

## **Stamford Patriotic and Special Events Commission**

**\*\* MEETING MINUTES (draft) \*\***

**Wednesday October 4, 2023 at 2:00 PM**

The meeting was called to order at **2:01 pm** by Chairperson Xavier Shellman, with all participants joining by Zoom or by phone.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87191603995?pwd=M0dlTyt3OXd5SXphZnNXOXJlYQ09>

Meeting ID: 871 9160 3995

Passcode: PSEC

One tap mobile

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### **Attendees:**

P&SEC Members: Xavier Shellman, Hubert Delany, Kate Cook

P&SEC Members Not Present: Dave Kaplan

Guests: Carmen Hughes, Kieran Matthew Edmondson, Briag Iguaran, Colleen Harkey

### **Agenda**

1) Review of draft meeting minutes

- a) August 9
- b) August 22
- c) August 30
- d) September 6
- e) September 27

**\*\* aforementioned minutes approved by board members \*\***

2) Planning for Veterans Day activities (Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, rain date Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>)

- a) Discussion & updates on Parade Coordinator (additional parade planning support)
  - i) Per Hubert, Sargeant Jacobucci unable to fill the Parade Coordinator role due to family/health emergency. However, there are 2-3 volunteers who have offered to help with parade planning. One of which joined the meeting.
  - ii) Hubert thanks Kate for covering down with parade planning even though she's busy working full time organizing one of the largest parades for the City. He and Kate will cover what was typically done by Joe and David (i.e. phone calls).
  - iii) Conclusion: Hubert, Kate, and a collection of volunteers will assist.
  - iv) Kate provided updates of various parade planning activities. Those updates can be found in subsequent agenda items (i.e. 2bii – Participant Sign Up).

b) Parade Planning

i) Parade Permit

(1) Xavier – submitted a few weeks ago but haven't heard back. Will reach out later today to determine where it is in the process.

ii) Participant Sign Up

(1) Kate – JotForm created, link sent to participants from the past two parades. As of before the meeting, have received 17 completed forms. To compare, Memorial Day had approximately forty (40). Sent a reminder email this morning. Hubert's volunteers will complete follow-up in a few days, once people have had time to view Kate's reminder email.

(2) Xavier – asks if the JotForm has been added to the website; ask if able to get banner on City home page and other website promotion (i.e. calendar)

- (a) Per Kate, JotForm link has been posted to the PSEC page on City website. Screen shared for meeting attendees to view the PSEC page.
  - (b) Per Xavier, PSEC previously given banner on City home page to promote upcoming parade. Also received two sections in the calendar that notified people, redirected them to PSEC page. Believes that the 2022 Veterans Day Parade (VDP) homepage banner included the graphic.
    - (i) Kate – unsure if that portion has been updated. Provided context that only City homepage promotion for the Memorial Day Parade was posted week before event, directed at attendees versus sign up for participants, and only included text. City website staff didn't utilize parade graphics as they report it not working for the website. Xavier confirms City previously updated website and there may be issues. Kate will check on the calendar postings.
- iii) Grand Marshal
- (1) Confirmation status
    - (a) Hubert – has called General Bouchard a few times and sent messages to confirm. General hasn't responded. If he doesn't respond to Hubert or a Stamford Veterans Council member by Tuesday, Hubert suggests PSEC be open to other options for grand marshal/guest speaker.
    - (b) Kieran (via chat) asks if he should get in contact with General Bouchard
      - (i) Hubert – it's more appropriate for PSEC to send official invitation to the general, then follow up from Veteran's Council. Brief discussion of concern for too many people contacting the general causing issues.
  - (2) Vehicle
    - (a) Kate – for Memorial Day Parade, had requested City golf cart. As the proposed cart was older, Parks employee Ron assisted Kate with getting City owned gator/ATV instead. Vehicle was decorated with flags, banners, etc. The vehicle is owned by the Parks Department. Kate will check with Ron to determine if he's willing to facilitate that again.
  - (3) Sash & Plaque
    - (a) Kate – can order the sash for Veterans Day Parade (VDP). Last year's VDP had multiple grand marshals, so they utilized hats instead.
    - (b) Kate – local vendor, Clark Trophies, utilized for plaques, aware of design needed. Kate will email the order once the grand marshal is confirmed.
- iv) Marketing
- (1) Graphics
    - (a) Kate – designer has sent drafts based on feedback from the board. Kate has emailed these to the board.
      - (i) Hubert – shared screen for viewing graphic design.
    - (b) Brief discussion of modifications to graphic for utilization as a print ad.
    - (c) Xavier – requests that rain date be added to flyer and QR code
      - (i) Kate – QR code will be added to print of graphics. QR code will direct to the PSEC webpage.
  - (2) Quotes: printing, print ads
    - (a) Kate – had sent over pricing for print ads in the Stamford Advocate to board members. Recommends ¼ page as appropriate size.
    - (b) Brief discussion regarding print ads; decision pending more information about pricing and if discount available if also having digital ads.
      - (i) Xavier – in favor of color for print ad. Suggests running the print ad every week (i.e. Sunday)

- v) VIP Invitations
  - (1) Hubert – shared screen of draft letter.
    - (a) Feedback of edits incorporated – specification of rain date in the same location and time.
    - (b) Colleen (via chat) – “invitation should come from the P&SEC -- you, of course can sign your state representative title but include the signature under P&SEC. This needs to be viewed from the prospective of future participation and leadership in this commission. Of course, you will do what you decide. The invite is not from you as a rep but rep signature as not problem being include. Alan spoke about that last time.”
    - (c) Hubert – edited signature to list both roles (state rep & PSEC board).
    - (d) Kate – discussion to specify start time of 1pm in case parade runs short
    - (e) Motion by Xavier to approve and send out invitations.**
      - (i) Seconded - Kate. Confirmed - Hubert. Carried without dissent.**
      - (ii) Hubert – to send out between now and Friday via his PSEC email.
        - Physical copies of the letter will be sent later to elected officials.
- vi) Troop Requests
  - (1) Hubert – good to go. Reached out to General Evon (troop request) and Lt. Joe Colavito (quartet). Both notified Hubert that due to request sent later than usual, less of a chance to receive requested troops. Especially for quartet that’s in middle of changeover; new point of contact TBD.
  - (2) Xavier – for future reference, how early should these requests be sent?
    - (a) General troop request – ASAP, preferably minimum of 60 days.
    - (b) Quartet – three months out is best.
    - (c) Xavier – asks is there an alternate to the quartet.
      - (i) Hubert – form to request quartet is the same as the general form.
      - (ii) Hubert – suggest using Fairfield County Police Pipe & Drums.
        - 1. Kate – contact (Christian) is waiting to hear back about availability
        - 2. Xavier – suggests also reaching out to BOE school band leaders.
- c) Ceremony Planning
  - i) Guest Speaker
    - (1) Hubert – pending; guest speaker was going to be grand marshal.
    - (2) Hubert shared screen to review draft run of show
      - (a) Run of show is similar to what commission has done in the past
      - (b) Items that are pending have been highlighted in yellow
      - (c) Placeholder for quote, to be provided by Kieran, is included
  - ii) Talent
    - (1) Xavier – in past parades, Joe Colavito and his wife sang the national anthem. They are away during the Veterans Day Parade.
      - (a) Kate – for Memorial Day Parade, it was sung by Leslie Manselle. Veterans Day Parade 2022 utilized a high school group.
      - (b) Hubert – volunteers to reach out to Veterans Council and Veterans Resource Center respective leadership for any volunteers willing to sing.
  - iii) Opening/Closing Prayers
    - (1) Confirmation of who will do the prayers has not been completed
- d) Photographer → item not discussed
- e) Miscellaneous updates
  - i) Xavier – suggestion to send out formal thank you notes after the event
    - (1) Xavier proposed board to keep a running list of individuals who assist
    - (2) Colleen (via Q&A) notes that she worked with David to send thank you notes in two previous parades.

- (3) Hubert acknowledges and thanks Colleen for her past work with this.
- ii) Press Release
  - (1) Hubert suggests pursuing this avenue to send a press release to News Channel 12 or other local media outlets.
  - (2) Kate recommends that it if highlights the grand marshal or something as newsworthy, it's more likely to get picked up.
  - (3) Colleen (via chat) - SVPP is highlighting the unveiling of the Historic Retrospective during the ceremony and will be publicizing that specifically which will include ceremony information. This is a tremendous project SVPP has launched supported by a \$150,000 grant from the URC. That will help with PR.
- iii) Hubert – introduction of Brian Iguaran, thanking for volunteering to assist.
  - (1) Per Hubert, Brian will assist completing some of the parade planning line items since PSEC is short staffed. Came via Stamford Veterans Resource Center (SVRC). Hubert provided a brief bio of Brian: Army specialist, medic, currently working at Stamford Hospital.
  - (2) Brian – introduced self. Works at Stamford Hospital as Director for the Wound Care and Hyperbaric Center. Former medic in the army. Looking forward to being a resource, help out the veteran community however he can, and ongoing participation with the veteran community.
  - (3) Xavier thanks Brian for helping PSEC and being a part of the community.
- iv) Xavier asked Carmen to introduce self to the group
  - (1) Carmen – introduced self. Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion for City. Also Director of the Stamford Veterans Resource Center (SVRC). Recently submitted application to participate in the parade. Looking forward to continued support of the veteran community and supporting the PSEC.
- 3) Reminder: any questions can be sent to [StamfordPSEC@StamfordCT.gov](mailto:StamfordPSEC@StamfordCT.gov)
- 4) General discussion (non-agenda items)
  - a) Kieran shared the following updates:
    - i) Events:
      - (1) Friday, September 8th- Kieran Edmondson, along with Patricia Parry, attended event at Zody's 19th Hole honoring Navy Seals before the 22nd anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.
      - (2) Monday, September 11th- two ceremonies were held in remembrance of September 11, 2001; (a) 8:30am-10:00am at Jackie Robinson Park, and (b) 7:00pm at the Stamford Fire Department.
      - (3) Tuesday, September 19th- City's Health Department held a suicide prevention presentation at Stamford Veterans Resource Center (SVRC). Presentation led by Brittany Dube (Behavioral Health, Health Promotion & Emergency Response Specialist).
      - (4) Wednesday, September 20th- The Stamford Veterans Park Partnership held a successful benefit dinner at the Italian Center of Stamford honoring board member, Greg Caggainello, with the Patriot Award.
      - (5) Friday, September 22nd- Kieran Edmondson participated in the CT Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) STAND DOWN event at Danbury War Memorial. From 8:00am-2:00pm, he helped veterans and their families to receive home supplies. One of the five regional locations of this event. The University of Bridgeport served as another location for this event.
      - (6) Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>- City's Social Services Department, with Sharona Cowan (Director of Social Services), held a housing presentation at SVRC.
      - (7) Tuesday, October 3rd- Carmen Hughes (City's Director of Diversity, Equity,

- & Inclusion) visited SVRC to find people who might be interested to oversee many important duties for SVRC. Kieran will continue as a volunteer there.
- (8) Tuesday, October 17th- Community resources presentation by City's Social Services Senior Outreach Coordinators at SVRC, 11:30am - 1:00pm. Topics include Renter's Rebate Program, state medical benefits, and different types of transportation available for senior veterans. Complimentary lunch.
  - (9) Monday, November 20th- SVRC, from 11:30am-1:00pm, to host a Veterans Appreciation Thanksgiving Lunch at 4<sup>th</sup> floor cafeteria in Government Ctr.
- ii) Xavier – asks if there's an email distribution list of these upcoming events. Would like PSEC notified of these events beforehand as many events are very local and would like to participate/support. How are people notified?
- (1) Kieran – brief overview of tracking SVRC visitor info (i.e. name, phone) and sends that information to Carmen.
  - (2) Carmen – thanked Kieran for great recap and promotion of the SVRC events. Mailing list is a great idea. Will work with Aaron Miller to add a button on the SVRC website to get people signed up for mailing list.
  - (3) SVRC can be found on the City website here:  
<https://www.stamfordct.gov/residents/veterans>

Meeting adjourned at 3:03 pm

**Veterans Day Parade Special Meetings at 2:00pm on the following days:**

|                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Tuesday October 10 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday October 12 <sup>th</sup> |
| Tuesday October 17 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday October 19 <sup>th</sup> |
| Tuesday October 24 <sup>th</sup> | Thursday October 26 <sup>th</sup> |
| Tuesday October 31 <sup>st</sup> | Thursday November 2 <sup>nd</sup> |

Next regular meeting: November 1, 2023 at 2:00 PM

*Minutes submitted by Winni Paul (interim PSEC board clerk)*