Meeting of Scituate Veterans Council

Wednesday, September 23, 2020

Call to order at 9:02 at Scituate Public Safety Building, 800 CJC Highway, Scituate MA

Present: VAC Members Kim Stewart, Ed Kelly, Kevin Norton, Drew Kitchen via phone

Other: Steve Litchfield-Scituate American Legion, Don Knapp- VSO, Ed Gibbons - SPD Liaison, Bob McLean- resident/veteran

Kim introduced Bob McLean who has expressed interest in joining the Council. Bob described his military service and professional background.

Open seat on Council- Bob McLean indicated that he will apply. Kim reminded Council that attendance is important for meetings to take place.

Council recapped the Purple Heart Community sign unveiling in August. Ceremony was a great success. Thank you to Joe Kelly for getting Rolling Thunder to attend. Pictures are up on the VAC Facebook Page. Joe Kelly expressed concern that the other 2 PH signs are not up. Ed Gibbons and Ed Kelly will explore good locations and contact Mike Breen

Outreach was not discussed- Ed Hanafin not in attendance.

Steve Litchfield talked about Veteran’s Day- there likely will be no luncheon as in the past. They are working on potentially a ceremony at the Common recorded live to commemorate the day.

Kim Stewart reported that Scituate Community Christmas will again this year be funding the sending of over 900 handmade cards by Scituate students to Veterans in town for Veterans Day. They received a grant to include a gift with each card. Suggestions are welcomed! Additionally, the food pantry will be offering a special day just for veterans where they will give out a specially designed box of “rations”, have refreshments and a gift on Friday Nov 13th. SCC will include this information in the Veterans Day cards. Marie the operations manager of the Scituate Food Pantry will join our October meeting to discuss further.

Don reported that there may be an issue with the way Kim signed the town up for Wreaths Across America. Kim said she is still a bit confused with the process. Steve Litchfield said that the Legion will help to fund the wreaths as they have in years past. We agreed that as the VAC we would help promote donations to the Legion in support of their effort.

Kim let the Council know that we now have a Facebook Page- Scituate Veterans Advisory Council. She encouraged members who are on FB to share the page and to suggest content. Kim and Drew are admins.

Don Knapp discussed what his office is doing – it has been challenging with COVID and lack of proper space at the Town Hall. He is looking forward to the new space at the Senior Center. Also, he will be receiving equipment to help Veterans participate in telehealth programs to ease the burden of getting to doctors’ appointments.

Kim shared a communication from Scituate Veteran, Conley Ford who has requested that the Council take up the issue of Veterans transportation to doctors’ appointments. We will offer him agenda time at our October meeting. Meanwhile Kim will speak with Vinny, the Rockland VSO who provides this service.

We had no July minutes to vote on (Drew not at meeting)

Ed Kelly reports no change in the treasury. He will circle back with Nancy Holt regarding donation of $250 made in August.

Discussion about the Fred Hyland Memorial-Steve to talk with Doug Smith to get the tree ordered. Follow up needed after tree ordered- town will plant.

Chair of Honor- we decided to stand by and wait til we are able to have the proper installment ceremony. The Council thanks Joe Kelly for storing the chair for now.

Kim let the Council know that VFW Auxiliary is organizing a drive for veterans in local VA Hospitals. The list if on our FB page. Kim will get the list to members. Collection ends September 30th.

Steve Litchfield has asked that we assist the Legion with our previously attempted conversation with the Town regarding the use of the WPA by the Legion as their base of operations. Drew will be making contact with the Town Administrator and report back.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:23