

**MINUTES FROM THE HAMDEN VETERANS COMMISSION,  
SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITY ROOM, MILLER COMPLEX,  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2015**

**Commissioners Present:** Mr. Howland, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Laffin, Mr. Lewis  
Ms. Lupi, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Shultz, Mr. Weil

**Commissioners Absent:** Mr. Best, Ms. Goodwin, Mr. Oakes

**Guests:** Mr. Goodwin

**Approval of Minutes** – January 6, 2015 – **APPROVED**

**Memorial Day Parade 2015** – Mr. Laffin reported that everything is basically the same as last year with the exception that we we need to add more parade marshals. 3 for each station. 2 for the cars. Total of 5 additional marshals. Volunteers are fine. CERT & Teen CERT were suggested – but no kids near the vehicles. Having additional marshals will be much more helpful. Mr. Laffin can be sure they're all set at the beginning (HHS) so he can get back to the reviewing stand.

There was discussion on Grand Marshals. Suggestions: Guy Ortoleva, Doc Messiah and Ray Sims. We still need a Veteran. Mr. Lewis noted he knows of a WWII veteran who is currently a patient at the West Haven VA. Mr. Shultz asked about obtaining a list of all the past Grand Marshals. Vera Morrison may have the list of parade marshals and the list of WWII Veterans. The Clerk w/contact Vera.

Mr. Laffin requested that any names/nominees be submitted with a little background on the individual & detail as to why they're being nominated.

Responses are slowly coming in. Things will start to pick up in February. He added that he is 90% sure on The Foot Guard. Mr. Weil confirmed we already have the Army Band.

**Town Hall Rotunda** – Ms. Lupi reported they met on January 20<sup>th</sup> and walked from HMS to Memorial Town Hall – and back. “The kids are excited. There were about 12 kids and they took pictures and videos. I did what I did basically on Veterans Day and answered any questions. They seemed genuinely excited to pull this all together”.

She invited them to attend our March meeting. Dean DelGiudice (their teacher) asked if it would be possible to hold the meeting in the Rotunda. Ms. Lupi checked w/Kim Renta, Council Clerk about availability. We are penciled in. Mr. Mitchell questioned the logistics. After brief discussion it was agreed Ms. Gaiolini would coordinate w/Kim Renta on the availability of the auditorium for the actual meeting portion of the event.

**Veterans Wall at Hamden High School – April 7, 2015 – 7:00pm – HHS Auditorium** -Mr. Laffin explained the Wall at HHS is to honor any/all STAFF members of HHS. Full-time employees who work or worked in Administration, Security, Cafeteria, Custodians and Faculty. People can submit

names to Doc Messiah at 203-407-2040 x5031 or [Cmessiah@hamden.org](mailto:Cmessiah@hamden.org). She has 90 names so far. Mr. Weil added that Doc had asked for his assistance with getting service reps. So far he's got from Yale the Navy Captain in charge of the Navy ROTC & one of his Marine officers. An Army Major is coming from the ROTC at UNH. The Air Force will be sending one of their people. He's just got to work on the Coast Guard. Challenge Coins will be passed out to the individuals by the members of their service. HHS Band & Chorus will also be participating at the event.

Mr. Laffin reviewed the "Honor Future Vets" program that honors graduating high school students that have enlisted. He reported that this year "We definitely have 3 committed to the parade. We're going to do a breakfast for them. At graduation they will wear special cords that are red."

**Veterans Awareness Day 2015** - Mr. Weil reported that he, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Shultz, Mr. Oakes and Dan Levy met and went through the contact lists. "Things are moving along. We all have our assignments"! VAD will be on a Thursday this year because the BOE has an in-service day on Friday.

There was discussion on the Color Guard. Dan Levy was promoting the Coast Guard Color Guard. HPD and HFD have provided Color Guard in the past. Mr. Mitchell felt before making any changes we should first find out if HPD wants to participate. If they did, they would be primary. Mr. Weil said, "protocol says we should at least go to HPD and ask if they want to do it".

Mr. Mitchell asked for the history/protocol of the Challenge Coin. Mr. Laffin started, "it goes back forever. If someone is a Commander of a unit they have a Challenge Coin – If he goes to an event and while shaking someone's hand – he passes the Challenge Coin on. It's for doing something above and beyond the call. It could be something simple. In the old days to be recognized as a member of a particular unit you carried a Commander's Coin. In the New Haven Militia, if you don't have your coin on you, you were fined very severely". It's still used as an expression of thanks. Mr. Weil has several in a display case and still gives them out.

**Change of Location - March 2015 Meeting** – The HVC will hold their March meeting in the Rotunda and Auditorium of Memorial Town Hall, 2732 Whitney Avenue. The HMS students have been invited to attend and discuss their project. Call to Order will be at 5:30pm.

**Hamden Chamber of Commerce Expo Fair – April 15<sup>th</sup>** – In Mr. Oakes absence, Mr. Weil will be attending a meeting on Thursday 9:00am at WQUN. The military has come out with an employee partnership program. The Army Reserve has at least one full time person in each state. Ariel Vogel of West Hartford is coming to the meeting. He has job listings and can match job openings with applicants. Mr. Weil will learn more and update us at the next meeting. This is all about helping veterans get jobs.

**"Save a Suit"** - The owner of D'Camm Limited is collecting suits to give to veterans. Hopefully he will be at the meeting on Thursday and he can get more info.

**Veterans 4 Veterans** – February 11th at 1:00pm – Senior Center – Mr. Mitchell will be attending this meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:17 pm.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deborah Gaiolini, HVC Clerk