

Stamford Patriotic and Special Events Commission

Minutes (DRAFT)

Tuesday, May 3, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 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, Dave Kaplan, Hubert Delany, Kate Cook – quorum present.

Special Guest: Mayor Caroline Simmons

Guests: Archie Elam, Pat Parry, Steve Fischer, Chris Munger.

Agenda

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Swearing in of new members by Mayor Simmons
 - a. Kate Cook
 - b. Hubert Delany
 - c. Mayor Simmons administered the oath of office to Kate Cook and Hubert Delaney, officially welcomed and thanked them for their service. All present voiced their congratulations.
- 3) Approval of minutes from April 5, 2022 meeting:
 - a. Read and approved unanimously.
- 4) Planning for Memorial Day Activities
 - a. Graves Registration Budget Line.
 - i. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier Shellman to further investigate the purpose of the Graves Registration Budget line and whether it should be transferred to another Government office.
 1. **COMPLETED:** Xavier reminded the Commission that per prior coordination, this budget line is not related to the Town Clerk's Veteran's documentation and processing function which is funded by a separate budget line. The Commission therefore agreed to

retain the Graves Registration budget line, since it can be effectively and appropriately used to cover the cost of the flags which are planted at cemetery gravesites for Memorial Day and Veteran's Day.

- b. Sponsorship of additional events
 - i. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** PSEC to evaluate whether additional events and funding requirements should be proposed for the FY22/23 budget.
 - 1. **ONGOING:** FY 22/23 budget is complete and therefore events cannot be planned for this time period. The action will be placed on hold and revisited for the following budget cycle.
- c. Parade.
 - i. PSEC Permits for Parade and Ceremony
 - 1. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier Shellman to coordinate and track status.
 - a. **ONGOING:** All required permits have been submitted and are being tracked. Xavier reported that Captain Barcello is aware of required street closures and parking meters to be bagged.
 - ii. Traffic Advisory Committee Review, April 27th
 - 1. David Kaplan reported that the Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC), approved our Memorial Day Parade plans as depicted in the draft Parade Information Packet (route, timeframe, staging), but pointed out that the outdoor parking lot near Bell Street is no longer available for participants' trailer parking due to construction. David stated that the parking lot would be removed from the diagram to be included in the final Parade Information Packet. Although not a formal action, Dave stated that an updated packet would be shared with TAC when available.
 - 2. TAC agreed that the upper portion of Bedford Street closure should begin at 11:30 AM to avoid traffic in the staging area as marchers and vehicles line up, as occurred at the 2021 Veterans Day Parade.
 - 3. TAC also agreed that Police availability to staff all street closure points is critical to avoid the situation at the 2021 Veterans Day parade where CERT personnel were diverted from staging area support to fill in for traffic control.
 - iii. Planning meeting with all Memorial Day event coordinators
 - 1. Xavier proposed scheduling a meeting the week of May 16th with all relevant departments and organizations, including Police, Traffic Control, Operations, and CERT.
 - a. **ACTION:** Xavier Shellman to coordinate a planning meeting with Captain Barcello. Planning meeting should include, among other factors, final Parade Information Packet, police availability for traffic control, road closure

- timing, required CERT personnel numbers, how streets will be blocked off, security measures, trash containers.
- b. **ACTION:** David Kaplan and Xavier Shellman to draft an updated Parade Information Packet NLT May 17th.
- iv. School participation in Memorial Day Parade.
 1. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier to determine if any of the schools are now ready to participate.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Xavier reported that Westhill HS and Stamford HS marching bands will participate.
 - v. 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. Confirmed additions now include: Fire Department Honor Guard, Police Department Honor Guard, and Pat Battinelli with Iwo Jima Replica, Superintendent of Schools and Cabinet, Knights of Columbus & Columbiettes, Hibernians, Toys for Tots, Strawberry Hill School, Freemasons Union Lodge No. 5 and No 14, all of whom will participate and are included on the spreadsheet as formal record.
 - b. Pending response from Stamford Schools Board of Education, Chief Shaw on Police retirees, EMT Honor Guard, Julia A. Stark Elementary School, SYHA Sharks, USMA MP Marching Unit
 - c. Not available: Stamford National American Little League, USMA Cadets
 - d. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan to determine if a local Y Adventure Guides and Princesses organization exists and offer invitation to participate in the Parade.
 - i. **ONGOING:** New Canaan and Darien YMCAs have Adventure Guide Programs and have been invited, pending response.
 - e. **ACTION:** Xavier to check with Joan Tongas on Board of Education status.
 - f. **ACTION:** Pat Parry to confirm that Police Honor Guard will have a firing squad for ceremonial volley.
 - g. **ACTION:** Pat Parry to invite Leslie Manselle to participate as soloist.
 - h. **ACTION:** Steve Fischer to submit proof of insurance for JWV privately owned vehicle that will be in parade.
 - i. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan coordinate with Alan Gerard for Groton participation.
 - j. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan to coordinate submission of Historic Military Vehicles proof of insurance.

- k. **ACTION** Chris Munger to determine availability of an antique vehicle to accompany Toys for Tots, and if so, submit proof of insurance. Also affix magnetic sign for Tots sign on vehicle.
- vi. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** 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.
- vii. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier to discuss with Board of Ethics for determination.
 - 1. **COMPLETED:** Paid sponsors are not permitted.
- viii. Dave Kaplan raised the question of donated snacks or water. The idea of snacks was not supported, but bottled water for participants can be considered if a third party, not-for-profit would act as the intermediary.
 - 1. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan discuss the option with Colleen Harkey, SVPP and coordinate with Board of Ethics.
- ix. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Kate to work with PSEC and Colleen Harkey and implement a Memorial Day advertising plan.
 - 1. 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.
 - 2. **ONGOING:** Kate to provide update at next meeting.
- x. **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. Need to complete NLT May 17th.
- xi. **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. Pat Parry suggested that purchase orders for sashes might be another source of information, but records have not been found to date.
 - 2. **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
 - i. **COMPLETED:** No by-name records available.
 - xii. CERT Personnel Support Requirements
 - 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. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Chris Munger to assess CERT capability for additional support personnel compared to the 2021 Veterans Day parade.
 - a. Chris stated that twelve personnel as a minimum, possibly fifteen, would be required. He reemphasized the need to determine if the Police will require traffic control assistance.
 - b. Xavier emphasized that both Police and CERT should designate names and roles so there is no confusion as to everyone's responsibility.
 - i. **ONGOING:** Chris Munger to attend meeting with PSEC, TAC, Police, and Operations (referenced in paragraph C/ii/a.), to definitize requirements.
 - xiii. **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.
 - xiv. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan to contact USMA, West Point to determine if Cadets are available to participate.
 - 1. **ONGOING:** Cadets not available since graduation and end of academic year is week before parade. USMA Police marching unit invited, status TBD.
 - xv. **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.
 - 1. **COMPLETED:** Xavier spoke with Captain Barcello. Details to be discussed at the follow-on planning meeting discussed in paragraph C/ii/a.
- 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 has confirmed that the Army Quintet will participate in the Parade and Ceremony. A singer for the National Anthem is available as a backup, but coordination is pending availability of Gold Star mother, Leslie Manselle.
 - 2. Hubert Delaney reported on status of request for other military troop support, including flyover, band, and any other available services.
 - a. **ACTION:** Hubert to update status of request for support at next meeting. Also distribute copies of forms and cover letter for PSEC record and use for future requests.
- 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:** Xavier check with Kevin Murray that all flags are in place along streets.
- vi. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Need to identify Keynote Speaker.
 - 1. Pat Parry to ask Jimmy Sparrow, Vietnam Veteran, to be the Keynote Speaker. (Correction to previous minutes: "Jimmy Farrell" should read "Jimmy Sparrow.") Other option is to invite MG Tom Bouchard.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** MG Bouchard has agreed to be the Keynote Speaker.
- vii. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Steve Fischer to confirm live streaming coverage with Local Live. Particularly important is access for Veterans at Nursing Homes and Senior Centers.
 - 1. **COMPLETED:** In addition, Steve offered to reconfirm.
- viii. **ACTION:** Collen Harkey to reach out to Bernie Weiss to photograph the event.
 - 1. **COMPLETED:** Confirmed that Bernie will photograph, pro-bono.
- ix. **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.

1. **ONGOING:** Kate, Colleen, Steve - Parking has been coordinated, but needs to be clearly advertised and marked.
- x. **ACTION:** Hubert Delany to invite elected officials, including Stamford Delegation, Senators, Congressman, Governor, and Commissioner of Veterans Affairs as soon as possible.
 1. **ONGOING:** So far, only the Governor has responded positively (on his calendar). Hubert to follow up with email and flyer once it is completed.
 2. Hubert presented a draft event flyer. The group liked the format and offered updates and changes, such as to include Ceremony information in addition to Parade.
 - a. **ACTION:** Hubert to update and distribute a copy to PSEC members when available.
 3. **ACTION:** Hubert Delaney in conjunction with Kate Cook to coordinate with Office of Economic Development to ensure the broader Stamford business community is aware of and invited to participate either as a business leader (VIP status) or parade group member (determination to be made depending on the corporate title/role of who responds). Steve Cohen, mentioned by name to invite, based on his role in the community. POC at Office of Economic Development is John Varamo, (203) 977-4693.
 4. **ACTION:** Hubert lead with PSEC input to determine value of a personal invitation/RSVP from the Mayor's office to the elected officials and follow up as appropriate.
- xi. Grand Marshal: James Lyles has been nominated and approved by the Stamford Veterans Council.
 1. **ACTION:** Hubert Delany to request Governor and Legislative Citations
 - a. **ONGOING:** Hubert presented a draft which was approved for final submission.
- xii. **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).
 1. **ONGOING**
- 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.

f. Next Meeting.

- i. PSEC agreed to change meeting time to 2:00 PM going forward.
- ii. Meetings will be scheduled for May 10th, 17th, 19th, 24th, and, if necessary 26th to accomplish event planning and preparation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM.