

**MINUTES OF THE HAMDEN VETERAN'S COMMISSION,
SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITY ROOM, MILLER COMPLEX,
TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2011 AT 5:30 P.M.**

Commissioners Present: Mr. Best, Mr. Conway, Mr. Johnson, Mr. McCarthy,
Mr. Oakes. Mr. Ortoleva, Mr. Shultz

Absent: Mr. DiSorbo, Mr. Laffin, Ms. Pavlis Mr. Weil

Guests: Mr. Lewis, Ms. Parks,

Approval of Minutes – April, 12, 2011 – **APPROVED WITH CORRECTION.**

* Mr. Oakes noted a correction on page 2, Monument for the Flagpole in the Park.
The amount should read \$2000.00. Minutes approved with correction.

VAD – MAY 27TH. Mr. Ortoleva has done the programs. Mr. Oakes has the updated list. There are almost 100 veterans and 450 students attending. Mr. Levy has picked up a couple of new veterans. Mr. Ortoleva stated the press release is done. He has on disk the press release, student guide, poster and program. There are some new questions in the student booklets on ROTC and DAR as well as Afghanistan. He also reported they have been on radio & TV. He will be contacting WTNH as well.

Mr. Oakes reported he spoke with Blumenthal's office this afternoon and they think he is going to be there. Nancy Wyman can not be there, but will be marching in the Memorial Day Parade. He is going to ask Kevin Creed from Fisher House to say a few words. There's been no word yet from the HPD or HFD regarding the honor guard. He has 4 cadets from Hillhouse ROTC. Mr. Shultz can help with the honor guard if needed. Mr. Conway will call the Asst. Fire Chief.

The dining room is open at QU. We'll have our usual continental breakfast and lunch. There will be a meeting on Friday at 2p with Jolene Kennedy to review the set-up. Mr. Oakes reported that Barbara Tito has a DVD on her brother (Ed Duel) that she would like on the table for the Vietnam Veterans

Mr. Johnson asked about the helicopter. Mr. Oakes stated that Sikorsky is not coming. We will have the bomb sniffing dogs, a jeep or humvee, a truck from the VA and the Coast Guard is coming with a boat!

Memorial Day Parade – Mr. Oakes & Mr. Conway will be meeting with Gerry Tobin in the Mayor's Office at 3:00 p.m. tomorrow to review the parade. The only bands we have are one paid band and the HHS, HMS & Wintergreen. We picked up 3 bands from New Haven. Discussion moved to vehicles for the veterans and the services at the Memorial. Singers are confirmed. We still need a bugler. The wreaths have all been ordered.

There is a need for marshals at the High School. CERT will be there but we can use more help. There was a brief review of the set-up at the High School. Jess Mallory will be contacted to assist. There was discussion on the walkie-talkies - Communication is often an issue.

Everyone needs to be told – **There are no changes once the Parade Orders go out.**

Monument for Flag Pole in the Park – \$2000 is available in a state grant. It will go before the Council on May 31st. There was discussion on what date to hold the ceremony to dedicate the flag pole. The 17th is the anniversary of the date the Moving Wall was here. Mr. Conway suggested having it on Flag Day, June 14th at the Flag Pole. That is the day the Wall arrived in Hamden. Ms. Parks reported the Elks will hold the Flag Day ceremonies on June 14th. She will check with the Elks to see if we can coordinate the 2 events to be held on Flag Day, June 14, 2011 *at the Flag Pole*.

Fisher House – Mr. McCarthy reported Fisher House is coming along. They're going to start fundraising and would like to get cooperation from other posts (150 & 10321) and anyone else who wants to volunteer. They will have a table at VAD. They will be at Wal-Mart and Stop & Shop and other places all summer long to collect money. There will be a spaghetti dinner at the Elks on September 17th. \$10/plate. He would like suggestions and input from everybody.

Mr. Oakes is going to have Gold, Silver and Bronze Sponsors and go out after some people in the local area that he knows. Gold/\$1000, Silver/\$500 and Bronze/\$250. Just as we did with the Moving Wall – to help with donations.

Gallagher Road– Gallagher Road is named for the Vietnam POW/MIA John Gallagher. Mr. Oakes will know more next meeting about the date for the dedication.

New Tree Freedom Park – Mr. Oakes spoke with the Mayor this afternoon and “that’s a go”. Mr. McCarthy has a quote for the tree. The Town is getting involved. Funding is available. It will be a fir tree so they don’t have to put the Christmas Tree in the fountain. January will be the 40th Anniversary of the dedication of Freedom Park.

Eagle Scout Interviews – Mr. Oakes and Mr. Ortoleva have been working with a fellow from Troop 640. He will be at VAD. He still needs some equipment. Mr. Conway asked what type of equipment is needed; he has a friend who might be able to help. Ms. Gaiolini suggested Dave Richards might be of assistance.

Veterans’ Flags – Mr. Oakes reported that 2100 flags were originally ordered. Another 300 will be delivered tomorrow. “We’re putting more out than we ever have before”. Street flags will go up a couple of days before the parade.

Mr. Oakes reported on his meeting with Joe Green and Bernard Young. They’re setting up a new group in New Haven called the Greater New Haven Veterans Advisory Group.

Mr. Shultz commented on one of the Korean War Veterans who came home last week after 61 years. “They shut down the Town of Old Saybrook – everyone was there”.

Mr. McCarthy spoke on MST - Military Sexual Trauma. “It has been reported that 20,000 cases have been reported just last year alone in the United States. This is being taken lightly and swept under the rug by certain individuals. It is not being directed. It is not being addressed. So, if you ever see or hear of anybody, a woman comes up to you and says she suffers from Military Sexual Trauma, try to get her some help. Try to go to somebody like Dr. Harkness”.

He also commented on recent reports of suicides of returning veterans. “There’s got to be a way of helping these people get the help that they need”.

Meeting Adjourned 6:48p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Deborah Gaiolini, Commission Clerk