



TOWN OF SUFFIELD

**MEETING MINUTES
VETERANS MEMORIAL EXPANSION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
January 10, 2022 6:00 p.m.
IN-PERSON MEETING ONLY**

**Location: Suffield Police Station Conference Room
911 Mountain Road Suffield, CT**

Meeting Name: Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee

By: Rebecca Sypek - Recording Secretary

Type of Meeting: Regular Meeting

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee Members Present

Dave Gauthier, Temporary Chair
Chris Matejek
David Shute
Raymond Hartford
Fredrick (Fritz) King
Chris Nikolis

Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee Members Absent

Salvatore Covino
Tom Elmore
William Moryto
Kevin Goff

Dave Gauthier called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and began with the Pledge of Allegiance. He asked for a roll call identifying members present at the meeting.

Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the Minutes from the Special Meeting held on December 13, 2021. This approval will be tabled until next meeting when more Committee members are present.

Discussion and Approval of War/Conflict Dates

Dave Gauthier brought to the Committee's attention the discrepancies between the Suffield proposed periods of war dates, the State of CT periods of war dates, and the Federal government's periods of war dates. The current

memorial seems to be based off the Federal dates, some of which may have changed since the original memorial was built so it may open up inclusion to more names.

One discussion that may want to continue is the fact that the Federal dates state that the Persian Gulf “Era” hasn’t ended yet so conflicts like Desert Shield/Storm, Lebanon, etc. are all under the Persian Gulf Era. The Committee will need to decide if Veterans during this era will all be included under Persian Gulf on the monument/expansion of the monument or if they’ll break up that era into separate conflicts.

Another discussion was about the Vietnam Era, Korean War, and Persian Gulf Era dates that were changed by the Federal government after the original memorial was already started. Dave Gauthier motioned to use the Federal government’s Title 38 U.S. code dates for periods of war for Phase 1 criteria of this project, David Shute seconded. There was further discussion on this but was unanimously approved.

One thing to be determined is the end date of criteria for Phase 1 (in order to have an end date for the update to the current monument). Dave Gauthier recommended using Desert Shield/Storm end date but this will be discussed further. Veterans who want to submit their names for consideration to be added to the monument will need to include some form of proof of service.

The Committee is still aiming for a March print into the Observer. Next meeting the Committee will decide how to disburse this and other information associated with the collection of names for Phase 1 of this project.

Finances

Chris Matejek shared that currently the Committee has approx. \$35,000 set aside in an account to put towards the project. Per a discussion with Jay D’Aleo, from Rogers Memorial Studio, it was estimated that a \$200,000 budget for expansion would be a reasonable estimate depending on what the Committee decides to do. He also said it would be roughly \$300 per name to add names to the current monument. Capital Expenditures and other budget meetings will be happening over the next month so Chris can get more information on continuing to fund the expansion project at those meetings. However, he confirmed that, for Phase 1, the Committee has the funds needed. Going forward into Phase 2 and the expansion, there will be a need for more conversations and more specific budget planning.

Dave Gauthier spoke with First Selectman Mole about financing the expansion, First Selectman Mole said he wasn’t aware of a current account with a budget to put towards the expansion but he said he’d look into it and that he’d probably be able to find funds to help the Committee get the Observer article posted. Chris Matejek said that he would talk to Selectman Mole about the current account as well.

Election of Officers

Dave Gauthier motioned to postpone an election until the next meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Business and Next Steps

When Dave Gauthier was speaking with First Selectman Mole he said that someone in town went to the First Selectman directly to discuss putting a name on the monument. First Selectman Mole asked why names that are verified can’t just be added to the monument as they come in instead of waiting to collect all the names and putting them all on at once. This could be done periodically, once a year potentially, especially since Jay D’Aleo confirmed that there isn’t a discount in price for putting names on in bulk vs one or two at a time.

Fritz King recommended that Phase 1 should focus mainly on older Veterans (WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam) and wait until Phase 2 for the Gulf War Era.

Dave Gauthier wanted to discuss briefly the names that have already been submitted to the town for recommendation and wanted to see how to handle these. Should those that have reached out already be included on the list for consideration or should the Committee wait and see if they submit their information when the information goes out to the Observer with the Phase 1 update? Fritz King recommended that it may be better for someone to reach out to each of these people, get more information from them, confirm if they're eligible or not, and get any necessary paperwork showing proof of service. Fritz and Dave will work on this small list offline and coordinate potentially reaching out to each of them. Overall it was agreed that the criteria should make the approval process easy enough in most cases.

Public Comment

None

A Regular Meeting of the Veterans Memorial Expansion Committee will be held on Monday, February 14, 2022 at 6 p.m.

Dave Gauthier motioned to adjourn, Fritz King seconded at 7:18 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Sypek
Recording Secretary