

**MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF
THE HAMDEN VETERANS COMMISSION,
SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITY ROOM – MILLER COMPLEX
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2021**

Commissioners Present: Mr. Best, Mr. Cardo, Mr. Goodwin, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Kautzner
Mr. Lewis, Ms. Lupi, Mr. Maebry, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Shepard, Mr. Weil

Guests: Brian Curtis, Peter Vitali

Approval of Minutes – October 5, 2021 – APPROVED with Correction.

Mr. Cardo noted a correction to the Minutes of October 5, 2021. In the first paragraph, his bio should read; *“He has a Bachelor’s Degree in Military History”*.

Mr. Jackson introduced Brian Curtis who will be a guest speaker at the Veterans Day Ceremony. Mr. Curtis is a veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan. He also volunteers with Mission 22, a non-profit that helps veterans with PTSD and TBI. His goal is to focus on accomplishments. “It’s better talking about the positives”. He will talk about his “job” in the Guard.

Peter Vitali is a Chaplin from Post 150. Their membership has gone way down. They are looking into getting a Memorial Bench placed at the Monument. He wants to know what is allowed. What is the criteria? Vera Morrison told him about the HVC. He also wanted to know how to become a member of the Veterans Commission.

Veterans Day Ceremony – Mr. Lewis distributed copies of the Program. The Honor Guard is all set. Mr. Goodwin reported Vera said she was coming. No confirmation on Mayor Leng at this time. Mr. Shepard has not heard from Michelle Coogan at HMS regarding a singer for the National Anthem. It was agreed they would do the music like they did for Memorial Day. Mr. Goodwin will check on the speaker system. Mr. Best will lead the Wreath Laying Ceremony. Commissioners should be at the Monument no later than 10:30a.

Mr. Weil reported on the meeting with Public Works Director Craig Cesare. He explained to Mr. Cesare the plan for Veterans Day and possibly needing to move indoors to the Rotunda at Memorial Town Hall if inclement weather. Mr. Cesare said, “Don’t worry about it, we’ll take care of it”. If we’re moved indoors we will need about 100 chairs set up in the Auditorium.

The words for the National Anthem and God Bless America are printed on the program for people to sing along. Mr. Cardo will read the poem “In Flanders Fields”.

Web Page - Mr. Shepard reported that no one has submitted any comments/suggestions for the Web Page. He asked again that everyone take a look at our page and be ready to discuss at our December meeting. He will then consolidate the info and forward it to Patrick Donnelly.

Veterans Awareness Day Update – Mr. Weil and Mr. Lewis will be meeting next week with Jason Burke and the secretary of the President at QU to discuss Veterans Awareness Day. He said we can’t really project anything for next May. We have to move forward as if it’s happening. January will be our first look at the list. “Keep moving forward”.

Commission Charter – Mr. Weil informed all that the Commission Charter can be found online. He suggested that everyone go online and review. He will have a printed copy for the December meeting.

Meeting Procedures – Mr. Weil stated, “We’ve been doing this for years. Meetings start at 5:30p. We do not wait. We don’t tell anybody when they come in, what happened when they weren’t here. The meeting goes on. We don’t stop. We don’t go back”. We make sure we cover everything we need to. Everyone should feel free to bring up subjects – “We’re open and honest in what we do”.

2022 Meeting Calendar – After review there was one change to the Calendar: November 2022 Meeting Date should be changed to *Tuesday, November 1, 2022*.

Updated HVC Contact List – No Revisions were needed.

Ms. Lupi asked if anyone from the HVC wanted to display their items in the display case at the Government Center. She has reached out to the public but no one has responded. Ms. Gaiolini suggested Abner Oakes. Ms. Lupi will contact his family for items to display.

There were questions from Mr. Vitali and Mr. Maebry about HVC info getting out to different organizations. Ms. Gaiolini explained that in the past there were different organizations on our Contact List. Each month our Agendas were sent to those organizations. They never responded. They never attended. Periodically Chairman Oakes would review the list with the clerk and remove them from the list if they weren’t interested participants.

She also noted Hamden Veterans Commission info - including our Agendas, Minutes and the HVC Meeting Calendar - are all available on our Web Page. The Web Page also lists the names of all the Commissioners.

There was discussion on the process for new applicants to the HVC. How to change procedures for new members? Mr. Jackson felt the Chairman and the Vice Chair should interview new applicants. It was agreed they should receive copies of the letters and resumes from new applicants. The HVC should have input on the appointment of new members. Mr. Weil said we should get a copy of the files at the Town Clerk’s Office.

Mr. Maebry felt we should have files, resumes, etc. They could be kept in our office at the Government Center. Mr. Best suggested that new applicants attend a meeting or two to get an understanding of what the HVC does – as he did prior to joining the HVC.

Mr. Lewis shared info on the History of the VA Hospital. Ms. Lupi asked if anyone was interested in being a Pen Pal. Mr. Maebry suggested the HVC sponsor an Essay Writing contest for Memorial Day or Veterans Day and give a small gift/reward. Mr. Goodwin said we could highlight the top 3 at Veterans Awareness Day.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:45p

Submitted by: Deborah Gaiolini
Deborah Gaiolini, HVC Clerk