on Applicant Legal Name Changes

Dave Gauthier said that he discussed this policy, as written, with the town's attorney and he approved the policy as is. With that in mind, Ray Hartford motioned to approve, and Tom Elmore seconded. Motion passed unanimously. This policy is attached to these minutes.

Discussion and approval of change to Application Review Procedure

Dave Gauthier discussed the policy of blacking out certain personal information as veterans request, which has been discussed previously.

After discussing the revisions to the Application Review Procedure, Kevin Goff motioned to approve, and Ray Hartford seconded. Motion passed unanimously. This policy is attached to these minutes.

Application Status

Dave Gauthier said the Committee has received 15 applications. He knows more are coming but is surprised by the lack of applications. He explained to the Committee that he's dealt with very interesting situations about the town they were from and brought up the possibility of changing the criteria to help ease future situations. Tom Elmore asked if this would affect the Committee in any way. Dave said yes, potentially the criteria may need to change for all previous conflicts so it might not be worth the potential issues it may cause for the existing memorial.

Dave discussed other interesting situations he's come across lately but thankfully, since the criteria is clear it helps navigate these situations.

After the meeting Committee members will stay to approve some applications that came in recently.

Other Business and Next Steps

Dave Gauthier brought up the idea of a committee member doing an internal audit of the Committee to assess and confirm that the Committee is meeting the requirements as posed by the Board of Selectmen. He's not sure it's necessary, and no one present volunteered, so this idea was tabled.

Dave also said he can't make the next meeting. He asked if the Committee should cancel the meeting in advance? Roger's Memorials could be scheduled to present their design come October's meeting. The present committee members agreed to cancel this meeting.

Public Comment

None

A Regular Meeting of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee will be held on Monday, September 11, 2023, at 6 p.m.

Ray Hartford motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m. Tom Elmore seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Sypek
Recording Secretary

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee

Policy (Applicant Name Changes)

TITLE: Applicant Name Changes

PURPOSE: To set a standard policy for approving legal name changes to be engraved.

POLICY: It is the policy of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee to allow approved service member applicants to have their choice of any legal name engraved on the memorial.

If the service member requests a name be engraved on the memorial that differs from their official military documents they must provide a copy of a legal document that changes their name.

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee

Standard Operating Procedure

TITLE: Applicant Request Review

PURPOSE: To set a standard policy for reviewing and approving/disapproving requests.

RESOURCES:

- A. Applicant request.
- B. Documented proof of eligibility.
- C. Current Honor Roll Eligibility requirements, to include war dates.
- D. Form to document results.

POLICIES:

- A. A minimum of two committee members must agree on the decision.
- B. Any disagreements or questions of decision will be brought to the full committee.
- C. Committee members are NOT to retain any applicant's personal or private data in their possession, beyond the completion of the approval process.
- D. Committee members are NOT to discuss any applicant's relevant personal or private data outside the committee with the exception of relevant government officials and/or family members when needed.
- E. Committee meeting discussions of personal or private data will only take place in executive session.

PROCEDURE:

- A. The Chair/Vice Chair will obtain the request via Town Hall mail or in person.
- B. The pertinent info from the discharge document will be recorded on the review form, and the discharge document delivered to the First Selectman's office for safe keeping.
- C. Chair/Vice Chair to provide request and documents to reviewers.
- D. Ensure social security number, and medical information has been made unreadable.
- E. Review for:
 - a. Principal residence of Suffield at time of entering active duty.
 - b. Service branch of: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard or Space Force.
 - c. Character of discharge.
 - d. Eligible period of service.
 - e. Applicant died in service or as a result.
- F. Document decision on review form.

- G.** Return request and documented evidence to Chair/Vice Chair.
- H.** When the request and documented evidence are no longer needed the Chair/Vice Chair will deliver to the First Selectman's office for safe keeping.

