



Veterans Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes of January 9, 2024

TOPIC		DISCUSSION
PRESENT:		Members: Robert Challinor Jr., Dave Gilbert, Michael Vassar, Alan Joslin, Jim Bradley, Hans Lowell, plus 3 guests
ABSENT:		Mayor Barney Seney (Ex Officio – Town of Putnam Executive Head), Willie Bousquet (Ex Officio – Town of Putnam Parks and Recreation Department Head) Harold Charbonneau & Arthur (Buster) Corey of Memorial Day Parade Committee.
1.	Call to Order	Rob C. called the meeting to order at 6:02PM. Quorum was met during roll call.
2.	Pledge of Allegiance	
3.	Public Comment – 3 minute maximum per person	Bill Schmidt, Janet Muscara & Dave Lavoie from Putnam Elks #574 Veterans Committee & Elks Riders attended the meeting to inform of their grant received for 2 projects at the Veterans Base Camp in Chaplin. 1) New 14'x40' Greenhouse, 2) Dog Park for vets' service animals. They will reach out in the spring when work begins for hands-on help from all service organizations.
4.	Approval of minutes from last meeting(s)	Approve Regular meeting minutes from December 12, 2023 Jim B made a motion, 2 nd by Alan J, no discussion, all approved.
5.	Communications	Bank statement, memorial brick orders still coming in. Elks Riders offered to do and asked approval for a ride & BBQ with proceeds to benefit the rehab of Veterans Park. April or May date (they will choose). Jim B made motion to accept to accept, 2 nd by Mike V, all approved.
6.	Reports of Standing Committees	A Cemetery Committee: Dave G reports that he completed list of veterans in St Mary Cemetery, approximate 800, and distributed the list to VAC members. B Flagpole Grove Street Monument: Nothing new to report. Expect no news until March/April. Possibly putting a bench there. Top of monument needs to be cleaned. Once all is done to satisfaction, committee will be closed. C Memorial Day Parade Committee: Buster working on plans to be shared at February meeting. Goal to increase by at least 10 new additional groups per year. An online registration form on VAC webpage has been created and is now live. A flyer with hard copy registration form has been created. D Hometown Heroes Banners: 1 st priority is Korean Vets. Revised letter is on VAC webpage. Pricing from Chase @ \$110 each.
7.	Reports of Special Committee	A Veterans Park (127 Church Street) Revitalization-all phases: Sidewalks & Electrical w/Ellis Tech: still moving forward Memorial Bricks (qty 1859): Orders @ 93 now. - Bricks can be ordered in any qty over 5.

		○ Shipped in boxes most likely if <40 are ordered. ○ Shipped on pallet most likely if >40 are ordered. ○ Come on pallets of up to 500 @ 2600# per pallet. (Will be stored in the Armory.) ○ Order forms are on VAC webpage. ○ Discussion to come later for larger bricks for Vet organizations. ○ MAJOR SPONSOR outreach for January – led by Willie B, Rob C & Barney. Updates to come. 10 majors x 100 bricks ea = \$1,000 x 10 majors = \$100,000 raised for 1,000 total bricks. If all bricks are not filled in with names at the time of order, they will be noted as paid for, and available to order in smaller quantities for future. Installation would be best to build from the center, and add to the outer ring over time. VAC will also do best to place bricks for families or organizations together as requested by purchasers. ○ MAJOR SPONSOR Salute/Event – Salute the Sponsors Bricks & Beatles, Willie’s idea for dinner dance tentative March 23, 2024 at VFW. 180 guests can be accommodated (100 sponsor tickets, 80 tickets for sale, 20 for staff/volunteers). B • Monuments: Mike V has researched. Pricing coming in at approximately \$7,000 per monument. C Quarterly Audit Status: (Barney, Dave G, Jim B): should be up to date by next meeting (Feb 2024) Other: Wreaths Across America: Complete & event went well. Will be removed from agenda.
8.	Unfinished Business	A Tree Removal Nancy Drive, Aspinwall Cemetery: Cemetery is town property, highway department to take down the tree. Status is unknown at this time.
9.	Grant Considerations & Updates	Eversource grant program is available. More information to come as we are updated.
10.	New Business	Hans Lowell resignation RECALLED: Hans recalled his resignation and is able to stay on as a member of the VAC. Since no signed resignation letter was received by the town clerk, no other action is needed.
11.	Public Comment – 3 minute maximum per person	Rob C noted that the VFW will hold off from an early spring chicken BBQ due to other activity that may impact success, but stay tuned for another successful chicken BBQ fall fundraiser.
12.	Adjournment	Mike V motion, Jim B 2nd, meeting adjourned at 7:08pm. Next meeting Tuesday, February 13, 2024, 6pm, Room 201 (2nd Tuesday unless otherwise noted)

Members: Robert Challinor Jr., David Gilbert, Alan R. Joslin, Michael Vassar, Jim Bradley, Hans W. Lowell, 1 vacancy.

****4 members needed for quorum****

Willie Bousquet (Ex Officio – Town of Putnam Parks and Recreation Department Head), Mayor Barney Seney (Ex Officio – Town of Putnam Executive Head).

Memorial Day Parade & Event Committee: Arthur “Buster” Corey, Harold Charbonneau