

TOWN OF WENHAM
Veterans Committee
Meeting of October 16, 2018
Wenham Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Committee members, a meeting of the Veterans Committee was posted for 9 am on Tuesday October 16, 2018 in the Selectmen Chambers.

The mission of the Veterans Committee is to perpetuate and support the Veteran's, ceremonies, events, and other activities in the Town of Wenham. The Veterans Committee consists of up to (9) members appointed by the Board of Selectmen (BOS) who will assist Veterans and their families, as appropriate, in cooperation with other organizations and agencies. The Veterans Committee was appointed by the Board of Selectmen on March 21, 2017.

B. Blanchard (2020); R. Breaker (2020); J. Bubriski (2020); W. Dodge (2021); M. Lucy (2021); D. Pedersen (2021); P. Hersee (2019); Selectman J. Wilhelm, Ex-officio (2019); William Wilson (2019)

In the absence of the Chair, and with a quorum present, Mr. Hersee called the meeting to order at 9 am

Committee present: Peter Hersee, Vice Chair; Bruce Blanchard, Secretary; Robert Breaker; Joe Bubriski; Win Dodge; Mike Lucy, Treasurer; William Wilson

Not present: Selectman J. Wilhelm; D. Pedersen, Chair

Also present: Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

Eastern Essex Veteran's Agent Karen Tyler; Gary Cheeseman, Cemetery Commission

- Approval of minutes-May 8, 2018

The Committee unanimously approved the meeting minutes of May 8, 2018.

- Wreaths Across America

The Committee previously decided to participate in Wreaths across America this year as a part of Wenham's 375th Anniversary and place wreaths on veterans' graves in the Main Street cemetery.

Nationally, communities are invited to participate in a wreath laying ceremony simultaneously with the wreath laying at the Arlington Cemetery on December 15 at 12 pm.

Karen Tyler reported that the Wreaths Across America Committee held their first meeting on October 3. Ms. Tyler said it was her intention that the ad hoc committee would be a mix of members from both Hamilton and Wenham and serve both towns but no one from Hamilton participated. The Committee concurred that without active support from Hamilton, to focus on having wreaths for the veteran's in the Wenham Main Street Cemetery. The Hamilton-Wenham American Legion offered to donate some wreaths. Ms. Tyler reached out to Matt Bailey, Wenham Scout Master to request the Scouts assist with the placing of the wreaths.

The Committee recommended 150 wreaths be purchased; the goal is to place wreaths on 25% of the 453 graves sites.

The cost of the wreaths is \$15 each or three for \$30. The order must be placed by November 28.

Bill Wilson spoke in more detail and referenced a PowerPoint slide of the Main Street Cemetery divided into sections as part of the overall plan going forward to place a wreath on each veteran's grave over the next 4 years.

Selectman John Clemenzi has offered to store wreaths in his warehouse and transport the wreaths to cemetery for placement.

The Committee discussed ideas to fund the wreaths. The Town's web site has a donation link and sponsorship form.

The Rotary club, Rod & Gun Club; religious organizations will be invited to participate.

The Committee discussed creating a pamphlet and how to best promote the fundraiser, collect donations and purchase wreaths.

Mr. Wilson gave a tutorial on the process to purchase a wreath through the town's web site.

The Committee preferred a local collection in and all checks be sent in to Wreath Across America at one time.

Ms. Tyler will coordinate the final delivery of wreaths.

Mr. Cheeseman will provide a drop box for donations in town hall.

Mr. Wilson and Mr. Cheeseman will create a flyer for donations toward the purchase of the wreaths.

Approved 11.13.18

- Cemetery update - Gary Cheeseman, Cemetery Commission

Review data base

Mr. Cheeseman referenced a PowerPoint presentation to review the Wenham Cemetery data base update:

There is a total of 3,284 graves in Wenham Cemeteries, of which 466 are veterans.

The data base is being validated to ensure veteran's gravesite are correctly marked with additional data fields ie date of birth, branch of service, rank, etc.

- Veterans Day: Program, time and day

Veteran's Day: Services will be on Sunday November 11

This November 11 is the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day, the end of World War I.

On November 11, bells will ring nationally 11 times at 11 am in honor of Armistice Day.

The Town Administrator will be asked to organize the bells of the church to ring at 11 am.

Town Administrator office will be asked to send out letter to veterans to invite to attend service and designate an area of seating for the veterans.

- Maintenance of Veterans Memorial

There is currently no maintenance plan for the Veteran's Memorial. According to Mr. Blanchard, there is money in the Veteran's Memorial Fund to cover maintenance. The Veteran's Memorial Committee has been disbanded and it was the opinion that the responsibility to maintain the memorial was under the Veteran's Committee.

The charter of the Veteran's committee will be referenced to clarify responsibilities for the next meeting

- Other Business

It was suggested the Veteran's Committee have their own stationary printed for official use.

The next regular meeting of the Veteran's Committee is November 13. The Committee was uncertain if an extra meeting would be needed prior to Veteran's Day. If necessary, an additional meeting would be posted.

- Adjournment - *The Committee unanimously adjourned at 10:11 am.*

Respectfully Submitted By

Catherine Tinsley

10.22.18