



Veterans Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes of November 12, 2024

TOPIC		DISCUSSION
PRESENT:		Members: Robert Challinor Jr., Dave Gilbert, Michael Vassar, Alan Joslin, Jim Bradley, Mayor Barney Seney (Ex Officio – Town of Putnam Executive Head), Harold Charbonneau of Memorial Day Parade Committee
ABSENT:		Hans Lowell, Willie Bousquet – (Ex Officio – Town of Putnam Parks and Recreation Department Head), Arthur (Buster) Corey of Memorial Day Parade Committee
1.	Call to Order	Rob C. called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM. Quorum was met during roll call.
2.	Pledge of Allegiance	
3.	Public Comment – 3 min max per person	*Alan J gave update on Elks Veterans Committee gun raffle with proceeds coming to Veterans Park Improvement project:. Drawing 11/17/24, 2pm @ Elks.
4.	Approval of minutes from last meeting(s)	Approve Regular meeting minutes from October 8 2024: Jim B made a motion, 2 nd by Dave G, no discussion, all approved.
5.	Communications	*Christina Gordon-Johnson, psychotherapist, reached out to VFW after hearing post Vet Park Dedication concerns voiced by Rob Morton of bankHometown. Rob will invite her to the next VAC meeting.
6.	Reports of Standing Committees	A Cemetery Committee: *Replacement stone is in place. *Dave motion to purchase 50 "US Veteran" plastic flag markers from Flag Themes. Alan 2nd, all approve, with goal to stick with this product & vendor so eventually all of the markers are the same in all locations. B Grove Street Monument: looking good, review any work needed in spring C Memorial Day Parade Committee: Organizational meeting was held just prior to this VAC meeting, 2025 mtg dates set: 3/11, 4/8, 5/13, 5/22 @ 5pm. Harold & Buster to co-chair. Task list reviewed. D Hometown Heroes Banners, \$125 ea/DUE 8/1/25: Forms are in print & online, webpage is updated, current banners coming down in next few days to be stored until next Labor Day, when they will go up for their 2nd & last season.
7.	Reports of Special Committee	A Veterans Park (127 Church Street) Revitalization-all phases: total cost currently at \$216, 119 / current taken in = \$311,205 Dedication recap: excellent attendance, a pleasure to see so many veterans Memorial Bricks: 2025 order deadline 2/1/2025 - Press Release to be done asap to announce details, gift season Monuments: WWII Bronze: once proof reviewed & approved, it is 4 week turn-around to see bronze in place 3 new smaller stones: backs to be engraved soon, Rob to check with George of NEFK to see if sponsor name engraving done as Northeast Flooring and Kitchen is ok as is, or if he wants a smaller font s added (font has to be smaller than rest of lettering to fit on the stone)

			• Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) Graphic on back: Outline of Afghanistan w/words Afghanistan - stone to be donated by bankHometown (\$5000 still to come) • Operation Iraqi Freedom Graphic on back: Crossed swords in hands. NEFK donated (\$5000 check received) • Operation Desert Storm Graphic on back: Outline of Kuwait w/words Liberation of Kuwait - stone to be donated by JCSB (\$5000 still to come) 4. OTHER: • Stone Wall removal / River Rock installation: waiting for ground to freeze. B Quarterly Audit Status: (Barney, Dave G, Jim B): in progress. C Other: *Beirut Ceremony by Am Leg 10/20, Vets Park, completed, small attendance, not a lot of prior awareness of the event *Elks Raffle: drawing to come 11/17 as mentioned by Alan earlier
8.	Unfinished Business	A	Tree Removal Nancy Drive, Aspinwall Cemetery (town property): No news
		B	Creation of VAC facebook page created, Rob to talk with Denise G upon return from vacation for setting up admin with best practices for accessibility
		C	America 250 celebration (7/4/2026, Cady Copp): Jim B agreed to fill a veteran role on committee made up of reps from historical society, library, teacher, selectmen.
		D	Need VAC member for vacancy: Rob has link to application from town website
9.	Grant Considerations & Updates		Nothing to report
10.	New Business	A	2025 meeting dates: 2 nd Tuesdays, 6pm, room 201: 1/14, 2/11, 3/11, 4/8, 5/13, 6/10, 7/8, 8/12, 9/9, 10/14, 11/18 (moved a week later due to 11/11 being Veterans Day), 12/9. Jim B motion, Alan J 2nd to approve meeting schedule, all approve.
		B	Wreaths Across America (American Legion is leader) – consider dialogue for future possibilities to make the event more interactive & inclusive of all Vet groups
		C	Jim B motion, Dave G 2nd to purchase & install temporary solar lights at all 4 corners of brick area. All approved.
		D	Existing Vet Park plaque: Rob researching pricing for decision to come on getting it mounted to granite.
		E	WWII Veteran plaques for bridge: more discussion to come in the future.
11.	Public Comment – 3 min max per person		None
12.	Adjournment		Jim B motion, Dave G 2nd, meeting adjourned at 7 pm. Next meeting Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 6pm, Room 201 (2nd Tuesday unless otherwise noted)

Members: Chairman Robert Challinor Jr. (11/30/28), Jim Bradley (11/30/30), David Gilbert (11/30/29), Alan R. Joslin (11/30/29), Hans W. Lowell (11/30/28), Michael Vassar (11/30/30), 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