

Stamford Patriotic and Special Events Commission

**** SPECIAL MEETING – Minutes (final) ****

Wednesday August 30, 2023 at 11:30 AM

The meeting was called to order at **11:35 am** by Chairperson Xavier Shellman, with all participants joining by Zoom or by phone.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87191603995?pwd=M0dlTyt3OXd5SXphZnNXQXJUQ1hYQT09>

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: Kieran Matthew Edmondson, Nick Montagnese, Pat Parry, Ray Downey, Stephen Fischer, Charles Jacobucci, Colleen Harkey

Agenda

- 1) Planning for Veterans Day activities (Nov. 5th, rain date Nov. 12th)
 - a) Discussion of additional parade planning support
 - (1) Commission Board members had drafted a list of responsibilities and qualifications needed for the Parade Coordinator.
 - (a) Parade Coordinator responsibilities document reviewed with attendees via shared screen during the meeting.
 - (b) Parade Coordinator responsibilities document placed at end of minutes and will be posted to the website separately.
 - (2) Brief discussion of document.
 - (a) Board called attention to responsibility #8 (Perform other duties as required by the PSEC members) which will allow to adjust responsibilities as needed.
 - (3) Motion by Hubert: to approve this language of responsibilities and qualifications for the Parade Coordinator position.**
 - (a) Seconded by Kate. Confirmed by Xavier. Carried without dissent.**
- i) Potential vote on payment rate of support
 - (1) Board had previously proposed a few different pay ranges. Xavier asked Kate to share her knowledge, as she has related experience in this area, how much such a position would pay.
 - (a) Kate – shared experience as freelance event project manager and standard of being paid a flat rate. Flat rate payment eases facilitation (i.e. track hours). Typically gets paid at the end but understands this may not work for current situation. Also shared instances where paid 50% of rate halfway through the project, and the 50% of rate at the end of the project. Based on Xavier previous suggestion \$30-\$35/hour rate, Kate estimates at 10 hours a week, for an 8-week contract – \$2,400.

- (b) Hubert – would like to increase to \$3,000 due to flexibility need as they are later in the typical timeline for the planning process of events, doing a lot of hard work at variable hours. Is in agreement with Kate regarding partial payment halfway through event planning timeline.
 - (i) Kate is not opposed to pay rate increase. Is in agreement with Hubert that they're asking someone to do a lot of work in a short period of time, including getting up-to-date with all the processes. Unsure of budget impact.
 - (ii) Per Xavier, Commission budget can handle \$3,000. Is in agreement with the other Board members that the pay rate seems reasonable.

(2) Motion by Hubert: pending any adjustments or legal constraints, to budget \$3,000 for payment of Parade Coordinator services; with half paid during planning and remaining half paid following conclusion of the parade/ceremony.

(a) Seconded by Xavier. Confirmed by Kate. Carried without dissent.

ii) Interview with interested candidates

- (1) Hubert – proposed Sergeant Charles Jacobucci, an Afghanistan war veteran with the US Army 82nd Airborne Division. Hubert has served with him and believes he's a man of excellent character and leadership. Sgt. Jacobucci has expressed interest in the role, has experience leading soldiers, and most importantly, he genuinely cares about taking care of people. He genuinely cares about the veteran community. Not only is Sgt. Jacobucci willing to step up but is enthusiastic about stepping up. As such, Hubert notes he would like to give his strongest recommendation for Sgt. Jacobucci. Per Hubert, as the sergeant is in attendance, would like to give him the opportunity to say a few words.
- (2) Sgt. Jacobucci spoke to Commission Board and attendees. Explained laptop just died, as such, audio only output. Shared brief statement emphasizing that it's not just about the military, but people who really care about the military and those protecting and serving us. The following are questions/statements posed to Sgt. Jacobucci and his responses.
 - (a) Hubert – Met in basic leaders' course when training to become sergeants. Knows him to be a person of excellent character, but also professionalism. Could Sgt. Jacobucci share with the group why he'd be a good fit for the role?
 - (i) Sgt. Jacobucci – have to be able to delegate in an effective manner. It's one thing to be kind to people under you, it's another thing to be efficient. Wants to ensure that the job we're trying to do gets done.
 - (b) Colleen (via Q&A) – project management qualifications as outlined in the prior meeting? → Hubert reiterated Parade Coordinator qualifications (i.e. experience planning events & project management, ability to effectively communicate both verbally & in writing, proficiency with Microsoft Office, etc.).
 - (i) Sgt. Jacobucci – reports capability of Microsoft and Excel. As per verbal & written communication, reports capability. His last almost year in the Army, he had 330 people staffed underneath him, in addition to being under training operations in artillery. Believes in himself to be fully capable of these qualifications.
 - (c) Xavier asked if Sgt. Jacobucci believes he's qualified to meet the responsibilities as listed in the Parade Coordinator document shared

earlier in the meeting. Also asked Sgt. Jacobucci about his availability to work this into his schedule.

- (i) Sgt. Jacobucci responded he's fully capable of taking on those responsibilities and has enough free time to accomplish the work needed.
- (d) Pat Parry (via chat) – what delegation is part of this job? What is Sgt. Jacobucci' current work? → Hubert clarified that there won't be a lot of delegating in this position. There will be a lot of line items that the Board is going to require of selected person to contact, either in person or virtually, to handle what's needed for planning the events. Hubert asks if Sgt. Jacobucci will have enough bandwidth to handle these things as previously discussed and as listed in the responsibilities.
 - (i) Sgt. Jacobucci – responded that he's able to do everything that's needed. Shared example of tracking down the phone numbers of 300+ people regarding blood type, next of kin, etc. He emphasized not leaving until he got that information. He states he's well prepped for something like this.
- (e) Colleen (via Q&A) – computer → Xavier asked Sgt. Jacobucci if he knows when he'll be replacing his computer.
 - (i) Sgt. Jacobucci – responded that he's replacing it today. The laptop was a specialized setup for him to learn how to program. He states that he doesn't take anything like this lightly.
- (3) Per Kate, Commission Board has been working with various City employees to guide them in the correct process for this position. Would like clarification on such requirements as: can we only interview one person and hire them? Do we have to interview multiple candidates? Does this have to be posted somewhere before?
 - (a) Xavier explains the Parade Coordinator would not be an W2 employee. This is a contract position similar to the graphic designer that the Commission has previously utilized. Commission is contracting with the selected Parade Coordinator to provide this specific service for this specific amount of time, from now until end of the parade in November.
 - (b) Hubert states the following points:
 - (i) If there's any other person that would like to be considered for the position, Commission Board could ask them a few questions. Directs interested persons to comment in the chat to start this process.
 - (ii) Due to the Commission Board just approving the responsibilities and qualifications earlier in the meeting, they can push back timeline to make sure that before the contract is officially filled out that they've checked out the administrative left and right limits to ensure they're squared away.
 - (c) Xavier confirms that City has a limit of how much can be spent on a specific vendor without going through a bid process or requiring quotes. She notes that the budget for this position falls under bid limit.
 - (i) Hubert recommends that once they make motion to select whoever's going to fill this position, that they review the contract or whatever required documentation to ensure that Commission is within ethics and within their limits to pay for this position.
 - (ii) Per Xavier, she and Winni have reached out to the City's finance personnel to get a blank copy of a service contract that they can be

utilized by the Commission.

- iii) Potential vote on selected candidate
 - (1) Brief discussion of tabling selection of candidate
 - (a) Kate has people in mind as potential candidates and asks for candidate selection to be changed to another meeting to provide opportunity for others to submit candidacy as voting on job responsibilities and pay rate was confirmed today.
 - (b) Per Xavier, can't push decision past next meeting as it is the only scheduled meeting in September, and the meeting afterward is not until October. The next two regular meetings are scheduled for September 6th and October 4th.
 - (c) Hubert proposes to have left/right seat offline meeting to make sure that individual items that Commission is tasking the Parade Coordinator with are squared away on day one.
 - (d) Xavier states Commission will set time aside to speak with Sgt. Jacobucci offline regarding the aforementioned. Advises meeting with other potential candidates individually outside of the Commission meeting since interviews don't necessarily or shouldn't necessarily be in the public forum.
 - (e) As Kate doesn't have anyone that's confirmed their interest, just a few people that could be good, she will send them the relevant information.
 - (f) At the beginning of next week's meeting, time will be reserved for public Q&A will any additional candidates. Similar to what was done today with Sergeant Jacobucci.
 - (2) As noted above, vote on candidate tabled until the next meeting to accommodate any additional interested parties
- b) General parade/ceremony planning
 - i) Xavier – will work on getting the permit for the parade.
 - ii) Xavier – need to reach out to veterans' groups to ask for nominations of grand marshal for the parade and ceremony.
 - iii) Hubert – will work with remaining Board members to have tasks for Parade Coordinator ready for Day 1.
 - iv) Hubert – will have drafts ready of the VIP invitations and troop requests for next meeting to review as a group and approve.
 - v) Hubert – volunteers to be the MC (master of ceremonies) and will also work on the run of show.
 - vi) Showmobile – Xavier asks about use of showmobile or if there's a new system?
 - (1) Kate – for the Memorial Day Parade, there was a very small stage that only the speaker stood on. Stage was placed on the corner (sidewalk) by the library (Bedford/Broad Street).
 - (a) Per Kate, had noticed at Veterans Day Parade there was a lot of congestion in the previous placement. David was reading the script for that parade, many participants were stopping to go into the park, there was difficulty keeping up with the script due to the bottlenecks. Xavier confirmed that bottlenecks was an issue.
 - (b) Per Kate, originally wanted to have stage in the street for Memorial Day. There was so much space on the sidewalk and the rented stage was very small, the sidewalk placement worked really well. In addition, it didn't prevent the City from reopening the streets once the parade was done.
 - (c) Per Kate, there was no seating for dignitaries at that stage. They had

checked prior to. Reminder that none of the dignitaries wanted to sit on the stage at Veterans Day Parade last year. They wanted to cheer participants on from the ground level.

- (d) Per Kate, speaker on the stage was someone from one of the local radio stations. They were paid a nominal fee. The script provided to the speaker was cut down. It included the important information for announcing that was provided by each group but didn't have a lot of fillers. For example, Toys For Tots gave them some stats on their fundraising figures.

vii) Kate - will reach out to graphic designer utilized for past few parades.

- (1) Hubert - offers that if something falls through, he can have his graphics team at the capital assist, as they did a few years ago, just in emergency.

2) Reminder: any questions can be sent to StamfordPSEC@StamfordCT.gov

3) General discussion (non-agenda items)

a) Hubert wanted the following noted on the record:

- i) Kate, Xavier, and he will work together to make sure that they have left seat-right seat documents squared away for whoever is going to fill the Parade Coordinator position
- ii) Thank Winni for coordinating website changes as was discussed at previous meetings
- iii) It's come to his attention that there's been some questions as to available video recordings. Requesting Winni to check with ethics to find out what we need to do to be in compliance.

- (1) Winni asked Xavier to provide some context about meeting recordings from FOIA training with Amy LiVolsi and Town Clerk's office

- (2) Per Xavier, during ethics training last year was advised that recordings were not required to be kept or posted unless they were the actual meeting. For PSEC, they were only using recordings for the purpose of creating the minutes. Then once they've created the minutes, they didn't need the recording any longer. However it's possible that that may no longer be the case. Reaching out to ethics and legal department to find out what the requirements are so the PSEC can be in compliance.

- (3) Hubert asks if answers from ethics and legal will be available by next meeting so they can discuss them as a group.

- (a) Per Xavier, she would hope so. Unfortunately do have to recognize that this is an upcoming holiday weekend. A lot of people are out Thursday, Friday, and Monday is closed. The next meeting is Wednesday. States they'll do their best to reach out to the parties necessary to get a concrete answer. If posting videos is required, then will coordinate with whoever maintains that portion of the website to have those posted and available for anyone who would like to watch them.

b) Stephen - composing email to Vets Council to get nominations for grand marshal by next Monday. With the idea of moving their normal Wednesday meeting to Tuesday so they'll hopefully have a name for the Commission on Wednesday.

- i) Xavier - requests that Grand Marshal be a single individual

- ii) Xavier - asks if it's possible to nominate a veteran from Desert Storm, OEF, OIF, or during that time period. Emphasized not a requirement, but it would be nice to see us sharing the spotlight with some of our younger troops.

- (1) Stephen reports not having a problem with that

- (2) Hubert concurs that this is a good idea

- c) Kieran – asks if it would be appropriate for any of them to ask a veteran they know if they would be interested in being the grand marshal.
 - i) Xavier – states if anyone has suggestions of someone who would make a great candidate for grand marshal, to bring their names and a short bio to the next meeting. That way Commission can vote on who will be taking that position.
- d) Pat – regarding the website, last time she saw yesterday that it still listed Memorial Day as the upcoming parade. Asks when that will be changed. Asks if Commission has JotForm already, can't they send out initial email asking people to submit their names if they want to participate in the parade.
 - i) Winni shared screen displaying PSEC website. The Memorial Day Parade information was removed yesterday.
 - (1) Pat responds that Commission needs to place info about Veterans Day then
 - (2) Xavier responds that it's part of their planning process that Commission was discussing earlier in the meeting. Reiterated that they are hiring the graphic designer to put together the flyers.
 - ii) Kate responds to Pat's query about updating the JotForm and getting the link on the website. Kate notes that if for example she sends it out, then they hire a Parade Coordinator, it's going to add a lot of confusion for the participants regarding who they're supposed to be replying to. The goal is to get Parade Coordinator on board and have them send out the updated JotForm.
 - (1) Hubert agrees with Kate and Pat. Thinks Commission should wait until they have Parade Coordinator to officially send out the forms. He thinks having general information about when the parade will take place seems like a doable update to the website between now and next week.
 - (a) Xavier asks who updates the City calendar added to calendar. Kate notes that it's done by Aaron. Xavier will reach out to Aaron.
- e) Colleen (via Q&A and verbally) – “Stamford Veterans Park Partnership plans to unveil the first phase of our Historic Retrospective Project during the Veterans Day Ceremony — this includes a Veteran & Military History segment as well as the importance of the site Veterans Memorial Park sits on — a member of SVPP will be speaking for the unveiling. Thank you.”
 - i) Colleen requests Commission to include 10 minutes in the program to speak about it and then have the official unveiling of the storyboards.
 - ii) Xavier requests Colleen to send email to general Commission account with summary, flyer, and other documentation about this project. That way Commission will have it as they're working on the script for the show and Hubert can incorporate that into his remarks.
 - iii) Hubert – during an upcoming meeting, can discuss with Colleen and the group about the best place to put that in for run of show. Will also need to know if arranging for an individual or individuals to do the unveiling.
 - iv) Colleen thinks that Xavier's recommendation to share a summary of what it's about first is probably the best route to take, and then once Commission has had an opportunity to review, if there are any questions, can reach out. Colleen surmises that most likely, Hubert would just introduce the person who would speak about the specifics of the project.
- f) Kieran – asks Kate if information about Veterans Resource Center will be included in the program or if he can provide a quote in the program.
 - i) Per Kate, it's too early to tell what program layout will be and how much space they'll have. Certainly if there's space to include either the resource center or a quote that he'd (Kieran) like to provide, will definitely keep on the list.

- ii) Hubert advised that he was planning on including the Veterans Resource Center in the list of organizations that are going to be mentioned and thanked during the parade.
- g) Kate – shared information about a new magazine, Stamford City Lifestyle. Their November issue will have stories on veterans. Kate had sent the editor information about the Veterans Resource Center so they could include a blurb about it in the magazine. Unfortunately it’s being published after the parade.
- h) Pat – asks if the Parade Coordinator document will be shared with everyone. Is it going to be publicly available? Requests reminder of what the graphic designer cost, so it can be shared with the group. Asks if \$3k payment of Parade Coordinator is for one parade or both?
 - i) Xavier – advises that as they are on a short timeline, in addition to the staffing issues they’ve been experiencing, the Parade Coordinator is specifically for this Veteran’s Day Parade. Going forward, they will be working towards not needing to rely on an outside person to fulfill these responsibilities. Because they want to have a successful parade and ceremony, this additional help is needed.
 - (1) Pat – asks follow-up whether Commission is planning to invite a guest speaker or just make historical plaques the center piece of the ceremony.
 - (a) Xavier – advises they haven’t gotten that far but believes they’ll start discussing once Commission goes into their regular meetings starting next week. She asks if Hubert has anything to add regarding this.
 - (b) Hubert – believes the breakdown of the run of show and what additional items to include in the ceremony is a discussion for next week.
- i) Pat – asks Hubert if in his VIP invites will he reach out to the new Commissioner of Veterans Affairs to see if he might be able to attend.
 - i) Per Hubert, he’s met General Walsh and was already planning on inviting him. As a follow up and for Pat’s edification, Hubert will present it as he did for the last parade. He will review list of people of invitees, have draft of invitation so it can be voted on and approved. Then, once approved, he’ll send out the invitation next week. He also notes that he’ll have a draft of the troop requests for next week as well.
- j) Stephen – wants it to be noted that he’s emailed the livestream request and will provide updates when available.
 - i) Xavier thanks Stephen for completing this task.

Meeting adjourned at 12:24pm

Next regular meeting: September 6, 2023 at 2:00 PM

Minutes submitted by Winni Paul (interim PSEC board clerk)

Stamford Patriotic and Special Events Commission

Parade Coordinator

Responsibilities:

1. Create Parade Application (via [Jotform.com](https://www.jotform.com))
2. Outreach to past parade participants
3. Contact potential new organizations, bands, etc. for sign-up
4. Ensure all participant applications are complete
5. Coordinate with PSEC to create parade line up & participant info packet
6. Respond to participant inquiries
7. Attend all PSEC meetings & provide update on participant sign-ups
8. Perform other duties as required by the PSEC members.

Qualifications:

1. Must have experience planning events or project management
2. Ability to effectively communicate both verbally and in writing
3. Must be proficient in Microsoft office (word, excel, outlook)