

Stamford Patriotic and Special Events Commission

Minutes (DRAFT)

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM by Chairperson Xavier Shellman with all participants joining by Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/98066585413?pwd=S1ppUmc0cDYvY25QbzBsZGVucHNadz09>

Meeting ID: 980 6658 5413

Passcode: PSEC

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Attendees

P&SEC Members: Xavier Shellman, Joe Colavito, Dave Kaplan, Hubert Delany, Kate Cook – quorum present.

Guests: Matt Quiñones, Colleen Harkey, Pat Parry, Steve Fischer.

Agenda

- 1) Minutes from March 1, 2022 meeting:
 - a. Read and approved.
- 2) Update on new members
 - a. **COMPLETED ACTION:** Xavier Shellman to contact Matt on nomination status.
 - b. **COMPLETED ACTION:** Dave Kaplan to contact Bridget Fox, Chief of Staff, for her assistance in expediting nominations.
 - c. New members present at meeting: Hubert Delany, Army Veteran with background in Communications and Journalism and currently the State Representative for District 144, and Kate Cook, Events & Marketing Manager for Stamford Downtown, have been approved for membership by the Board of Representatives. Hubert and Kate were warmly welcomed and exchanged introductions with current members and guests.
- 3) Discussion of PSEC Budget
 - a. Xavier Shellman presented the approved SPEC budget for FY 2022/2023:

Fiscal Year 2022/2023 - Program Detail Report

3/9/2022 - 10:46:06 AM

Fund: 0001 General Fund
Office: 005 Government Services
Dept/Div: 0556 Commissions
Program: 5092 Patriotic & Special Events

Program Description:

This program funds expenses associated with patriotic events including parades and maintenance of graves.

Ref #	Account Title	FY 19/20 Actual	FY 20/21 Actual	Adopted Budget	FY 21/22		FY 22/23			
					Revised Budget	Projected Exp & Enc	Department Request	Mayor's Proposed	\$ Var Adopted	% Var Adopted
01450928811	Memorial Day	0	8,270	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000	0	0.0%
01450928812	Veteran's Day	11,197	1,521	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	0	0.0%
01450928813	Grave Registration Office	0	0	3,000	1,500	3,000	3,000	3,000	0	0.0%
01450928814	Care of Graves	0	3,600	4,000	5,500	4,000	4,000	4,000	0	0.0%
Community & Cultural		11,197	13,392	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	0	0.0%
Total Expenditures		11,197	13,392	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	33,000	0	0.0%

- b. Funding levels for this year’s Memorial Day and Veterans Day are same as last year. Memorial Day actuals for FY19/20 were \$0.00 since the event did not take place.
 - c. Care of Graves includes procurement of flags. Quantity ordered each year is approximately 6,000. Flags for Memorial Day have been ordered by Alan Gerard.
 - d. It is unclear what the Grave Registration Office budget line includes and why it is under PSEC’s purview. The Comptrollers’ Office could not provide more information. Dave Kaplan stated that certainly a justification and paper trail must exist for the budget line. Xavier Shellman has coordinated with the Town Clerk to determine if this budget line is related to the Town Clerk’s Veteran’s documentation and processing function. The Town Clerk does not know why this budget line is under our control, if it is in fact related to Veterans documentation and processing.
 - i. **ACTION:** Xavier Shellman to further investigate the purpose of the Graves Registration Budget line and whether it should be transferred to another Government office.
 - e. Pat Parry asked whether events beyond Memorial Day and Veterans Day are included within PSEC’s purview, and hence should be budgeted. Pat mentioned Flag Day and St Patrick’s Day as events PSEC had been involved with in the past. Discussion centered on the fact that the PSEC charter only calls out Memorial Day and Veterans Day by name but does not limit consideration of additional events. Dave Kaplan stated that while the PSEC’s focus for the FY21/22 budget is on these two events, we will certainly assess the viability of including other events going forward and invited recommendations.
 - i. **ACTION:** PSEC to evaluate whether additional events and funding requirements should be proposed for the FY22/23 budget.
- 4) Planning for Memorial Day activities
- a. Parade and Ceremony voted and approved for Sunday, May 29, 2022 at the February 1, 2022 meeting.
 - b. PSEC Permits for Parade and Ceremony

- i. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier Shellman to coordinate and track status.
 - 1. **ONGOING:** All required permits have been submitted and are being tracked.
- c. Parade
 - i. Route same as 2021 Veterans Day – Bedford Street from Hoyt to Veterans Park.
 - ii. Xavier Shellman reported at the February 1, 2022 meeting that the Stamford Schools marching bands were not be ready to participate in the Memorial Day Parade due to lack of training and practice because of Covid constrains on their music programs.
 - 1. **ACTION:** Xavier to determine if any of the schools are now ready to participate.
 - iii. Dave Kaplan presented a spreadsheet of potential participants, almost all of whom voiced their intent to join in the parade.
 - 1. **ONGOING ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Dave Kaplan to update the participant spreadsheet with recommended additions and update participant status at subsequent meetings.
 - a. Additions now include:
 - b. Fire Department Honor Guard, Police Department Honor Guard, and Pat Battinelli with Iwo Jima Replica, Superintendent of Schools and Cabinet, Knights of Columbus, and Hibernians will participate and are included on the spreadsheet as formal record.
 - c. Pending response from Stamford Schools Board of Education, EMT Honor Guard, Freemasons Union Lodge No. 5, SYHA Sharks, Stamford American Little League
 - d. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan to determine if a local Y Adventure Guides and Princesses organization exists and offer invitation to participate in the Parade.
 - iv. **ACTION:** All to notify Parade participants that the VFW trailer is available to those unable to walk the distance. Notify Alan Gerard of those individuals wanting a ride to ensure numbers are within capacity limits.
 - v. Kate Cook asked if the Parade is allowed to have paid sponsors.
 - 1. **ACTION:** Xavier to discuss with Board of Ethics for determination.
 - vi. Kate offered to take on responsibility to put together a list of Social Media and Community Calendars and implement a strategic plan to advertise the Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony. Emphasis is on no-cost advertising rather than paid advertising with low readership/return. Colleen Harkey suggested that the Army Quintet be featured in advertising, if they are participating, since that would be a great attraction.

1. **ACTION:** Kate to work with PSEC and Colleen Harkey and implement a Memorial Day advertising plan.
- vii. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier Shellman, Dave Kaplan and Joe Colavito to assess available Memorial Day funding before committing to participants that entail cost.
 1. **COMPLETED:** Approval agreed by all PSEC members to commit to Greenwich Pipe Band, Pyramid Shriners Legion of Honor and Pipes and Drums, Tristate Military Vehicles for jeep and HMMWV
- viii. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Group to provide input to Dave Kaplan for update of the 2021 Veterans Day Parade instruction packet and step-off map overview which will form the basis of the Memorial Day Parade document.
 1. **ONGOING:** Decision was made to maintain the same schedule: participants enter Staging Area on Bedford Street, 11:00 – 1130 AM, Parade Step, 12:00 PM down Bedford St, crossing Broad onto Atlantic St to Veterans Park. Ceremony at 1:00 PM.
- ix. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Need to select Grand Marshal. Stamford Veterans Council to review.
 1. **COMPLETED:** Steve Fisher announced that James Lyles has been nominated and approved by the Stamford Veterans Council.
- x. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** No master list of previous Grand Marshals exists. Potential sources of information: Town Clerk, Stamford Advocate, Previous PSEC Minutes (only recent minutes have been ported over to the new Stamford Government website).
 1. Collen Harkey requested and received clarification that the intent of this action item is that a master list needs to be formulated both for the record and so that previous Grand Marshals can be invited to the Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony.
 2. Colleen Harkey also suggested that purchase orders for sashes might be another source of information, but records have not been found to date.
 3. **ONGOING:**
 - a. Steve Fisher and Alan Gerard to investigate through Stamford Veterans Council and Veterans organizations and develop list.
 - b. Xavier Shellman and Dave Kaplan to further research through the purchase order process.
- xi. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Chris Munger to assess CERT capability for additional support personnel compared to the 2021 Veterans Day parade.
 1. During the Veterans Day Parade, CERT had to step in for a shorthanded Police presence rather than support the Parade setup in sufficient numbers.
 2. **ONGOING:** Dave Kaplan to contact Chris Munger to determine CERT availability and numbers.

- xii. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Consider open invitation to all Veterans, whether affiliated with a Veterans Group or not to participate in the parade.
 - 1. **ONGOING:** Kate Cook to incorporate invitation into the event media publicity/advertising plan. Veterans Groups publicize through their membership who might know unaffiliated Veterans.
 - xiii. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan to contact USMA, West Point to determine if Cadets are available to participate.
 - xiv. **ACTION:** Xavier to coordinate with Chief of Police to ensure Bedford and Atlantic Streets are closed to thru traffic by 11:30 AM. At the 2021 Veterans Day Parade, the streets were not closed soon enough, and Parade vehicles were forming as traffic continued to flow. Also determine if Police will have sufficient staffing.
- d. Ceremony
- i. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Joe Colavito to invite 102D Army Band to participate in Parade and Ceremony and singer for the National Anthem.
 - a. **ONGOING:** Army Band is not able to participate. Joe Colavito is coordinating with the Army Quintet for their participation in the Parade and Ceremony and singer for the National Anthem.
 - ii. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting** Xavier Shellman to check that Parade and Ceremony are listed on Mayor's calendar.
 - 1. **COMPLETED:**
 - iii. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier Shellman to coordinate availability of the Showmobile with the Director of Operations
 - 1. **COMPLETED:**
 - iv. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Coordinate better placement of bunting with Kevin Murray, Parks and Recreation (second floor rather than first floor and anchor to prevent flipping backwards). Kevin has agreed to install bunting one month prior to the event.
 - 1. **COMPLETED:**
 - v. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Need to identify Keynote Speaker.
 - 1. **ONGOING:** Pat Parry to ask Jimmy Farrell, Vietnam Veteran, to be the Keynote Speaker. Other option is to invite MG Tom Bouchard.
 - vi. **ACTION:** Steve Fisher to confirm live streaming coverage. Particularly important is access for Veterans at Nursing Homes and Senior Centers.
 - vii. **ACTION:** Collen Harkey to reach out to Bernie Weiss to photograph the event.
 - 1. **COMPLETED:** Confirmed that Bernie will photograph, pro-bono.
 - viii. **ACTION:** Collen Harkey to coordinate parking availability at Stamford Town Mall and Trolley for transport from parking to Staging Area. Based

- on experience, location of Trolley needs to be clearly advertised and marked.
- ix. **ACTION:** Hubert Delany to invite elected officials, including Stamford Delegation, Senators, Congressman, Governor, and Commissioner of Veterans Affairs as soon as possible.
 - x. **ACTION:** Hubert Delany to request Governor and Legislative Citations.
 - xi. **ACTION:** PSEC to schedule a rehearsal/dry run one week prior to the event. Setup for ceremony should include 2 additional speakers on stands (in addition to the two ground level speakers used in previous events) to ensure intelligibility in noisy conditions. Coordinate with Kate Cook and Hubert Delany to develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
- e. Possible 5k
- i. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Consider as an addition to the parade and ceremony. Evaluate potential for Saturday, May 28th at Cummings Beach, as in 2019.
 - 1. **COMPLETED:** Not feasible this year given added complexity of two discrete locations on separate days and not sufficient time to coordinate and control.

The meeting officially ended at 9:02 PM.

Next meeting is scheduled for May 3, 2022, at 7:00 PM.