

Stamford Patriotic and Special Events Commission

Minutes (Approved)

Wednesday, August 3, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 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 – quorum present.

Guests: Colleen Harkey, Archie Elam.

Agenda

- 1) Read minutes from June 8, 2022 meeting
 - a. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.
- 2) Review any outstanding bills from Memorial Day events
 - a. There are no outstanding bills per se. However, two open items were addressed:
 - i. The Fairfield County Police Pipes and Drums. FCPP&D had not submitted an invoice for their participation in the Memorial Day Parade and no payment had been made. In discussions after the Memorial Day events between Dave Kaplan and Chris DiCarlo, FCPP&D, Chris said that they had failed to discuss costs or submit paperwork. He said they would appreciate any consideration that could be given but did not specify an amount. In fact, for the 2001 Memorial Day Parade, the FCPP&D did not submit an invoice, but payment was made in the form of an honorarium for \$800 for their pro-bono participation. Taken to a vote, it was agreed unanimously that payment should be made for \$900 for 2022, to be consistent with the amount charged by the Greenwich Pipes and Drums for their similar role. Due to personnel changes in Operations, payment date will be contingent on new assignments in Operations for financial transactions.
 1. **ACTION:** Xavier Shellman to determine who is the new Operations point of contact for finances and to coordinate payment.

- ii. Wreath provided by Springdale Florist
 1. Dave Kaplan spoke with Mickey Doyle, Springdale Florist regarding payment for the wreath per PSEC discussions at previous meetings. Mickey said that he donates the wreath each year as his way of giving back to the community and particularly to honor Veterans and those who have sacrificed their lives in defense of the country. He also said this is his way of thanking Stamford for the many years of support that Springdale Florist has received. For all these reasons, Mickey does not want to be reimbursed for the wreath.
 2. Following discussion regarding the best way to thank Mickey for his support, a motion was made and approved to make a \$500 donation in his name each year to a Stamford Veterans Organization on a rotating basis, starting with the Veterans of Foreign Wars this year.
 - a. **ACTION:** Xavier to submit paperwork for a \$500 donation to the Springdale Post No. 9617, VFW in honor of Mickey Doyle, Springdale Florist.
- 3) Review new PSEC event registration form
- a. Dave Kaplan presented his initial draft of a standardized registration form. The intent is that the form would be required for submission by all prospective event participants, starting with the November 6th Veterans Day Parade. Ideally, the form would be accessible on line through the Stamford Government Center website.
 - b. The form was approved as a working draft with the following suggestions:
 - i. Add a drop-down selection box or checklist for vehicle type instead of the current free text field to standardize and help organize choices. Add “float” as a choice. Include a quantity drop down box.
 - ii. Colleen Harkey offered to review the form relative to forms she has used and provide suggestions, if any.
 - c. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan include suggested additions as appropriate to the form and coordinate additional input with Colleen Harkey.
 - d. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan coordinate hosting of the registration form on the Government Center website.
- 4) Review new PSEC event SOP
- a. Dave Kaplan presented his draft Standard Operating Procedure document for event planning.
 - i. The document was approved unanimously as a working draft with updates to be made as appropriate going forward.
 1. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan, spell out all acronyms.
 2. **ACTION:** Hubert Delany, per offer, forward example SOP formats for consideration.
 - ii. Discussion led to the following understanding:

1. The SOP is by intent a set of benchmarks and planning considerations and not a day-to-day, detailed task/work-flow guide.
2. As a compliment or annex to the SOP, need a sequential task timeline, structured week by week, perhaps a Gantt chart.
 - a. **ACTION:** Archie Elam to provide a relevant example Gantt chart.
 - b. **ACTION:** David and Xavier develop an initial draft sequential task timeline.
3. Due to its complex nature and organization-specific requirements, need a Communications (marketing) timeline (annex).
 - a. **ACTION:** Kate Cook develop an initial Communications sequential timeline.

5) Planning for Veterans Day activities

- a. Parade and ceremony will be held November 6, 2022 as agreed at the June 8rd meeting.
- b. All reconfirmed, per the June 8th meeting, that we should plan for the same route (Bedford ST/Atlantic ST), assembly point (in front of Police Headquarters), and times – Assembly (11:00 -11:30AM), parade step-off (12:00 Noon) and Ceremony (1:00 PM) – as for the 2022 Memorial Day events .
- c. A rain date of November 13th was unanimously agreed – same route, timeline, and location.
- d. **ACTION:** Xavier to reach out to the Stamford Government Webmaster to upload a placeholder (save the date) for the Veterans Day events pending development of a graphic-designed flyer.
- e. **ACTION:** Kate Cook begin advertising ASAP. Provide an update on availability of a graphic designer and determine earliest start for design and completion of the graphic.
- f. **ACTION:** Xavier to submit packet for required permits.

6) Action items carried forward from previous meeting:

- i. Develop SOP including timeline of all actions to be accomplished.
 - a. **ACTION:** PSEC members to work off-line on draft SOP previously emailed by Dave Kaplan.
 - i. **COMPLETED.** See (Para 4) above for status and follow-on actions.
- ii. Early advertisement
 1. **ACTION:** PSEC develop advertising timelines and procedures for implementation (and incorporation into the SOP).
 - a. **ONGOING.** (See Para 4) above. Kate Cook to update at next meeting.
- iii. Contacting participants
 1. **DECISION:** PSEC agreed unanimously to hold the Veterans Day Parade and Ceremony on November 6, 2022. Parade at 12:00 PM and Ceremony at 1:00 AM.

2. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan to begin contacting units for participation in the 2022 Veterans Day Parade.
 - a. **ONGOING:** Most units have been contacted with a “save the date” pending completion and posting of registration form.
 3. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan to draft an on-line registration form for units to provide required information (official name of unit, parade leader and POC, number of marchers and/or riding in vehicle, description to be announced during pass in review, vehicles and proof of insurance, cost, etc.).
 - a. **DRAFT COMPLETED:** See Para 3) above for status and follow-on actions.
 4. **ACTION:** Kate Cook to provide Dave with the form she uses for Stamford-Downtown application/registration.
 - a. **COMPLETED.**
 5. **ACTION:** Hubert Delany coordinate with Joe Colavito to determine who should contact the 102nd Infantry Bn Band/Quintet to lock in availability. Should lock in as soon as possible.
- iv. Political Candidates and Campaigning
1. **DECISION:** PSEC agreed unanimously to maintain a “no campaigning” policy for Veterans Day.
 2. **ACTION (new):** Dave Kaplan to include a “no campaigning” statement in the registration form.
 3. **ACTION (new):** Xavier and Kate investigate possibility of a press release of the “no campaigning” policy (increased importance to implement the policy given upcoming elections).
- v. Mayor’s Proclamation, Plaque, and Citation
1. **ACTION:** Going forward, PSEC coordinate with Mayor’s office to ensure that any proclamation is being prepared, with offer of assistance (e.g., provide bio), but not in lieu of the staff’s role.
 - a. **ONGOING:** Xavier to coordinate with Bridget Fox, as Chief of Staff, to determine who we should work within formal protocol going forward ... Lauren Meyer?
 2. **ACTION:** PSEC clarify, going forward, roles and responsibilities for Plaque (Mayor’s Office?) and Citation (Hartford).
 - a. **ONGOING.**
 3. **ACTION (new):** Archie coordinate with Steve Fisher, Stamford Veterans Council to identify nominee for Grand Marshal. Request name by September 21st, but no later than October 4th.
- vi. Seating
1. Of the 250 chairs in the park, 50 were unoccupied. However, spectators sitting on the second-tier wall were obstructing the view from the officials and guests seated in front.
 2. **ACTION:** Limit seating to bottom wall and grass area immediately above. Account for the approximately 25 spectators who would have required additional chairs.

- a. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
- vii. Rain Date
 - 1. **ACTION:** Consider scheduling a rain date for the 2022 Veterans Day Parade and Ceremony.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Rain date set for November 13, 2022. See para 5) above.
- b. Parade
 - i. Participants
 - 1. Pat Parry remarked that the Parade in Ridgefield the following day included many youth groups, including Boys and Girls Club, lacrosse, soccer, baseball, and martial arts teams. Dave Kaplan stated that similar effort was made to include youth groups in Stamford. Team coaches were enthusiastic but did not get the support of parents who voiced concern over Covid or who had other plans for Memorial Day weekend.
 - 2. Alan Gerard noted that the American Legion sponsors a SR league baseball team which should be invited. He also noted that the American Legion in the past has included several military vehicles in parades. This year, they did not get enough advance notice to schedule the vehicles.
 - 3. Pat Parry asked if participants could be offered the opportunity to include floats in the parade.
 - 4. **ACTION:** Dave Kaplan and Xavier Shellman to include the suggestions above (subpara i.1 – i.5) in Veterans Day planning.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - ii. Transportation for school students
 - 1. **ACTION:** David Kaplan to move the bus pickup diagram to near the front of the participants package and, going forward, work with Rebecca Chuhta, Stamford Schools, who has offered to coordinate among all the Stamford School band directors and participants in Veterans Day Parade.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Package updated. Rebecca Chuhta has agreed to coordinate school participation.
 - iii. Participant package
 - 1. **ACTION:** Implement lineup page handout for staging area as a best practice going forward.
 - a. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - iv. Flow of parade
 - 1. Unit Announcements
 - a. **ACTION:** Limit each unit announcement to thirty seconds or less.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - 2. Toy Vendors
 - a. **ACTION:** CERT and Police need to be instructed to clear the area on Atlantic St itself and allow only registered vendors to position in unobstructed areas.

- i. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - b. **ACTION:** Coordinate with Frank Fedeli, Chief Compliance Officer, well in advance of Veterans Day to discuss rules and limits on registered vendors, issue badges, and enforce compliance during parade.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - v. CERT assistance
 - 1. **ACTION:** Going forward, ensure CERT personnel in staging area are reminded that they should relocate to Veterans Park to assist inflow of spectators once staging area is cleared. This was not done, and CERT personnel in staging area left, thinking their role was finished.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - 2. **ACTION:** Chris Munger to coordinate with CERT personnel going forward that irrespective of assignment to Police support, if role is complete, they should assist in the park.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - vi. Showmobile
 - 1. **ACTION:** PSEC coordinate with Parks and Recreation to procure a proper PA system and provide a podium for future parades. Also check on their plans for an upgraded sound system for the park which should include equipment for the Showmobile.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
- c. Cerermony
- 1. The 102nd Infantry Bn Quintet was to play patriotic music during the interval., but evidently this did not happen or was very abbreviated.
 - 2. **ACTION:** Going forward music should be scheduled to fill more of the interval.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - ii. Run of show
 - 1. Colleen Harkey stated there was too much focus on emcee narrative at expense of Mayor and Grand Marshal participation.
 - a. **ACTION:** Coordinate roles and detailed speaking parts with Mayor's office going forward.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - iii. Speakers
 - 1. **Future Consideration:** As an alternative to political or elected officials, consider asking ranking Veterans Organization leaders or other affiliated Civic leaders to speak.
 - i. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.
 - iv. Live Stream
 - 1. Needs more advance advertising/announcement for community and public awareness
 - 2. Videographer needs more focus during interval from parade to ceremony. Camera appeared set on static wide angle without

attention to details. Could have given a virtual, unspoken tour of the park.

a. **COMPLETED:** Added to SOP.

v. At this point, since Kate had to leave the meeting, a quorum was no longer present, and further discussion of the Ceremony was carried forward to the next meeting.

1. **ACTION:** Revisit Ceremony After Action Report at the next meeting.

a. **ONGOING.**

7) Actions carried forward from May 26th meeting:

a. **ACTION:** Evaluate possibility of an overhead banner along route on Bedford St. for Veterans Day.

i. **ONGOING:** Added to SOP. Dave Kaplan to coordinate with Kate Cook based on her experience with DSSD.

b. **ACTION:** Confirm if Mickey Doyle, Springdale Florist, has submitted an invoice and been paid for wreath.

i. **COMPLETED:** See Para 2) above.

8) Upcoming event: Sept 4th Monolith unveiling at Veterans Memorial Park.

9) Upcoming meetings

a. Next meeting August 24th at 2:00 PM

b. Meet twice monthly during August and September

c. Meet twice weekly during October and November

10) The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.