



TOWN OF WAKEFIELD

VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes – January 16, 2024

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM

Pledge of Allegiance: Conducted by all attendees.

Attendance: In attendance – Paul Cancelliere, Dave Mangan (VSO), Rob Ettinger, Dan Benjamin, Dale Findlay, Marc Young, Marion Dennehy, Joe Dellolio, Bill Curran, Chris Olsen, Councilor Dombroski (TC Liaison) Absent: Kristi Yentile

Review/Approval of December Meeting Minutes-vote required: Motion by Rob, to approve December minutes and second by Marion. The vote was unanimous for approval.

Members of the Public may Speak: no one in attendance.

VSO November 2023 Report and Veterans Coffee: The Veterans monthly food and dry goods support program will be held tomorrow, January 17th behind the senior center from 10 am to 12 noon. All 26 applicants have been notified.

- If any Veteran, spouse, or immediate family member of a Veteran would like to participate in this program, and to be included in the drive thru and pick up, please call our office for further information 781-246-6377

The products are offered through the Greater Boston Food bank and the Wakefield Food Pantry. There is a selection of meats, vegetables, and canned goods as well as dry goods.

- The next Veterans coffee social will be held on Saturday January 20th at the Senior Center 30 Converse St. Wakefield downstairs in the cafeteria from 10 am thru 12 noon. Our Guest speaker will be Barnaby Cylien the Veterans outreach coordinator for the Home Base program. Home Base, a Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital Program. They provide mental health care for Veterans and their families, providing resources that assist with healing the invisible wounds of war. He will be discussing some of the aspects of what they do for Veterans and how to contact them. As well as many of the awesome programs they have.
- Please come and share some of the highlights of the proposed “Hero Act-Fact” Sheet being offered by the Healy-Driscoll Administration. I have the two-page report available in my office for anyone wishing to review it or you can visit the mass.gov web site.
- The trip to Washington for the Vietnam Veterans Roll to DC from the district, has left a residual fund available for Wakefield in the amount of \$2900.00. I am recommending the monies be put into the Veteran Relief fund for Wakefield for any future hardships or service needs for Veterans (or spouses) in the community, please advise.

As I have mentioned each month Under Chapter 115 of Massachusetts General Laws the Commonwealth provides a uniform program of financial and medical assistance for veterans and their dependents.



Qualifying veterans and their dependents receive necessary financial assistance for food, shelter, clothing, fuel, and medical care in accordance with a formula that takes into consideration the number of dependents and income from all sources.

For appointments for Veteran Services, please contact me with any questions you may have regarding on-going benefits or submission of new benefits. We are located downstairs / rear entrance at the Senior Center 30 Converse St. Wakefield and is by appointment only.

Veteran Services hours of operation:

Monday, Wed. & Thursday. 8 am – 2 pm

Holidays on Monday hours will be Tues. Wed. and Thursday 8 am -2 pm

Voice mail is checked seven days a week at: 781-246-6377.

Items for Public Discussion:

- Motion – Open discussion on Wreaths Across America – Lakeside Cemetery on Saturday December 14, 2024. Dale moved, Marion seconded. If anyone at Lakeside wants a WAA wreath, can reach out to them, then have delivered at home, and can place wherever. Paul suggested Dale contact WAA directly.
- Motion - open discussion for a full-time veteran services officer (VSO) in accordance with CMR 108 Chapter 12 – moved by Dale, seconded by Chris. Unanimous vote to open discussion. VSO Magan made the case why the 18 hours a week current role isn't enough. Needs to be 35 hours a week, fulltime. Has 600 files from last 4.5 years. Too much volume.
- Status of getting Junior ROTC to provide Gun Salutes at Wakefield events such as Memorial Day on the Common, Wreaths Across America, etc – Rob motioned, Dale seconded. JROTC or any group that can deliver. For Memorial Day (outside at Town Common – conducive to gun salute.

Upcoming events:

- Four Chaplains Day Saturday, February 3, 2024, at 9:00am at the Four Chaplains Monument at Temple Emanuel - Paul will take care of this.
- Monday, May 27, 2024, Memorial Day, at 1:00pm, at the War Memorial on the lower common.
- Flag Day, Friday, June 14, 2024, at 6:00pm at the War Memorial on the lower common

Member's Report (around the horn):

- Secretary's report
 - We have three VAB member terms expiring in April: Kristi, Rob, and Joe. You all should have received an email from Sherri stating that if you'd like to reapply to a new 3-year term, you must do so by February 2nd.
- Vice-chair's report
- Chair's Report

- Thank you – Fr. Thomas Reilly, Councilor Ed Dombroski, Denis Fazio and the DPW team, and WCAT for their support for the Wreath Day Ceremony at Forest Glade Cemetery
- Congratulations to Commander Shelby Nikitin who relinquished her successful command of the USS Thomas Hudner on January 5th, 2024, in Mayport, FL. Her next assignment is at the US Naval War College in Newport, RI. Commander Ingram assumes command.
- Upcoming events:
 - Saugus VFW Post 2346 – Holding a Comedy Fund Raiser January 25, 2024, call Lisa at 781-558-3728 for details.
 - June 2024 Change of Command of the Commander of the USS Constitution

Town Council Liaison's comments: None

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at 6:30pm via Zoom (Please note: This meeting is on the 4th Tuesday so families may enjoy the winter break) - Town has offered hybrid meeting locations with video accessibility for CY 2024.

Matters Not Anticipated for Agenda (Any Voting matters not anticipated necessitating action by the Veterans Advisory Board)

Adjournment (motion to adjourn): Motion to adjourn by Dale, seconded by Marion to adjourn. The vote was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted: Rob Ettinger, Secretary, VAB