**Veterans, Ceremony and Parade Commission Regular Meeting**

**December 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

**Opening:** The Veterans, Ceremony and Parade Commission held their Regular Meeting on Thursday December 9, 2021 in the Fowler Memorial Building, 45 New Haven Avenue, Bill Kates called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and asked those present to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**:

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Bill Kates - Interim Chairman

Vincent Zelinsky

Mike Kupson

Tom Jackson

Pattie Deer

Emily Sopchak – (via telephone)

**ABSENT/EXCUSED**:

Frank Rodriguez

John (Jack) Jansen

**GUESTS**:

Diane Zelinsky –recording secretary (via telephone)

**Agenda**: Open Agenda

**Consideration of Minutes** – There were no minutes from the November meeting as a quorum was not present. Bill Kates read the minutes from the October 14, 2021 meeting and called for a motion to accept.

Motion was made by Pattie Deer and 2nd by Emily Sopchak – motion passed to accept the minutes as read.

**A quorum was present for tonight’s meeting.**

**New Business:**

Bill Kates started off the meeting by reading a letter from Mayor Blake in which he thanked the VCPC for all the hard work put into organizing the Veterans Day Parade with such a limited time table. Discussion then opened with members sharing comments and compliments received on how the parade went well given the obstacles of the current situation with the ongoing Pandemic. Bill then thanked Vinny Zelinsky and Mike Kupson for the efforts involved in putting it together with all the of moving pieces the day before and day of the parade with units dropping out and walk on units showing up to participate.

One recurring comment was participation of the Jeep Group and the volume of members who participated, some thought it was “too” many but most agreed they were used well as transitions between the different parade divisions. Tom Jackson proposed for the next parade having organizational markers to help line the segments up better and hopefully for the next parade more preparation time will be available to get attendance responses prior to the day for better organization.

The only real complaints one which was an oversite was noted that the Police Honor Guard should always lead the procession and apologies were made. The American Legion Riders or any other motor cycle division will be placed later in the order to avoid continual starting and stopping and the second one was that the sound system needs to be better placed for the guest speakers on the green as it was difficult to hear Jack Dougherty’s speech.

The Final word on the Veteran’s Day parade was that all thought the attendance of those who participated and those attending was very good and better than expected.

There was a brief discussion on the roles and responsibilities of the VCPC with more to come at the January meeting. Discussion then moved on to once a permanent Chairperson is named that the VCPC should have an office in the Fowler building and the one formerly used by the Catholic War Veterans could be a possibility. Supplies such as stationery and extra flags and the reusable car signs could be stored in one central location. Also, it was strongly suggested that the roles be delegated to those on the commission rather than be run solely by the Chair or Vice Chair such as maintaining the new calendar of building use which needs to be re-established so it is clear what organizations use the building on a regular bases and what days and times are then available when building use requests come in. Bill Kates also reported that a preliminary budget was submitted and in January the Chair would have to attend the hearing either in person or virtually for the budget to be passed.

**Old Business:**

Mike Kupson took the opportunity to mention that he had reached out to Tom Flowers and wanted to note in the record that for Memorial Day events Pastor Jim Loomer from the Milford Christian Academy needs to be contacted. He also mentioned he would send an email to Jack Dougherty thanking him for being the Grand Marshal. He also mentioned that his term is up on December 31, 2021 and he had contacted Mayor Blake’s office that he would not be renewing his nomination. He also mentioned that there was a candidate to replace him from his VSO. Mike would be updating the master email list of contacts for various parade invitees and come back at a future meeting to distribute that. Bill Kates also indicated that since he assumed Tom Flowers spot which also is up on December 31, 2021, he is willing to return for a few months to continue to assist with the running of the VCPC and further discussion will take place at the January meeting.

The next scheduled meeting will be on Thursday, January 13, 2022.

**For the Good of the Order**:

Tom Jackson brought up an idea to have some sort of ceremony or presentation at Armed Forces Day, which is on the 3rd Saturday in May. More discussion to come.

The DAR Wreath laying ceremony will be held on December 18th at Kings Highway Cemetery at 12 noon.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Vinny Zelinsky and 2nd by Pattie Deer

**Meeting adjourned at**: 8:25 pm

Respectfully Submitted by

Diane Zelinsky

Recording Secretary