

Stamford Patriotic and Special Events Commission

Minutes (Draft)

Thursday, May 26, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 2:08 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.
Guests: Archie Elam, Pat Parry, Chris Munger, Steve Fisher, Kevin Murray, Kieran Edmondson, Fire Chief Trevor Roach, Matt Quiñones

Agenda

- 1) Read minutes from May 24, 2022 meeting
 - a. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.
- 2) Planning for Memorial Day Activities
 - a. Parade
 - i. Items to confirm/reconfirm
 1. Portajohns to be located at Staging area and Veterans Park
 - a. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier and Dave reconfirm at May 19th meeting with City officials.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Kevin Murray, Parks and Services was confirm that one PortaJohn will be located in the staging area and two at Veterans Park.
 2. Sash
 - a. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier to look in storage for available sash, if not coordinate with Operations to order a new one.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Xavier located a sash and it is available.
 3. Plaque

- a. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier coordinate with Operations for available blank plaque; if none, coordinate order new one from Clark's and have engraved.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Xavier confirmed Clark's will have a blank engraved by Friday, May 27th.
 - 4. Jim Lyles bio for program and citation
 - a. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Alan Gerard to complete and forward
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Distributed for inclusion in final program and citation.
- ii. Participants
 - 1. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Dave Kaplan and Xavier Shellman to arrange the list in step-off order for inclusion in the final information packet NLT May 13th.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Final sort completed and agreed by all present, pending any additional participants before COB Monday, May 22nd deadline.
 - b. **ACTION:** Hubert to provide update on Dignitaries when additional confirmations are received.
 - i. **ONGOING:** Will remain open through staging on May 29th.
 - c. **ACTION:** Pat Parry to notify Leslie Manselle that she is welcome to march with Dignitaries if she is able.
 - i.
 - ii. **COMPLETED:** Leslie will not march, but will go directly to Veterans Park.
 - d. **ACTION:** Hubert to provide update on 102nd Inf. Bn, CT NG Troop, whether they will also provide a HMMWV for inclusion in the lineup and if troop are driving up (mall parking) or troop carrier (designated parking – Main St). POC is SFC Paoli, 203-444-5098 (mobile).
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Will not bring a HMMWV.
 - 2. The group reviewed the route map in the draft information packet and agreed the start point was accurately displayed.
- iii. Meeting with City officials on May 19th
 - 1. Topics to be discussed: In addition to the contents of the information packet – police and CERT requirements, need to assign specific roles and functions per individual, Bedford/Atlantic road closure times, method of closing intersections (cones, vehicles, police presence), contingency plans for dealing with inoperative vehicles, trash disposal, EMT. Need to stress that Trolley will be driving up Atlantic/Bedford with participants, potentially as streets are closed to the public., setup of four speakers at ceremony and speaker at Showmobile.

- a. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Dave complete the information packet for presentation at the May 19th meeting.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Packet was completed and discussed at the meeting. Additional changes to be made, based on the meeting:
 - 1. In staging area, move vehicles from east side of Bedford to west side and do not block Police Station driveway; move marchers from North St east of Bedford onto east side of Bedford parallel to vehicles, south of Hoyt and north of North St; move marchers on North St east of Bedford to sidewalk away from Police St (south side of street) and do not block Police driveway.
 - 2. Bus staging pickup point after parade, move from corner of Tresser and Atlantic to Edith Sherman Drive.
- 2. CERT participation
 - a. 17 personnel currently confirmed.
 - b. **ACTION:** Allocate according to roles and responsibilities at the meeting.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** 6 CERT personnel to support staging and ceremony, 11 to support Police.
- 3. Transportation for students
 - a. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Dave to determine student count per school to update Pat Williams at the May 19th meeting.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** 7 busses required and coordinated with Pat Williams, Transportation at the meeting. Could be more required if student count increases.
- 4. Street Closure
 - a. Police and Traffic Control agreed to 11:30 AM Street Closure
 - b. If Trolley from Veterans Park to Staging Area departs after 11:30, it will have to loop around and avoid Bedford enroute to Hoyt.
 - i. **ACTION:** David to notify Kurt Kuehner and also confirm pickup time and location
 - 1. **COMPLETED:** POC is Zita Skilling (917) 602-0147. Trolley driver is Nora (203) 940-6661. Trolley will arrive at Veterans Park bus stop at 10:50 and prepared to depart at intervals between 11:00 and 11:30AM as needed.

Probably depart at 11:10, 11:20, and 11:30
(10 minutes to loop back to start point).

- c. At Parade end, will need a combined effort by CERT and Police to keep foot traffic moving and avoid bottleneck at park entrance.
 - i. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** CERT to help enforce
 1. COMPLETED: CERT assignments made.
- iv. Advertising
 1. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Hubert to provide graphic to Kate.
 - a. COMPLETED
 2. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Kate to send event writeup and graphic to lists of local event calendars and Social Media blogs (spreadsheet of 30+ sites/organizations).
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Kate has sent the package to local influencers and bloggers and is following up to check status of publication. Also include Livestream information. Provide information to Colleen (**and Steve**) to send it out as appropriate.
 3. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Hubert to check back with Lauren Meyers if VIPs have been contacted. They were not when Hubert spoke day on May 16th.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Pending responses
 4. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier to submit writeup and graphic for posting on the City website, both an initial “save the date”, followed by more detailed information when available (Residents as well as Boards and Commissions website).
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Notices are posted.
 - b. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** There is no “headline” or “banner” on the Homepage to alert viewers that there is a posting on subpages about Memorial Day. Xavier to investigate.
 5. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier to investigate process for sending a City email blast for “save the date” and then detailed information to designated press lists. Kate currently receives email blasts from Lauren Meyer. Hubert is working with her regarding the graphic and Lauren is most likely the POC for email blasts: lmeyer@stamfordct.gov, 203.977.5115.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Xavier contacted Lauren Meyer who is the correct POC and email blasts will be sent out. Hubert confirmed that Lauren has the graphic.
 - b. Xavier also sent Kate a copy of the press release that went out last year (provided by Alan) that can be used as a template.

- i. **ACTION:** Kate to evaluate and use, if sufficient time.
 - 1. **COMPLETED.**
- 6. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier to investigate if City is registered with an account on any of the calendars since some event calendars require an account to post. If not, Kate can create an account as needed.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Posting done to degree possible.
- 7. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Contact Board of Education PAO who may be willing to send out press releases to the schools and families and should be contacted.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Xavier spoke with PAO and press release will go out shortly. However, we have not seen it.
 - i. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Xavier to double check.
- 8. At the last meeting, discussion on paid advertising concluded that it did not work out for Veterans Day and all agreed not to pursue it for Memorial Day. The decision was reconfirmed at today's meeting.
- 9. Hubert raised the possibility of an overhead banner along route on Bedford St. All agreed this was a good idea, but there wasn't sufficient time to get authorizations, design and print it for Memorial Day. The possibility should be addressed for Veterans Day.
 - a. **ACTION deferred until Veterans Day:** Evaluate possibility of an overhead banner along route on Bedford St.
- 10. Flags along Bedford and Atlantic.
 - a. Pat raised the question when flags would be put up.
 - i. **ACTION:** Xavier to reach out to Kevin Murray for status
 - 1. **COMPLETED:** This year flags are not going up until a week prior, but Kevin understands that going forward flags should go up a month before.
- v. Liability insurance for vehicles
 - 1. Risk Manager has determined that he does not need a certificate of insurance for non-government vehicles since the Stamford umbrella policy provides sufficient liability coverage. We have informed him that we are obtaining certificates anyway as further risk mitigation.
 - a. **ACTION:** Chris Munger to provide certificate for vehicle being used with Toys for Tots.
 - i. **COMPLETED.**
- vi. Participant Package

1. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Dave & Xavier to arrange the participant list in step-off order and Dave to complete the package per above action items.
 - i. **COMPLETED as of May 17th:** Edits agreed at last meeting have been made: changed the deadline for participant registration to Monday, May 23rd and designated the Trolley pick up point as the Bus Stop at Veterans Park. Added diagram drop off point for students arriving by private vehicle in Staging Area.
 - ii. **COMPLETED:** See para 2/a/ii/1 above for current status. Last minute changes will be made in staging area.

- vii. Staging Area Setup
 1. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Dave to determine numbers of participants in each unit so that proper space is allocated.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Last minute changes to be made in staging area.
 2. All agreed that most efficient setup plan is to determine space requirements per unit, assign a sequence number which is marked as the unit location with chalk or street paint. This approach requires the fewest CERT personnel.
 - a. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Dave and Xavier to coordinate with CERT once units and participants are finalized.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Final setup will be done on arrival at staging area on May 29th and meeting has been arranged with police for 10:00 AM.

- viii. Announcer at Showmobile as units pass in review.
 - a. Dave pointed out that Joe Colavito served as announcer at last year's Memorial Day Parade. This function had not been included in previous parades and was well received.
 - b. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Dave to ask Archie Elam if he would be willing to serve in this capacity.
 - i. **COMPLETED: Archie will take on announcer role.**
 - c. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Dave to work with Archie in developing a script. Dave will send out emails to all participants requesting appropriate wording (unit designation, led by, couple of sentences about the unit).
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Dave and Archie will continue to update until showtime.
 - d. **ACTION:** Dave to check with Archie if he wants a "spotter" to track units as they approach

- a. At the last meeting, Alan offered the Sea Cadets to help in this or any other aspect of the ceremony where needed. Alan's offer remains if a need arises.
 - b. Goal to get younger people involved. Example for future consideration: youth demonstration of how to fold the flag and why.
- iv. Ceremony Walk thru
 - 1. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Pat to determine when Police are holding their practice so we can be there to coordinate our walk thru.
 - a. **COMPLETED.** Our walk thru scheduled for May 23rd, 6:00 PM.
 - 2. **ACTION carried forward from the last meeting:** Dave and Hubert to attend May 23rd walk thru. Inform Alan Gerard of time and date, if he is interested in attending.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** All agreed on setup and sequence of events.
 - 3. **ACTION:** David to distribute graphic depicting layout for the ceremony, including Police, Quintet, 102ND Inf BN, Wreath, Taps, podium, seating by category, water, and PortaJohns.
 - a. **COMPLETD.**
- v. Park Setup
 - 1. **ACTION:** Xavier to invite Kevin Murray, Parks and Rec to next meeting, Tuesday, May 24th to discuss setup, including number of chairs for dignitaries (City & Elected Officials, Chaplains, Grand Marshal) and audience; podium location' sound system-4 speakers; bottled water, etc.
 - a. **COMPLETED.** Will provide total of 250 chairs, 4 speakers, 2 PortaJohns at rear of Park. Specific layout of all items shown on graphic in para iv. Above.
 - 2. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** CERT act as "usher" to direct audience to designated seating. Consider reserved seating for Veterans and those with mobility issues. Monitor capacity and add extra seating as required.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Chris Munger voiced concern that total CERT personnel may be reduced from the 17 previously stated. Even, if so, **plan is to have several of the CERT members move from staging area to the park once the lineup is set in place. In addition, Police will have an officer at the park entrance who is expert at directing and controlling access.**
- vi. Veterans' participation in the ceremony
 - 1. Consider asking Veterans to participate in various ways, such as relay in laying of the wreath.
 - a. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Chris Munger to ask Bill McGirr for names of suggested participants, including **Sergeant Wilma Deicas, Marine Corps League.**
 - i. **CONFIRMED:** Wilma Deicas will participate.

- c. **ACTION:** Provide print-ready brochure NLT Friday, May 27th.
 - i. **COMPLETED.**
 - d. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Make digital copy of program available for review by spectators possibly before or after ceremony.
 - i. **COMPLETED.**
- ix. National Anthem.
 - 1. Pat stated for the record that Leslie Manselle has agreed to sing the National Anthem, as had been reported in Pat's absence at the last meeting.
- x. Run of Show/Script
 - 1. Hubert screen shared his 2021 Veterans Day Run of Show/Script as the basis for the Memorial Day ceremony. The group reviewed the script, and all agreed on changes and revisions for Memorial Day.
 - 2. Primary revisions:
 - a. Eliminate Purple City reference,
 - b. Separate entries for National Anthem, sub-entry sung by Leslie Manselle
 - c. Separate bold entry for Raising of the Flag, sub entries Police Honor Guard and Rifle volley
 - d. Update Opening and Closing Prayer section
 - e. Grand Marshal Section - **introduction and remarks from Mayor Simmons, then Mayor to hand proclamation, plaque, and citation to James Lyles. Mayor's preference whether she reads/says for each, but most probably will be Hubert.**
 - f. Speakers section – replace last year's speakers with MG Bouchard.
 - g. Closing Section order
 - i. Closing Prayer
 - ii. Laying of the Wreath/ concurrent with Amazing Grace
 - iii. **3 Volley** Gun salute
 - 1. **Stamford and Norwalk Police Department Honor Guards**
 - iv. Taps
 - 1. **Identify Sea Cadet**
 - v. Thank everyone for coming, drive safe
 - 3. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Hubert to update the script and share with the group for discussion at the next meeting
 - a. **ONGOING.** Script updated with the above and pending list of dignitaries. Incorporated more updates, identifying service branch in titles, etc. in real time during meeting. Timing needs to be refined for each part. Carefully

consider opening quote to ensure it is appropriate to Memorial Day.

4. **ACTION carried forward from last meeting:** Hubert to coordinate with Kate and submit final version by Tuesday, May 24th.
 - a. **ONGOING:** Kate to do final proofing, grammar check, and formatting for publication. Needs final ASAP.
 5. **ACTION:** Pat to coordinate with Ryan McAllister for Amazing Grace (bagpipes).
 - a. **COMPLETED.** Ryan will be accompanied by the Pipes and Drums.
- c. Rain Date
- i. **ACTION:** Determine plan
 1. **COMPLETED:** No rain date planned, Weather forecast is good.
- d. Running Reminder Checklist
- a. When it's time for the Honor Guard to raise flag and stand at attention, ensure no one is standing near the Lincoln or in front of US Flag, and during rifle volley.
 - b. Position wreath far away from the Dough Boy and walk the wreath slowly to allow time for a complete stanza of Amazing Grace.
 - c. Create an SOP covering all actions needed to plan a parade with calendar lead times for each. Consider a standard form that participants would fill out at the time they agree to participate to provide all necessary information, including estimated numbers, vehicle proof of insurance, short narrative description for Showmobile announcer, etc.
 - d. Future Consideration: Archie Elam suggested we solicit the broader Stamford youth community for future events (e.g., bugle player for Assembly and Taps) to increase awareness and participation.
 - e. Future Consideration: Pat has also asked Sandy Errico, Stamford Schools Performing Arts, if any students who play the trumpet would be available and capable of playing Taps.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:54 PM.