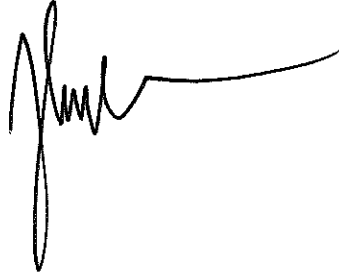


TO: Town Council
FROM: John A. Elsesser, Town Manager
RE: Vietnam Memorial Repair Request
DATE: July 12, 2022

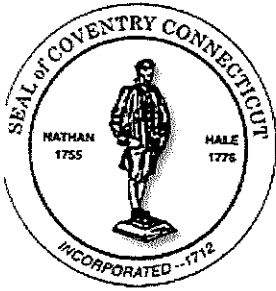


Attached is a memo on recommended repairs to the statewide Vietnam Memorial as identified by the Veterans Memorial and Events Commission.

While the Commission has identified LOCIP as an eligible funding source, the use of those funds are allocated in the Capital Improvement budget for the next five years. This funding is actually approved at the Annual Town Meeting. Its use can be considered during next year's budget process, but it will require taking away funds from another identified Town project.

This needs to be considered during the next budget cycle. If it is an emergency situation, the Council would need to allocate funds, since there are no funds available in this extremely tight FY 22/23 budget.

Cc: Peter DePaola



COVENTRY VETERANS MEMORIAL AND EVENTS COMMISSION

To: John Elsesser, Town Manager

From: Peter DePaola, Veterans Memorial and Events Commission

Date: April 12, 2022

Subject: Vietnam War Memorial Monument

At this year's Vietnam War Veterans Day ceremony, it was noted that the Connecticut Vietnam War Memorial Monument has shifted on its pedestal and is in need of repairs. Thus far meetings have taken place with the State of CT Commissioner for Veteran Affairs, Thomas J. Saadi, and with Jean Risley, the original Committee Chair for the monument. The State of CT recently authorized \$30 million for the repair and replacement of monuments throughout the state by use of LOCIP grants. The following report is submitted for your review and instruction for further guidance to the next steps towards repairs.

Summary

The Connecticut Vietnam Veterans Memorial serves as a symbol of Connecticut's honor and recognition of the men and women who served and sacrificed their lives in the Vietnam War. Inscribed on the black granite wall are the names of the 613 men who gave their lives for our country. The memorial is dedicated to honor the courage, sacrifice and devotion to duty and country of all who answered the call to serve during one of the most divisive wars in U.S. history. The memorial was dedicated in 2008 and attracts visitors and veterans throughout the year.

Introduction

In 2001, inspired by their teacher Thomas Dzicek the students at the Captain Nathan Hale Middle School in Coventry decided not only to identify, but to find out more about each of the Connecticut servicemen who died in the Vietnam War. The project took one and a half years and resulted in a book titled "612," a listing and biography of every State Vietnam Veteran who died in the war. One of those patriots was Robert Tillquist, a Combat Medic and a

Distinguished Service Cross recipient who died in the Pleiku Campaign on November 4, 1965. His sister, Jean Risley, of Coventry had become personally involved in their project. She was stirred by their effort but felt that a book should not be the final memory, and that a memorial needed to be created to honor these men, and to thank them and to welcome them home.

She formed a group called the Connecticut Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee to raise money to establish a memorial to the 612 Connecticut men who lost their lives in the Vietnam War.

In July of 2006 the committee started in earnest to contact various attorneys, accountants, and Coventry Town officials to determine the best way to proceed. The Town decided to place the monument in Veteran's Memorial Green in Coventry. Support for the monument was overwhelming and the groundbreaking ceremony was held in August of 2007.

Problem Statement

Although the Connecticut Vietnam War Memorial appears to be in pristine condition, however the harsh New England weather has taken a toll on the monuments pedestal. The western corner of the monument has shifted over time and is now on the edge of the foundations pedestal. The east corner of the monument is set two inches from the edge.

It is evident that the waterproof gasket protecting the monument has failed to keep water and ice from under mining the black granite monument.

Objectives

Given the importance of this monument as a testimony from the State of Connecticut to honor and recognize what the Vietnam War Veterans sacrificed, it is upon us to ensure that it stands the test of time. The following are the objectives of the grant:

- a. Monument Inspector: To hire an organization with expertise in evaluating monuments to assess the current condition of the Connecticut Vietnam War Memorial and to provide a timely report on their findings.
- b. Repairs: To identify and hire an organization that repairs monuments in a professional and timely manner and meets all required regulations.
- c. Future Inspections: Establish a timeline for future inspections and for routine care of the monument.

Project Description

The proposed project is comprised of several different, but related activities:

- a. Inspection: To assess the current condition of the foundation, pedestal base and of the monument itself. Report any cracks or weak areas of the foundation and the pedestal base. Inspect and assess the integrity of the black granite monument. Report all findings.

b. Estimate Repair Costs: Provide a detailed cost estimate for any and all repairs, cost of equipment, labor and materials.

c. Future Inspections: Provide a cost and timeline for future inspections, and for routine care and maintenance.

Evaluation

To determine whether project objectives are being met, the Coventry Veterans Monument and Events Commission (VMEC), in close collaboration with the office of the State of CT Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) will formally evaluate the progress and success of the repair project. The VMEC will report on start and completion of each step of the project to the State of CT DVA.

Future Funding

Despite the fact that most of the costs involve one-time expenses, it will be necessary to plan for future funding of certain aspects of the project. These costs include routine inspection and maintenance materials. Should additional grant funds not be available, the VMEC will seek support from the Coventry Town Council, Coventry Department of Public Works and local Veteran organizations.

Budget / Narrative

a. Consultant / Inspector

4 hours at \$300.00 / hour = \$ 1,200

b. Repair Crew (equipment operator-1, road guards -2, repair crew -2)

8 hours at \$2,00.00 / hour = \$16,000

c. Equipment

Large Crane at \$5000 / day = \$5,000

Repair materials at \$500 \$ 500

d. **Total Estimate Costs** **\$22,700**

Consultant /Inspector

Standard rate for experienced professional monument inspectors.

Repair Crew

The repair crew consists of road guards, safety personnel, repair team, inspection personnel.