

VETERANS COMMISSION MEETING

740 MAIN STREET

EAST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

January 9, 2024 - 7:00 pm

Present: John Cook, Richard Bates, Howard Satalino, Art Parker, Paul Barry, Robin Parys, Candy Guastamachio, and Juliet Relph, Clerk.

Absent: James Shelmerdine Jr.

Pledge of Allegiance with a moment of silence led by Art Parker.

1) CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner John Cook called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

2) AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA: None

3) ROLL CALL: As indicated above.

4) OPPORTUNITY FOR RESIDENTS TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

Gary Roy, Matthew Road, East Hartford -

Mr. Roy would like to be on the Memorial Day committee, and he also wanted to know if the board had decided on having a non-Veteran as the Grand Marshall for the 2024 Memorial parade and he has never heard of it.

Chairperson Cook said the committee has not yet been formed and that the commission approved the possibility of a non-veteran to be considered for Grand Marshal.

5) APPROVAL OF MINUTES for December 12, 2023.

A motion was made to approve the December 12, 2023 minutes.

MOTION By Howard Satalino
 Seconded by Art Parker
 Motion carried 7/0

6) COMMUNICATION AND INVOICES

a) Richard Bates received communication regarding low-cost dental care for Veterans.

Emma Wentworth Winchester is a dentist at the UCONN Dental school in Farmington. She is offering low-cost dental care for Veterans who are interested.

" Our "friends and family" phone number is 860-679-7600. They should inform the operator that they are looking to get registered as a patient in the student dental clinic through the friends and family program and give the name "Emma Wentworth Winchester". They will be given a chart number,

which they should write down. Then they should call or text my clinical contact number 860-474-3716 and leave me their full name and the chart number, and I can get them scheduled with me for an initial screening appointment!”

- b) Melody Wilson, a former member, would like to rejoin the Veterans Commission. The Board presented the application to the Mayor’s office and is waiting for a response.

7) OLD BUSINESS

- a) Grave markers for graves outside designated Veteran’s areas.

Commissioner Cook indicated a pilot program is being done to map out the location of Veteran’s graves that are outside of the designated Veteran’s areas at Hillside and Silver Lane Cemeteries. The intent is to do an inventory of our buried veterans. Students will be volunteering to do mapping of the graves.

Chairman Cook said he has not received any feedback and would like to table this for the next meeting.

- b) Wreaths for Silver Lane – Great job and the event was well-attended.

8) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Paul Barry is a member of Helping Hands Funds for Vietnam Veterans. If any Veteran has any outstanding bills (electric, gas, rent), the Helping Hands fund will pay directly to the organization. They are eligible for up to \$1,000.00 and they will need to present their I.D. and their DD214 card.

- b) Mayor Connor Martin would like to address the commission concerning Service Monuments and Bicentennial Park.

Mayor Connor Martin introduced the Veterans Flag Retirement Memorial Park
Some ideas/feedback:

- Instead of the name Veterans Flag Retirement Memorial Park – change to U. S. Flag Retirement Memorial
- Put service flags up.
- Have a table so that the flags can be placed on the table.
- The design is simple and nice.
- Veteran’s family can buy bricks to offset the cost.
- Firepit – 2 ft high – covered with a lock.
- Great idea to have on Town property.
- Nice to have a respectful place.
- Suggestion for place – Hillside Cemetery

Feedback on Bicentennial Park

- Better use for the Bicentennial Park – rename to Veterans Memorial Park
- Move memorials that can be moved into the park – monuments that cannot be moved can have a photo or plaque on stand with a QR code

- Have memorials in chronological order so that a story can be told.
- The Park will add character to the town.

A motion was made to fully support the idea of the Veterans Flag Retirement Memorial Park and the Bicentennial Park.

MOTION By Paul Barry
 Seconded by Art Parker
 Motion carried 7/0

- c) Memorial Day Parade – establish committee and begin work.

A motion was made to authorize the Veterans' commission to establish a Memorial Day events committee and to make periodic reports to the commission.

MOTION By Art Parker
 Seconded by Howard Satalino
 Motion carried 7/0

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:13pm

MOTION By Art Parker
 Seconded by Robin Parys
 Motion carried 7/0

The next meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2024

Respectfully submitted by: Juliet D. Relph, Clerk