

Garner Veterans Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

June 14, 2021 - 9:07 ^{AM}

Committee Members

- Committee Members:
 - Jeff Hicks (Chairman), Don Searles (Vice Chrm), Willis McCoy, Matt Padone, Duane Tabb
 - Ex-officio Members:
 - Bob Carter (VFW), Terry Chatfield (AL)
 - Town Staff: Katie Lockhart
 - Town Liaison: Phil Matthews
 - Tours: Spence Cardwell, Terry Chatfield and Katie Lockhart, Matt Padone.
 - Maintenance of the Memorial: Terry Chatfield and Katie Lockhart
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A) The meeting opened by Jeff Hicks at 9:07 with the following in attendance:

- Jeff Hicks, Don Searles, Bob Carter, Helen Carter, Willis McKoy, Katie Lockhart, Duane Tabb, and Tim Stevens.

B) Minutes from March 8, 2021 meeting – There was one correction on the correct spelling of Willis McKoy’s name. The minutes were approved with that correction.

C) Report from Standing Committees

Observances:

- The Wall that Heals – We are on the list now as the only application from NC. New Bern held theirs as planned with poor attendance, and Charlotte has not reapplied at this time. The committee will start out west, so our dates will likely be some time in fall of 2022.
- Memorial Day 2021 –
 - Garner put out 66 full sized flags around the memorial as usual for the 66 names on the monument. An unofficial service at the memorial was held by the Legion and VFW. There was a wreath there, so we used it in the ceremony. We later learned that it was purchased by Mr. Abernathy thinking no one was doing anything since the Town had cancelled the official program. After the wreath was laid, several people were there, so members also gave tours. It was decided to put up a sign each year for the prior week to let people know about the program on Monday.
- Independence Day – will be held as usual with Monument tours, the Raleigh Symphony and fireworks.
- Garner Veterans Day – expecting to do the usual program. Katie is looking for a speaker
- Salute to the Troops – This year it was not held but will be held in 2022 as usual. Date to be set yet but may be tied to Armed Forces Day.
- Gold Star Families Event (Dec) – expecting to be usual program. They are looking at something closer to Flags Across America Day, but not the same day.

D) Maintenance of Memorial – Charles and Katie

- Thinking of adding permanent mounting holes for easy placement of flags and to insure they stay upright. Now need at least 67 for the flags.
- Time for another cleaning of the memorial. Katie will check on this.
- Katie – town is accepting applications for new bricks. Cut-off is July 31. Then they need to update the brick finder list.
- A new KIA, Sgt Courtney T Johnson, an OIF-OEF soldier has been identified and qualified. Need to add name to Memorial.

- Discussion of adding Space Force to the list of branches of the military. For now, it may just be a sign or a reference in the tour guide.

F) Unfinished business:

- a) Hometown Heroes (banners around town) – tabled for now, due to activity on the Wall.

G) Reports of Vets Organizations:

- a) VFW: opened as usual, just got back from state convention.
- b) AL: Keith Craven will be sworn in soon as the new Commander of the Post.
- c) DAV: Closed since March of 2020. Expecting to reopen on Aux 1. Still processing claims online (which is faster). They are also doing veterans' needs assistance.

H) New business:

- a) Nominations for officers was held in March, so we elected the new officers: Jeff Hicks as Chairman, Don Searles as Vice-Chair, and no official secretary yet. Until that is resolved, Helen Carter will continue as temporary Secretary.
- b) All visits to rest homes are still shut down for past year. VA is doing much online, and starting to let some visitors in now.
- c) Tim Stevens is working on a special for local TV about the veterans from Garner that were killed in Vietnam.
- d) Town website needs to be updated for the Advisory Cmte with:
 - Year each member was appointed so we know when the 3 yr term is up and if they are eligible to be re-appointed. This is needed because the rules say you serve for a 3-year term and can only serve 2 terms back-to-back.
 - Add the DAV as a group member once it is approved. Jeff is drafting Bylaws change which must be approved by the town to allow for this.

- l) Closed at 9:56^{AM} and will meet again on Sept 13 at 9:00^{AM}.