

VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (VAC)

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Monday, November 17th, 2014 @ 6:30 P.M.

American Legion Hall
12 Freestone Avenue, Portland, Connecticut

Members in attendance: R. Farrington-Chairman, T. Dickerson, W. Willinsky, D. Hutchins, W. Petras, J. Sterry

Absent: K. Burke, R. Walton, R. Cote, P. DeRing

Guest(s) in attendance: S. Bransfield

Pledge of Allegiance

Meeting called to order at 18:30.

One change to the minutes from last meeting. The minutes stated that Kathy Burke was having schoolchildren make thank you cards for veterans. Ms. Colleen Brede, from Valley View School, actually did this.

Motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by J. Sterry. Seconded by W. Petras. All were in favor. None was opposed. The motion passed.

The V.A.C. gave a special thank you to Mr. Jeff Mill, for all of the newspaper coverage of the Veterans activities in the Middletown Press.

Good reviews were received of the High School Ceremony

Susan received an e-mail from the Parent Teacher Organization from Valley View looking for the names of any Portland armed service members overseas so they can send cards. We will look at putting a bullet in the River East asking parents of service members stationed overseas to submit their names and addresses if they would like cards sent to them. We will also mention that there are blue star flags available at the town hall.

W. Willinsky shared that they had 240 persons attend the Veterans dinner. Last year all of the set up went very smoothly. This year, it did not go as smoothly. There were no table clothes and not many there to set up. The custodian (Valerie) did a great job setting up for us. No one was sure who did it last year. We will look into how it was done last year and make improvements for next year. We will also look at buying rolls of plastic to cover the tables.

Key Club postponed picking up flags last Saturday due to the Girls' High School Soccer team competing for the state championship that day, which they won. They scheduled to help pick them up next Saturday.

Susan reiterated what a wonderful job the VAC does honoring the Veterans. She heard this from many other people and wanted to share it with us. People liked seeing one another at the dinner.

W. Willinsky asked all of the local clergy to attend the dinner but none were available so Sal Pitruzello filled in and did a nice job.

We will work with Michelle Cepaggia to write a Thank You letter to Seby Milardo.

We have neither seen nor heard from VAC member Rob Walton in ages. The question was asked if he could be replaced on the VAC without a resignation? Susan said we should send a letter to his last known address and see if it is returned. If it is returned as undeliverable, then action can be taken. We will try to work with Michelle Cepaggia to send a note to the last known address. If he is removed, any suggestions on a replacement? Sal Pitruzello's name was suggested.

Update on the Civil War Monument:

Rick Kelsey will have the town crew do at least a temporary repair to the wall to prevent any safety issues. The grant the town was looking at was very complicated and could be more to submit than we would receive. The town engineer was looking at it as well.

J. Sterry received one call on an ex-service member. He will return the call.

W. Petras: Wreaths Across America Update

Portland is getting 12 wreaths.

1 – Vet Monument

1 – Senior Center

5 – One For Each Cemetery

5 – One For Each School

Wreaths Across America – The actual ceremony will be at 1200 on Saturday Dec 13th.at the state veterans cemetery.

All wreaths should arrive the week before the 13th. W. Willinsky will let the Board of Education know to expect them by Dec 12th.

The Wreath for Veterans Day came from Keser's Flowers in Glastonbury because Pine Ledge was already closed. The bill has not been received yet.

A motion to adjourn was made by R. Farrington. J. Sterry seconded the motion. All were in favor. None was opposed. The motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Dec 15th, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

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Timothy Dickerson