



TOWN OF SUFFIELD

**MEETING MINUTES
VETERANS MEMORIAL EXPANSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
March 11, 2024, 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
Frederick (Fritz) King
Tom Elmore
David Shute
Raymond Hartford

Also Present

John Murphy
Brendan Malone

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee Members Absent

Kevin Goff
Salvatore Covino
Chris Nikolis
William Moryto, Vice Chairman

Dave Gauthier called the meeting to order at 6:02 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 Meeting held on February 12, 2024. Tom Elmore motioned to approve the minutes, and all seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Discuss changing requirements to allow Guard and Reserve state active duty

One member of the public asked the Committee to consider allowing state activated active-duty veterans as an eligibility option, versus the current requirement of only federal activated active-duty veterans being eligible. The Committee discussed the possibility of this and the past precedent they'd need to override but decided to table any decision about this until a future meeting when a larger population of the Committee is present.

Discuss lighting ideas

Dave Gauthier asked if any of the Committee members had thoughts or ideas of how the lighting should be set up for the new monument. He brought up the idea of a light bar he saw at a memorial when he was in DC recently. Tom Elmore asked if he had pictures showing this light bar because he has concerns about lawn and snow care potential damage. Dave said he believed there was a guard and a gravel space around the light, but this will need to be discussed with the Public Works department to see what they think would be best to protect the new lighting.

Application Status

One more application came in, which Dave Gauthier thinks is ready for approval. He also got an application for the original memorial, which will require approval and, if he qualifies, Roger's Memorial will need to weigh in on how to fit the name into the existing memorial.

Other Business and Next Steps

The Committee discussed social media and other ways they'll be working to try to get more names submitted for consideration.

Public Comment

John Murphy came to ask the Committee for clarification about the updated eligibility requirements and Dave Gauthier clarified the updated requirements. He also asked for a status update on his children's eligibility, which Dave confirmed they can discuss after the meeting.

Brendan Malone came to the Committee to further discuss the requirement of title 10 (federal active-duty) activation versus title 32 (state active-duty) activations. He asked to read the below email into the minutes to further clarify his specific situation:

“I appreciate the committee taking my application into consideration.

I am left a little confused though, given this is to add those who served during the Global War On Terror, as to why it is only Title 10 activations that are being recognized. Under Operation Noble Eagle, thousands of Air and Army National Guardsmen were called up under Title 32, for duties such as security details at sporting events like the Olympics and the Superbowl, as well as guarding sensitive public facilities like power plants, water reservoirs, and just about every airport in the country. Even though many of these missions lasted more than 30 days, the reason why they were not activated under Title 10, was due to the fact that under Title 32 a National Guardsman is permitted to act in a Law Enforcement capacity, an activity which is prohibited under Title 10.

All soldiers and airmen who served more than 30 consecutive days, or 60 days combined in support of Operation Noble Eagle, are either eligible for, or have received the GWOT (non-expeditionary) service medal.

If having a Title 10 activation is the definitive requirement, I'm afraid I won't be making the cut. I hope that the committee though, will discuss this correspondence, and see if there may be exceptions made, given the new information I have brought forward.

Thank you for all you are doing, to help honor our Vets.”

He understands that the Committee is trying to work under the existing precedent, and understands that he may not qualify, but he wanted to voice his explanation to the Committee at large regardless. The Committee had further discussion about this and decided to continue discussing it at future meetings.

A Regular Meeting of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee will be held on Monday, April 8, 2024, at 6 p.m.

David Shute motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m. All seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Sypek
Recording Secretary