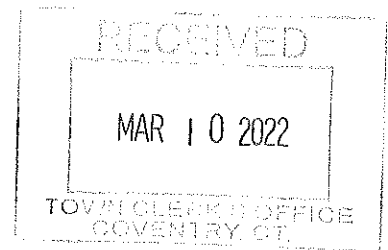


Coventry Veterans Memorial & Events Commission

March 8, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Location: Town Hall, #B Conference Room



Attendance: Peter DePaola, Jamie DePaola, Bill Glenney, Rick Nowsch

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes from the February 8, 2022, meeting was approved.

Old Business:

- Vietnam War Veterans Memorial Day – March 29th, Coventry, 5:30 p.m.
 - Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Saadi, CTANG, Commissioner CT Veterans Affairs, will be keynote speaker
 - BGeneral Ron Welch, CTANG (Retired) will also be speaking.
 - RSVPs only for those wanting to continue celebration at Lakeview Restaurant (Pay-as-you-go).
- Gold Star Families Memorial Monument dedication – April 23rd, Berlin Veterans Memorial Park, 51 Lower Lane, Berlin, 1:00 p.m.
 - Many veterans lost a brother or sister-in-arms and may be interested in this monument.

New Business:

- Veteran Resource Booklet – discussed the creation of a tri-fold handout to give to veterans in town, as well as a welcome to new veterans moving into town. The trifold will include local Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) contacts in town (American Legion & VFW), as well as Veterans Coffee House programs and other VSO's in the region such as Veterans Rally Point, VA Willimantic and emergency contacts with the VA Hospitals.
 - This booklet will also be available to the town hall offices, senior center, and the library.
- State of CT event to honor Korean War veterans – The LtGov office reached out to us to help locate any Korean War veterans in town. We worked with the Town Clerks Office and they compiled a list of 17 names of Korean War era veterans in Coventry. Will submit the roster to LtGov office this week.
- Honor Flight to Washington, DC for WWII and Korean War veterans – June 5th. The veteran is free, and they must complete an online application. If they select to bring a guardian, their fee is \$350. They fly out of Bradley to DC for the one-day tour of the war monuments in Washington DC. The Honor Flight organization will also be offering a fall flight since the June 5th date is filling up fast. Wheelchairs provided for each veteran.
 - The Honor Flight CT team has offered to schedule a "Meet and Greet" in Coventry to provide more information about the program and how to apply. We recommended to work with the Senior Center on scheduling this event in the next couple months.
- Veterans Rally Point, 24 Stott Ave., Norwich, is a comprehensive one-stop shop for Veterans services for veterans and their families. We discussed planning a field trip with

our team and other veterans to check it out. It's 30 min. from Coventry, next to Dodd Stadium. They have a Peer Group meeting every Wednesday at 5 p.m.

- Monument Clean Up date is April 30th – 10:00 a.m.: Annual cleaning of the monuments at Veterans Memorial Park. The plan is to invite local groups (BSA and high school) to help keep our memorials pristine. This will provide an opportunity for students to get community service hours.
- We now have a Facebook page to help promote the events and activities for our veteran community.
- “By proclaiming Coventry as a Purple Heart community, we are committing to remembering acts of resiliency of brave men and women. It is with much admiration, honor and respect that we should salute all of the veterans and Purple Heart recipients.”
- The Town assigned VMEC our own email to use in correspondence. CovVMEC@coventryct.org. Waiting for password.
- The Town Clerks Office staff are being very supportive in researching records to locate ALL Coventry veterans from all eras so we can establish a better communication and relationship with them.

Upcoming Events to share with veterans:

- Eastern CT Veteran Coffee House: Every Wednesday at Hops 44, 655 Middle Tpke., Storrs, 9 – 11 a.m.
- March 29, 2022: Vietnam Veterans War Memorial Day, 5 p.m., at Coventry Veterans Memorial Park. There will be a brief ceremony followed by a meal at Lakeview Restaurant (reservations required for dinner).
- May 22, 2022: Armed Forces Day, 11:00 am. Aqua Turf Club, Southington.
- May 30, 2022: Coventry Memorial Day Parade, 10 a.m. American Legion Post 52 organizing.
- June 5, 2022: Honor Flight to Washington D.C. for WWII and Korean War veterans. (applications required)

Top Needs for Veterans Commission:

- The Veteran community is a valuable part of our Town, and we need to be more present to our veteran community by being the resource to share community news and events and opportunities, etc.
- Some current day veterans are having a difficult time transitioning back home. We need to find a way to support them by first welcoming them.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. Location: Town Hall #B

Respectfully submitted,
Jamie DePaola
Coventry VMEC