

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes,
Monday, February 19, 2024, 7:00 PM

Members Present:

Kristin Reilly
Wendell Rich
Dave Reese
Erik Saracino
Michael Pinciotti
Tom Yaegel

Members Not Present:

John Coulbourn

Others Present:

Paula Gasper – Township Liaison
Lisa Russo - Administration Liaison
Pete Palestina
Dave Parry
Connie Whalen

MEETING CALL TO ORDER – 7:00 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: Jan 15, 2024 - Unanimous consent.

OLD BUSINESS

- Collaboration with students from the Veterans Service Club (VSC) at Council Rock North High School (CRN), Newtown, PA, on MSgt Elwell’s dedication ceremony at CRN (TBD: 2024).
 - Connie Whalen, CRN Travis Mannion Foundation (TMF) Service Club introduced the idea of a potential collaboration with TMF, VSC, and NTVAC. (Pending).
- Erik Saracino is currently drafting a white paper/article highlighting the veteran process to apply for VA healthcare and disability benefits (Pending: April).
- Erik Saracino encouraged attendees to review the current Northampton Township Ordinance #570 Bylaws, dated Jan 23, 2014. (Pending discussions in April).
- Erik Saracino introduced plans to work with PA State House Representative Kristin Marcell on sponsoring a bill in the name of Daniel “Larry” Rubini.
- Northampton Township Veteran Directory
 - Talks continue as members discuss new marketing strategies.

NEW BUSINESS

- Update on NTVAC sponsored programs in 2024.
 - NTVAC Town Hall meeting March 18, 2024, with Matt Allen, Director, Bucks County Veterans Affairs.
 - Event advertisement pamphlet disseminated to the public.
 - Kristin Reilly notified Lower Southampton Veterans Commission.
 - Services of the Liberty War Birds Association (LWBA): Discuss plans to incorporate LBWA during the Memorial and/or Veteran Day events. LBWA provides a fully restored and flyable U.S. Army UH-1H (Huey) helicopter which can be used to provide support for appropriate activities.
 - Tom Yaegel introduced a motion to commit \$5K from the NTVAC account which is needed to commit LBWA's participation at the Veterans Day event in November.
 - David Reese seconded the motion.
 - Pete Palestina introduced opportunities to help offset costs associated with speakers needed for township events.
 - NTVAC participants agreed to host a fundraiser and, Erik Saracino will research veteran grant opportunities in Pennsylvania.
 - Tom Yaegel introduced a motion to move the NTVAC Veterans Day event to Saturday, Nov 9, 2024 @ 11:00am. Wendell Rich seconded the motion. Approved.
 - Kristin Reilly will distribute event scripts to NTVAC participants for review/feedback.
- PA State Representative Kristin Marcell is hosting a Senior Expo on April 5th @10:00am – 1:00pm.
 - NTVAC agreed to participate.
- Bernadette Heenan requested member participation to attend the Eagle Scout recognition ceremony for the nephew of PFC Robert H. Dembowski Jr.
- Picture detailing the township's memorial plaque will be unveiled prior to the start of the Memorial Day ceremony.
- Northampton Days scheduled for October 6, 2024.

Every year, NTVAC members participate in four Veterans related ceremonies: (1) Memorial Day (at Dembowski Park); (2) Flag Day (NHT Civic Center); Veterans Day (Front of Admin. Bldg.) and Wreath Laying (Union Cemetery).

- **MEMORIAL DAY: Monday, May 27th @ Dembowski Park:**
 - Renovations appear to be underway as the townships aims to address a few items that need attention.
 - M/C: Wendell Rich
 - Guest Speaker: John Heenan
 - Singer: Lisa Garner
 - Chaplain: Dave Parry
 - Color Guard/Firing Squad: Patriot Det.1230, Marine Corps League
 - Bugler: TBD

- Bagpiper: Paul Carney (Pending)
- NOTE: Flag raising mini-ceremony and unveiling of the township Memorial plaque will be held 10 minutes prior to the event
- **FLAG DAY: Friday, June 14th @ NH Recreation Civic Center.**
 - Microphone and speaker (Pending Tom Yaegel)
 - External sound system provided by the Northampton Indians Football and Cheerleading Organization.
 - Participation commitments from the Northampton Township Baseball Organization and Troop 145 parents & scouts (Pending Erik Saracino/Kristin Reilly)
 - M/C: Michael Pinciotti
 - Singer: Kristina Keyak (Pending Kristin Reilly)
 - Chaplain: Dave Parry
 - Color Guard: Patriot Det.1230, Marine Corps League
 - Bugler: TBD
- **VETERANS DAY: Saturday, November 9th @ STAR Center**
 - Location (Pending Bernadette Heenan)
 - CR South Marching Band. (Pending Erik Saracino)
 - M/C: Erik Saracino
 - Guest Speaker: LBWA Representative (TBD)
 - Chaplain: Dave Parry
 - Singer: Lisa Garner
 - Color Guard: Patriot Det.1230, Marine Corps League
 - Bugler: TBD
- **HOMETOWN HEROS WREATH LAYING CEREMONY:
December 7th @ Union Cemetery, 209 Almshouse Rd**
 - M/C: Kristin Reilly
 - Singer: TBD
 - Chaplain: TBD
 - Wreaths: TBD
 - Color Guard/Firing Squad: Patriot Det.1230, Marine Corps League
 - Bugler: TBD

Meeting Adjourned: 8:15 pm

Respectively Submitted

Erik Saracino, Secretary

NTVAC Town Hall: Monday, March 18, 2024 (No General Meeting)

Next Meeting: Monday, April 15, 2024