

**MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF  
THE HAMDEN VETERANS COMMISSION,  
SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITY ROOM – MILLER COMPLEX  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2021**

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

**Commissioners Absent:** Mr. Jackson

**Guests:** Peter Laffin, Cherie Strucaly, Peter Vitali

**Approval of Minutes** – November 3, 2021 – APPROVED.

**Veterans Day Ceremony** – Mr. Lewis said he thought the event went very well. He was disappointed that the Honor Guard was not able to come. Mr. Shepard commented the sound system kept cutting out. Mr. Lewis said they had it at Silver Bells and it was doing the same thing. Mr. Goodwin asked how well it had been charged because they're battery operated. He will mention the trouble to the powers that be. Mr. Mitchell suggested that anyone who will be coming to the podium needs to come early (10:30a) and practice with the microphone.

Charles Neal sang the Star Spangled Banner. Everyone thought he was wonderful. Mr. Shepard gave both Mr. Neal and the Principal of HMS an HVC Coin. Compliments also went out to Josh Alexander who played TAPS. He told Ms. Lupi he would love to come back for Veterans Awareness Day.

Ms. Lupi suggested that in the future we introduce the guests and give a little "blurb" about them. The Commissioners should introduce themselves as well. There was discussion on ordering more HVC Coins. Mr. Goodwin will check on prices. Ms. Lupi mentioned Dr. Lorenzo from Helen Street School and the programs he and his students held on November 11<sup>th</sup> to honor Veterans. She would like to give him a Coin.

Ms. Lupi would like an announcement made at each of our events regarding the availability of the Display Case at the Hamden Government Center. She also mentioned the need to get more of the HVC note cards printed.

**Veterans Awareness Day Update** – Mr. Weil had no update at this time. He and Mr. Burke agreed to wait until after the holidays. They will try to meet in January and see where we're going. He said we (the HVC) will move forward with what we normally do. He also said he should probably pay a visit to the Mayor and talk about the Parade. At some point he & Mr. Lewis should meet with her and introduce themselves and tell her about the Commission and what the Commission does.

**Commission Charter** – Mr. Weil distributed copies of the Veterans Commission Charter. He asked everyone to review the Charter and if they have any issues/questions we can put this on the Agenda for the next meeting.

**HVC Service Award** – Mr. Weil began by asking - how do we formalize something when there is someone that we want to give more than a coin to? A Plaque? A certificate? When someone leaves the HVC or the Town – what do we give them? Mr. Mitchell had shared via email and with printed photos examples of possible ideas. He felt that “whoever is taking care of the Monument area are going a great job. Every time we show up it looks better and better. They do things on their own initiative. I thought it would be nice to recognize the organization”.

There was discussion on prices, funding, what the plaque or certificate should say, etc. Mr. Goodwin will get prices on plaques and certificates. To be discussed further at the next meeting.

**Brooksvale Tree Planting** – Peter Laffin is a former member of the Hamden Veterans Commission. He served over 8 years on the HVC. When Fred McCarthy (another former member of the HVC) passed away, there was no service. No memorials. Mr. Laffin with the Friends of Brooksvale would like to create a “Memorial Grove”. Trees planted to honor veterans. Families can buy a tree to honor their veteran. He had discussed this with Abner Oakes. Fred was very involved in the Maple Sugaring program at Brooksvale. Mr. Laffin would like to plant a Sugar Maple for Fred McCarthy. There was much discussion about where the trees would be planted, costs, coordinating with Tree Commission, Town Arborist and Town Tree Superintendent.

Mr. Maebry brought up the question of who receives the proceeds. There were many questions about accepting donations, approval from the Legislative Council, who oversees the program, etc. Mr. Laffin agreed that he will have to get more information. Perhaps Friend of Brooksvale will take it on. More info to come.

Mr. Mitchell had Questions about items noted in the November Minutes:

- Has Abner’s family been contacted about the Display Case?  
Ms. Lupi reported she’s had no response from the family.
- The Essay Contest?  
Mr. Maebry made the suggestion at the November Meeting.  
Mr. Goodwin suggested highlighting the top 3 at VAD.
- Getting HVC Files from the Town Clerk’s Office?  
To be discussed.
- And the Biographies that were to be included on the Agenda each month?  
The First 3 Commissioners listed on the HVC List will present a brief bio on themselves.  
January Meeting should include:
  - \*Johnnie Best
  - \*Anthony Cardo
  - \*Phil Goodwin

He asked the above items be added to the January 2022 Meeting Agenda.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:54p

Submitted by: Deborah Gaiolini  
Deborah Gaiolini, HVC Clerk