

# **Scituate Veterans Advisory Council, November 26, 2013**

## **SCITUATE VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Meeting Minutes – November 26, 2012

Location: Scituate Maritime Center

Members Present: Joseph Kelley (Chairman), Edward Covell (Vice Chairman), Michael Scott (Secretary), Vincent Fountaine, Karen Kelley, James Hunt, Dennis Badore, Richard Johnson, Ben Summers, Don Knapp (VSO – ex officio)

Members Absent: Robert McHugh (Treasurer), Jack Manning, John Miller, VFW Commander

Members Resigned: Thomas Edwards, Robert Young

Meeting called to order at 7:04 pm by Chairman Kelley

Pledge of Allegiance recited

### **Minutes**

Motion made to approve the 10/16/2012 meeting minutes as drafted

Motion seconded

Motion passed unanimously – minutes approved and accepted

### **Treasurer's Report**

Chairman Kelley reported an unchanged balance of \$873.30 on account

### **Correspondence**

Chairman Kelley reviewed an email he sent to the Town Administrator regarding the Council's plans to publish a newsletter; Town Administrator suggested the Council work with VSO Knapp and she saw no ethical issues; discussed publishing every 3-6 months

Chairman Kelley reported that Special Town Meeting approved the warrant article providing for a veterans fund check-off on tax bills

### **VSO Report**

VSO Knapp reported that he attended a meeting among the Attorney General, State Representative Cantwell, and seniors concerning financial scams targeting veterans and the elderly, who are a known source of funds given their receipt of cash benefits

VSO Knapp reported that he attended a meeting at the Council on Aging, which is one way to keep the lines of communication open with veterans

VSO Knapp reported on his work on behalf of an elderly veteran victimized by a home financing scam

VSO Knapp reported on his work on behalf of a veteran with a federal claim for "Agent Orange" benefits

VSO Knapp reported that Scituate's census of c. 115 recipients remains at 15

VSO Knapp reported that the Veterans Services budget is in good shape and he expects a supplement to come through

VSO Knapp commented on the Veterans Day ceremonies and thanked the DPW for doing a great job at Cudworth, Lawson, and Union cemeteries, which “looked great” – the Council then discussed the condition of flags and flag replacement protocol at local cemeteries with VSO Knapp – Mr. Hunt stated that “flags on the ground during Veterans Day on town property is a travesty” – Chairman Kelley suggested that it is the responsibility of the VAC to make sure there is a good flag at every veteran gravesite

#### Chairman’s Report

Chairman Kelley reported that Noel’s Eagle Scout Project is focusing on St. Mary’s Cemetery and he is in the process of entering data onto spreadsheets

Chairman Kelley led a discussion of the Veterans Day ceremonies and he thought the opening ceremony was “incredible” – Vice Chairman Covell remarked on the good turnout and stated that 91 meals were served at the GAR Hall

Chairman Kelley reported that he and Mrs. Kelley were in Bourne for flag placement at the national cemetery, where over 56,000 flags were placed by 1,600 volunteers

General discussion of members assigning themselves to “police” various cemeteries in town to ensure appropriate flag and marker placements

#### Wreaths Across America

General discussion of the ceremonies planned for 12/15 at 750 military cemeteries across the globe – Scituate’s ceremonies will be at Cudworth and St. Mary’s cemeteries – Chairman Kelley stated that this will be an “important” ceremony and he wants more residents to attend – discussion of placing announcement in the public school system’s Virtual Backpack for kids and parents to learn of event – later, general discussion of seeking a line-item for wreaths in Veterans Services budget through warrant article

#### Fundraising for Veterans Services

Chairman Kelley mentioned that the Scituate Rotary is selling paper Christmas trees at area merchant locations and Scituate Veterans Services will be one of four beneficiaries of funds raised – Chairman Kelley asked Council members to volunteer time to this cause

Vice Chairman Covell mentioned that a local Girl Scout troop is looking for a project to honor veterans – general discussion of appropriate projects, such as flagging ceremonies, yardwork, and etc. – Mr. Fountaine suggested that the scouts get involved with addressing holiday greeting cards to local veterans and noted that a local pharmacy is willing to donate 1,200 greeting cards to veterans

#### Council Terms of Service

General agreement that the discussion of the length of Council terms would be put off until the next meeting – recognized that Bob Young and Tom Edwards have resigned

#### Public Comment

None

Next meeting date set for January 15, 2013, at 7 pm at Maritime Center

Motion to adjourn meeting made and seconded; vote unanimous and meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Scott, Secretary