



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Patriotic Committee

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TOWN CLERK

Members

Joe Boucher
Ted C. Graziani
Dennis Kayhart
Robert King
Cheryl Samborski
Christian Sauer
John Takach

Chairman

Bruce Warkentin.

Secretary

Rhonda Villanova

Student Representative

Steven Villanova

October 23, 2018

Meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m.

In attendance were: Bruce Warkentin, Joe Boucher, Rhonda Villanova and Christian Sauer; special guest: Joe Palombizio (Emergency Services and Ellington Veterans liaison)

We did not have a quorum to hold a regular meeting. The attendees discussed Joe's liaison work and the committee's plan moving forward.

Joe laid out his ideas for the near future, including a statue of a soldier to go with the memorial at the center of town and an area surrounding it with a brick base and a small path to the monument.

Joe B. mentioned the other existing monuments and their maintenance needs.

Joe P. stated the Fire Department wanted to do something for the Fire Department (small statue and/or plaque). He had called around for a bronze statue – he discussed various designs and found the bronze military statues are much more expensive than other designs. There may be a cheaper option, he's finding out more soon.

Bruce wants to clean up the Civil War monuments and stones.

Joe P. suggested trying to combine efforts with the Fire Department and have a fundraiser for Veteran Projects. He relayed that The Ivy also wants to have a fundraiser for Veteran Projects in town.

Joe P.'s liaison position helps him connect Veterans to state facilitators to take care of any issues. Jennie Gardner (?) handles claims at the Veteran Service Office.

Joe P. usually attends the Veteran Coffee House at the Hall Memorial Library (held the 3rd Thursday of most months). He said there were usually about a dozen attendees. The November Coffee House will have Chris Davis speaking with the Veterans. Then, in January, they will have someone attending that helps with Vets acclimating back into society. Joe is working to bring more people in to speak with the group, advocates at town and state level.

Joe P. spoke at last year's EHS Veteran's Day program. He is inviting any Veterans he knows to attend. The program will be held at EHS on Monday, November 12th (this is a change from November 9th). There is a brunch at 7:30 a.m. and the program with the student body starts around 8:20 a.m. The program is run by the Student Council and staff (Mr. Helmin and Ms. Ouellet). Joe spoke with Mr.

Guidry (new Principal at EHS) to make the program more interactive due to his observation at past programs that the students lose interest after about 10 minutes. He recommended adding (5) songs representing the (5) branches of the military, in addition to asking the Veterans in attendance and the students who have a family member in each branch to stand as the song is played and the branch flag is recognized. He wanted to recognize the sacrifice the families make as well as the Veterans themselves.

There was a short discussion regarding the difference between the Memorial Day ceremonies and the Veteran's Day ceremonies. The Memorial Day program honoring those who passed and Veteran's Day honoring those who are still with us, dictates that the former be a more somber event and the latter more celebratory.

The Ellington Middle School Veteran's Day program is on November 8th at approximately 7:30/8:00 a.m. as well.

Joe P. stated that the American legion /VFW numbers were going down; it's been an effort to sign up younger Veterans. Bruce said they are young people with young kids and it's hard for them to get away and the older Vets aren't able to do as much to bring them in. Rhonda suggested doing a potluck where the families could come, not just the Vet, and the preparation load would be shared by everyone involved, not just the older Vets who may have trouble getting around. The committee will continue to work on fundraising ideas.

Bruce mentioned the VFW programs at EMS (Patriot's Pen) and EHS (Voice of Democracy) – essays written by students based on a designated theme. Two of the EMS students read their Patriot's Pen essays at this past year's Memorial Day ceremony.

Rhonda mentioned she spoke with Tressa Giordano at the Youth Services office regarding her group (Rise Above) that is planning some type of Veteran event or project. Rhonda invited her to tonight's meeting, but she was not able to make it. Tressa hopes to have a volunteer from the core group of interested students for the Veteran project specifically to become our 2nd student representative on the patriotic committee and to be a liaison for her group.

WAA:

Bruce stated that LouAnn has the WAA flyer, we should ask her to place it in the Veteran's page on the town website.

Bruce/Joe B. - need to find out if the WAA sign is available via PDF from WAA site to have it printed (via Sign Connection).

Joe B. mentioned the committee needs a Fire Department contact – Joe P. will see if someone wants to be liaison to the Ad Hoc Patriotic Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Next Meeting scheduled: November 23, 2018 - 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Submitted by:

Rhonda
Villanova

Digitally signed by Rhonda Villanova
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