



## Veterans Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes of December 10, 2024

| TOPIC    |                                          | DISCUSSION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| PRESENT: |                                          | Members: Robert Challinor Jr., Dave Gilbert, Michael Vassar, Alan Joslin, Jim Bradley, Mayor Barney Seney (Ex Officio – Town of Putnam Executive Head), Willie Bousquet – (Ex Officio – Town of Putnam Parks and Recreation Department Head), Harold Charbonneau of Memorial Day Parade Committee, plus 6 guests                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| ABSENT:  |                                          | Hans Lowell, Arthur (Buster) Corey of Memorial Day Parade Committee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 1.       | Call to Order                            | Rob C. called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. Quorum was met during roll call.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2.       | Pledge of Allegiance                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 3.       | Public Comment – 3 min max per person    | <p>1 Heidi Bates requested a bench in Veterans Park in honor of her grandfather Robert “Bob” Harris in a heartfelt statement of his service to country &amp; family. <b>Chairman Rob C said that the VAC will consider this request and be in contact with her.</b></p> <p>2 Janet &amp; Bill Schmidt of the Elks Vets Committee presented a check to the VAC for Veterans Park in the amount of \$5710, proceeds from the recent raffle</p> <p>3 Steve &amp; Tracy Blanchette from Woodstock attended to give kudos and to learn more about how VAC operates as it seems to be unique &amp; operating above the norm</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 4.       | Approval of minutes from last meeting(s) | Approve Regular meeting minutes from November 12, 2024:<br>Jim B made a motion, 2 <sup>nd</sup> by Mike V, no discussion, all approved.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 5.       | Communications                           | none                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 6.       | Reports of Standing Committees           | <p>A <b>Cemetery Committee:</b> nothing new</p> <p>B <b>Grove Street Monument:</b> on hold - review any work needed in spring</p> <p>C <b>Memorial Day Parade Committee:</b> Organizational meeting was held just prior to this VAC meeting, 2025 mtg dates set: 3/11, 4/8, 5/13, 5/22 @ 5pm. Harold &amp; Buster to co-chair. Task list reviewed.</p> <p>D <b>Hometown Heroes Banners, \$125 ea/DUE 8/1/25:</b> 11 new in 2024 in storage, going up again for last year in 2025. 7 old ones in storage in rec office – try to return to families.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 7.       | Reports of Special Committee             | <p>A <b>Veterans Park (127 Church Street) Revitalization-all phases:</b> + / - totals: cost currently at <b>\$221,000</b> / current taken in = <b>\$321,200</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Memorial Bricks:</b> 2025 order deadline 2/1/2025</li> <li><b>Monuments:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>WWII Bronze:</b> VAC proofing still in process before submitting for mfg</li> <li><b>Existing Vet Park Plaque:</b> Rob researching pricing on mounting options no news</li> <li><b>3 new smaller stones:</b> backs to be engraved in spring, <b>George @ NEFK to be contacted regarding decision to add s to reflect business name as Northeast Flooring &amp; Kitchens (originally made without the s)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Operation Enduring Freedom</i></li> <li><i>Operation Iraqi Freedom</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ol> |

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|     |                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Operation Desert Storm</i></li> </ul> <p><b>OTHER:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stone Wall removal / River Rock installation:</b> waiting for ground to freeze.</li> <li>• <b>Shoveling/Maintenance Situations:</b> to be played by ear, see what happens, Willie B suggested some kind of signage, Jim B added maybe a generic "If You See Maintenance Needed, Call Vet Office". <b>Rob said he would get a sign made.</b></li> <li>• <b>Solar lights for brick area:</b> 4 at the corners are in, 4 more to come</li> <li>• <b>Synagogue Parking Courtesy of Sign:</b> in progress</li> </ul> <p>B <b>Quarterly Audit Status:</b> (Barney, Dave G, Jim B): current done</p> <p>C <b>Other:</b> *Elks Raffle: drawing – see public comments</p> <p>*Wreaths Across America, Saturday 12/14/24, noon in Veterans Park. Mike V &amp; Rob to finalize details/materials in next day or so. Willie B suggests starting in 2025 that VAC adds a subcommittee and takes on this event</p> |
| 8.  | Unfinished Business                   | <p>A Tree Removal Nancy Drive, Aspinwall Cemetery (town property): No news</p> <p>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 - no news</p> <p>C <b>America 250 celebration (7/4/2026):</b> Jim B is veteran role on committee made up of reps from historical society, library, teacher, selectmen. Meeting Thurs 12/12 @ 4:30. Willie B showed sample idea for small sculpture in Vet Park</p> <p>D Need VAC member for vacancy: Rob has link to application on town website – no news</p> <p>E WWI Veteran plaques for bridge: 1 is returned in bad shape, 1 is still missing. Rob working with AHS to find clean photos of these to recreate them</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 9.  | Grant Considerations & Updates        | Nothing to report                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 10. | New Business                          | Mike V suggests cleaning & re-bronzing existing bridge monuments – they are quite unsightly now, He will send contact info for someone he used at KHS to do this                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 11. | Public Comment – 3 min max per person | None                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 12. | Adjournment                           | <p>Barney motion, Jim B 2<sup>nd</sup>, meeting adjourned at 7:06 pm.</p> <p><b>Next meeting Tuesday, January 14, 2025, 6pm, Room 201</b><br/> <b>(2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday unless otherwise noted)</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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