

Scituate Veterans Advisory Council, July 17, 2012

SCITUATE VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes – July 17, 2012

Location: Scituate Maritime Center

Members Present: Joseph Kelley (Chairman), Edward Covell (Vice Chairman), Michael Scott (Secretary) (arrived 7:30 pm), Robert McHugh (Treasurer), Vincent Fountaine, Karen Kelley, James Hunt, Richard Johnson, Dennis Badore, Don Knapp (VSO – ex officio)

Members Absent: Jack Manning, John Miller, Thomas Edwards, Ben Summers, Robert Young, VFW Commander

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm by Chairman Kelley

Pledge of Allegiance recited

Chairman Kelley reviewed letter received from Sladen Family thanking Town for supporting Mr. Sladen, a recently-deceased veteran

Vice Chairman Covell reported on success of 4th of July ceremonies

Chairman Kelley reviewed details of Heritage Days agenda, including discussion of veterans services booth, community outreach, and delegation of assignments to members

General discussion of banner for Veterans Services Department containing town seal

Motion made to expend VAC funds for purchase of banner to be used at all veterans services events, including Heritage Days; motion seconded; motion to expend funds for banner approved by unanimous vote of council members

VSO Report

VSO Knapp reported that Noel is moving forward with his Eagle Scout project, which will involve providing an inventory of veterans buried in Cudworth Cemetery along with identifying gravesites in need of appropriate military markers; general agreement that the old and new St. Mary's cemeteries were in greater need of being inventoried and VSO Knapp agreed to contact Noel and ask that Noel focus his efforts on St. Mary's

VSO Knapp reported that the Massachusetts Department of Veterans Services hosts a website known as MassVetsAdvisor.org where veterans can easily apply for assistance online; business cards identifying website distributed

VSO Knapp explained that he does interface with other social welfare agencies to help veterans realize the full scope of benefits available to the veteran and their family; VSO Knapp stated that he starts at the top when securing benefits for a veteran, meaning that he looks for federal eligibility first and then works through the state and local system; benefits include medical assistance, food assistance, and fuel assistance

VSO Knapp stated that his office is busy as people realize he is working full-time hours in Town Hall; reviewed summer conference on Cape Cod; mentioned grant opportunity for veterans services from a local benefactor; reported that ten veterans now receiving benefits from Scituate; rejected two applicants

recently; explored employment opportunities for veterans at Verizon, US Postal Service, and the railway

Treasurer McHugh expressed concern regarding a group called “Veterans in Transition” soliciting funds at Shaw’s supermarket; further investigation to follow

Chairman Kelley reviewed Gold Star Memorial Train and recounted that over 100 people visited the car at the train station; “another first for Scituate”

Minutes

Motion made to approve the 6/19/2012 meeting minutes as drafted

Motion seconded

Motion passed unanimously – minutes approved and accepted

Public Comment

Mr. Hunt discussed suicide epidemic among returning troops; encouraged participation in suicide awareness program; referred members to recent article in Time magazine

Chairman Kelley mentioned flag folding ceremony at Camp Edwards for National Guard unit that is standing down after nine overseas deployments (Michael’s unit)

Next meeting date set for August 21, 2012, at 7 pm, at Maritime Center

Motion to adjourn meeting made and seconded; vote unanimous and meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Scott, Secretary