



City of Biddeford
Veterans Committee
October 28, 2024 at 4:30 PM
City Hall Second Floor Conference Room

1. Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Minutes
 - 3.a Acceptance of September 23rd Veterans Committee Minutes
 - 3.b Acceptance of June 24th 2024 Meeting Minutes
4. Old Business
 - 4.a AMVETS POST 1 Briefing - top 3 Goals and Challenges
 - 4.b Bridge naming overview and recommendation for City Council
5. New Business
 - 5.a General Assistance overview as it pertains to veteran support
6. Discussion/Review
7. Adjourn

Mayor's Veterans Committee
Maine
Meeting Minutes, Monday, 23 September 2024

Biddeford,

Committee Members

Roger Beaupre (Chair), Jen Fullmer, Eric Gates (Vice Chair), Jessica Johnson, Quang Minh Le, Ben Neveux, Frederick Oliver

Committee Attendees: Eric Gates, Jen Fullmer, Frederick Oliver

* Eric Gates chaired the meeting.

Local Veteran Org Attendees: VFW Post 7997-Mike McInnis, American Legion Post 26-Rick St Onge, Volunteers of America (VOA)-Brian Bouthout, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1044 (VVA)-Paul Therrien

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Initial Admin

- Eric introduced committee members and provided an overview of the committee charge
- Minutes for Jun & Sep will be approved at the Oct meeting due to no quorum today

3. Local Veteran Group Information

- Local veteran organization reps were asked to provide their top three goals & challenges

ORGANIZATION	CHALLENGES	GOALS
VFW Post 7997 Mike McInnis	- Getting volunteers (aging membership)	- Work together with other vet orgs on local events - Get more involved with schools & kids
American Legion Post 26 Rick St Onge	- getting schools to respond to scholarship opportunities - Getting volunteers	- Work together with city and other vet orgs on local events (parades, etc.) - Maintain "adopt a class," currently with 4 th graders has been a great success
Volunteers of America (VOA) Brian Bouthout	- Continually increasing need for housing - Lack of housing stock, veteran specific housing, female veteran specific housing - Staff shortages	- Collaborate with other vet orgs to identify vets in need - Open up more veteran specific housing - More public transportation options, especially in rural areas
Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 1044 (VVA) Paul Therrien		- Have open house every Wed for vets to come between 9-noon to help them get the services they have earned (they have 2 VSOs present)

- We plan to hear from AMVETS Post 1 during the October meeting.

4. Other Guest Presenters

Flags in City Parks (Lisa Thompson was unable to attend so the Mayor provided an overview of the topic)

- Lisa is looking for help with flag protocol and support in our various city parks, specifically
 - assistance with raising and lowering flags at appropriate times and other coordination

Bridges Honoring Veterans (Colista Cross)

Overview

- Worked for past couple years to have a bridge in towns across Maine named for veterans
- She's working with Maine legislature, Chair of the Maine Transportation Committee
- She proposed that Biddeford approve naming of Bridge #3908, Alfred road crossing
 - Town could name it either in general, or specific vet name, for example: "The Biddeford Veterans Crossing Bridge" or "Alfred Veterans Road Crossing," etc.

Process (Colista can oversee)

- City Council approves the concept and identifies the bridge & name
- City Council sends a letter to the State approving the naming of the bridge
- Once State Transportation Committee receives the letter and approves, goes to the governor for approval – all have been approved so far (13 towns, 10 bridges)

Other comments

- Mayor Grohman recommended that the local legislative delegation be involved in the discussion because the bridges are Maine DOT properties

*Further discussion on this will be tabled until the October meeting when we have a quorum and can vote to make a recommendation to City Council.

5. Other Business

- Mayor Grohman brought up that the Heart of Biddeford (HOB) is planning for this year's Veterans Day event
- Team is currently looking for Master of Ceremonies, Grand Marshall, Guest Speaker, Chaplain, Flag raisers, and other positions
- Planning meetings are run by HOB on zoom and are recorded by Delilah
- Mayor Grohman thanked everyone on the committee and guests

6. Recap, Takeaways, Tasks

- Table the bridge discussion until the October meeting
- AMVETS will present their top 3 goals/challenges at the October meeting
- GA Office to present in October – information on what GA is hearing from local veterans

5. Meeting Schedule (4th Monday of every month at 4:30pm)

- NEXT MEETING: Monday, 28 Sep 2024, 4:30pm, **Second Floor Conference Room** (due to work being done in the Council Chambers)

6. Adjourn

Mayor's Veterans Committee
Meeting Minutes, Monday, 24 June 2024

Biddeford, Maine

Committee Members

Roger Beaupre (Chair), Jen Fullmer, Eric Gates (Vice Chair), Jessica Johnson, Quang Minh Le, Ben Neveux, Frederick Oliver

Committee Attendees: Roger Beaupre, Jen Fullmer, Eric Gates

Local Veteran Org Attendees: Gene Foster (AMVETS, American Legion), Paul Therrien (Vietnam Veterans of America)

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Upcoming Events

Wall That Heals (17-21 July 2024):

- Graig Morin, President of Brown Dog Carriers & Logistics, dialed in via Zoom
 - He explained the history & logistics behind the Wall That Heals
 - He asked that we spread the word as they still need many volunteers

3. General Discussion

Local Veteran Group Coordination

- We would like different local veteran groups to attend our meetings to increase communication & collaboration
 - One example of miscommunication: wreath & flag laying at cemeteries
 - different orgs seem to have different number counts of vets at each location
- Recommend that we give a few minutes over the next couple of meeting to hearing from a rep from local veteran groups – to identify their top 3 goals & top 3 challenges
- Reps identified from AMVETS (Gene Foster), Vietnam Veterans of America (Paul Therrien), American Legion (Paul Therrien), VFW (Mike McInnis), and Volunteers of America (Brian Bouthot)

4. Committee Communication

Email - Personal vs. City of Biddeford

- Some committee members have not received CoB emails so at the next meeting we will discuss and recommend the most effective/efficient way to correspond with members

5. Meeting Schedule (4th Monday of every month at 4:30pm)

- Decided that meetings will reconvene after summer
- NEXT MEETING: Monday, 23 Sep 2024, 4:30pm, Council Chambers

6. Adjourn