



TOWN OF HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT

Veterans Commission Minutes

Regular Meeting

5:30 PM, September 2, 2026

[Click to View Agenda](#)

Hamden Government
Center
2750 Dixwell Avenue
Hamden, CT 06518
Tel: (203) 287-7070
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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

2. ATTENDANCE

The attendance was taken by B&C clerk Porsche Edmundson.

Present: Bill MacMullen, Barry Elliott, David Lewis, Cal Shepard, Ronnie Mayberry, Tyrone Mitchen, Owen Arenberg, Porsche Edmundson.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Minutes approved for the month of August, with minor changes made.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT / INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Tyrone Mitchen, applicant for an alternative position was introduced. Status of his application remains pending.

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Members reported no new formal correspondence requiring action.

Veterans Awareness Day – Guest Author

- Mark Genevieve, author of I'm Not a Hero, plans to attend Veterans Awareness Day again.
- He shared information about a 22K walk supporting awareness of veteran suicide (20 per day).
- Rides are available for those unable to walk the full distance.

Veterans Flight Applications

- September 26 flight is full.
- No new applications expected.

Stand Down Day – September 18

- Multiple statewide locations: Rocky Hill (primary hub), Bridgeport (University of Bridgeport), Norwich, and others.
- Rocky Hill remains the strongest and most attended site.

CT Transit Veteran Bus Pass Program

- Effective August 1, approved by Governor and VA Commissioner Welch.
- 31 day bus pass for veterans; intended primarily for transportation to VA medical

appointments.

- Applications available through local CT Transit offices or online.
- Program is new and still being refined.

Heroes on Wheels Program

- Contact: John Chan, program chair.
- Provides wheelchairs, walkers, and mobility devices (including electric).
- Commission will seek printed materials for the office.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

(if recommended by the town attorney)

No executive session was required.

8. REPORTS

Memorial Day Parade

- No report required; event concluded successfully.

Veterans Awareness Day (VAD) Planning

Participants: Virginia D., Cal Shepherd, Dave Lewis.

Key points:

- Meeting scheduled with the middle school vice principal on Friday at 10:00 AM.
- Discussion was needed at the start time, due to congestion from student arrival and veteran exhibit setup.
- Booklet creation should return to educators; the Commission feels overextended.
- Flyers: Crystal Heron is printing corrected versions.
- Participant recruitment: Some long-time participants have stopped attending; outreach continues.
- Senator Murphy's office may attend; scheduling requires confirmed event time.
- Suggestion to invite the Adjutant General of Connecticut.
- Library (Public Library) will save discarded military books for the Commission's office library.
- Event date clarified: Friday, November 6 (previous confusion due to calendar errors).
- Commission will send updated "Save the Date" and participant assignments.

Social Media / Website

- Outreach attempts were made by Alexa (web contact).
- Only one response was received ("I'll look and get back to you"), with no follow up.
- Members copied on emails; no progress.

Wreaths Across America

- Bill Compton was absent due to his wife's illness.
- Chair recommends allowing him a leave of absence rather than resignation.
- Commission agrees authorized absences are permissible.

VAD Participant Assignment Lists

- Lists previously distributed (approx. mid-July).
- Members asked to review and confirm their assigned organizations.
- Additional pages may have been added; members will coordinate directly.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Veterans Welcome & Protocol Manual

- Manual previously circulated; no member feedback received.
- Chair will resend for review.
- After consensus, the manual will be forwarded to the Town Clerk for approval and printing.

Office Manning Schedule

- Revised schedule prepared due to Alicia's departure.
- Dave will post an updated schedule in the office and distribute copies.

Whitney Center Veterans Outreach

- Commission received an email from a resident requesting support after the passing of their previous ceremony coordinator.
- Meeting held with Ken Sandberg, VP of Community Relations.
- Whitney Center veterans are enthusiastic about collaboration.
- Ideas include: POW/MIA ceremony support, Missing Man Table presentations, Filmed events, Shared programming for Memorial Day.
- Next meeting date TBD; Cal will coordinate.

Collaboration with Dunbar Davenport Veterans

- Discussion on inviting Dunbar Davenport veterans to joint events.
- Past ceremonies at Dunbar Davenport included participation from the Lieutenant Governor.

Collaboration with Human Rights & Fair Rent Commission

- Previously initiated by the Rabbi, the project stalled due to leadership turnover and lack of quorum.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Veterans Organization Meeting Schedules

- AMVETS Post 9 meets first Wednesday monthly (except Dec/Jan/Jul/Aug).
- DAV meets the second Thursday of the month, at 11 Pine Street.
- Members are encouraged to attend for outreach.

Veteran Assistance Requests

- Discussion of agencies assisting veterans with home repairs: House of Heroes, Home for the Brave.
- Commission receives frequent calls; will continue referring appropriately.

VA Benefits Books

- Updated 2026 edition placed in office.
- Older 2025 edition is also available.

Legal Assistance Inquiry

- Member seeking legal support for family estate matters in Iowa.
- Recommendation: Connecticut Veterans Legal Services, Vet Center in Orange (200 Edison Road), Possible JAG consultation in Groton.

- Commission will assist with contact information.

Hamden Veterans Coalition

- Initiative originally drafted by Scott Holland.
- Chair will locate paperwork and invite Scott to the next meeting.

Legislative Council Appointments

- Several Commission seats remain unapproved despite the mayoral submission in March.
- Chair requests members attend the Legislative Council meeting on September 14 at 7 PM (Old Town Hall) to advocate during public comment.
- Members are encouraged to wear Commission polos.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Cal Shepard motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 PM and was seconded by Bill MacMullen.