

**Veterans Affairs Committee  
REGULAR MEETING  
September 21, 2015**

PRESENT: R. Farrington, F. Hutchings, W. Willinsky, T. Dickerson, P. DeRing, J. Sterry

ABSENT: K. Burke, W. Petras, R. Cote

OTHERS PRESENT: Susan Bransfield (First Selectwoman)  
Jeff Mill (Middletown Press)

**1. CHAIRMAN CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairman W. Willinsky called the REGULAR meeting to order at 6:33 PM at the American Legion Hall, located at 12 Freestone Avenue, Portland, Connecticut.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG OF OUR COUNTRY**

**3. ACCEPT AGENDA**

Agenda accepted.

**4. ACCEPT MEETING MINUTES**

There was a motion by R. Farrington, seconded by J. Sterry, to approve the meeting minutes of June 15, 2015. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

**5. Secretary's Report**

T. Dickerson obtained an itemized list of the town's Veterans Affairs account expenses from last year.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Vendor</b>	<b>Expense</b>
10/21/2014	Corporate sponsorship Wreaths Across America (100 wreaths)	Wreaths Across America	\$1,500.00
12/3/2014	Veterans Day wreaths	Keser's Flowers	\$90.00
5/12/2015	American flags for Veterans graves at cemeteries	Quonset Surplus Store	\$630.00
5/19/2015	Plants for Veteran's Monument flowerbeds	Frances Schoell	\$158.40
5/26/2015	Names inscribed on monument. (60 letters @ \$6 per letter.)	RZ Sandblasting	\$360.00
6/9/2015	Memorial Day wreaths	Wild Orchid	\$135.00
	<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$2,873.40</b>

Note: The parade budget is a separate account.

**5. VETERANS SERVICE OFFICER'S REPORT (J. Sterry)**

No current cases. There is a Services Officer course at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Newington October 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>. J. Sterry stated that he has never had any problems with the Connecticut Services Officers and has only heard positive comments about them.

**6. VETERANS BENEFITS & INFORMATION OFFICER'S REPORT (P. DeRing)**

P. DeRing showed a one-page sheet of important Veteran's information that he would like to make available for all veterans. We will ask K. Armstrong to put it on the Veteran's page of the town's website. (Note it has since been added to the town's website.)

**7. COMMISSION ADVISOR'S REPORT (R. Farrington)**

R. Farrington asked if anyone knew when the Red, White, and Blue mass, held at Saint Mary's Church, is? He said that the Hartford Veterans Day parade is on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

(After the meeting, it was learned that the Red, White, and Blue Mass is scheduled for November 15<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.)

R. Farrington passed that the Portland Middle School was trying to arrange an assembly in honor of the veterans in case any VAC members were interested in participating. He did not have any specific details yet.

**8. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

W. Willinsky passed that the Wadsworth Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution contacted him and wants to place a wreath on the Veterans Monument on November 7<sup>th</sup>. No one was opposed, although we were curious why it was being done on the 7<sup>th</sup> and not on Veteran's Day the 11<sup>th</sup>.

The American Legion's Veterans breakfast will be on November 7<sup>th</sup> at the American Legion Hall.

The Veterans' Dinner will be November 11<sup>th</sup> at the Portland High School. R. Farrington has the paperwork to use the cafeteria. There is a new advisor to the Key club so he will meet with them to see if they can provide any volunteers to help set up. We need to check with Melilli's to see if they have tablecloths or if we need to buy them.

R. Farrington said that he would get 250 tickets made for the dinner. Tickets will be distributed to the following locations for veterans to pick them up: Waverly Center (Senior Center), Town Hall, Quilt Shop, Melilli's, and Quonset Surplus. If possible, we should sequentially number the tickets.

F. Hutchings passed that Portland resident Andrew Donohue, who entered the Military Academy at West Point this summer, was pictured in a recent River East newspaper having just completed summer basic training.

**10. GENERAL DISCUSSION / PUBLIC COMMENT**

S. Bransfield wanted to congratulate W. Willinsky as the new VAC Chairman and R. Farrington as the new VAC advisor.

S. Bransfield also wanted to pass that R. Basso was in the process of trying to arrange for a ceremony to be held at the Portland Fair on October 10<sup>th</sup> to honor the RCP American Legion Northeast Regional Baseball Champions. She encouraged as many veterans as possible to attend.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. However, that is the date of the American Legion Potluck dinner to honor the Boys and Girls State participants from Portland. If needed, a short VAC meeting may be held AFTER the potluck dinner.

**11. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

There was a motion by F. Hutchings, seconded by T. Dickerson, to adjourn the meeting. Vote unanimous, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:12 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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Timothy E. Dickerson

Recording Secretary