

DRAFT

Monuments and Ceremonies Commission Meeting

Minutes of the May 10, 2011 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Phil Kraft at 3:35PM on May 10, 2011. The following Commission members were in attendance: Phil Kraft, David Polett, Ed Carabillo, Ken Reiss, Charles Scribner, Marian Castell, George Walsh, Bob Riith, former member John Geoghegan, and Ann Penrose. Don Cavet who will be assisting Ed Carabillo on Memorial Day was present. Three students from Darien High School SOS Club were also in attendance, Alex Schenck, Michael Lauer and Alex Rodriguez. The SOS group has volunteered their services on Memorial Day to assist us in managing the parade staging.

Phil Kraft distributed maps of the Goodwives Shopping Center parking area so the Commission could discuss proper staging and any changes from last year. A meeting will be set up on Friday May 20, 2011 with Captain Pavia at Goodwives to discuss the plans for this year.

Phil Kraft informed the Commission that the Guiding Eyes for the Blind handlers and their guide dogs would be participating in the parade this year. Many of these dogs are prepared for use by returning veterans so the connection to the parade was apparent. David Rucquoi is the contact for this group. Additional groups confirmed for the parade will be the Darien YMCA Gymnastics Team which has a presence at Goodwives Shopping Center and a return of the Special Olympics participants who have assured us through Celeste Marsh, that they will have adequate procedures in place, specifically cars, to transport any participants who cannot make the entire parade route under their own power.

Phil related the details of a meeting he had with the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs of the State of CT and her entourage on Friday the 28th of April. They walked the Veterans Cemetery grounds and Commissioner Schwartz was very pleased with the enhancements that have been implemented, so much so that she

has agreed to have her Commission restore the flagpole itself with paint and a new halyard installed by Memorial Day. She also indicated that she may pursue purchasing additional land at the cemetery site for a possible columbarium for veteran's cremains. The group then visited the Darien Historical Society to take in the Civil War related exhibition. She was very pleased with the presentation of information on the Fitch Home for Soldiers and Orphans, the first of its kind which was established in 1864, right here in Darien.

Phil then mentioned that the State wreath will be delivered to the Darien Police Department and the flags they supply will be delivered to Phil's office.

Jimmy Nester donated 3000 lightly used flags to our cemetery and 500 of those will be donated to the SOS Club at the Darien High School for use when they construct their field of flags.

Park and Recreation will receive a request for the reviewing stand and speakers stand to be placed in their customary sites for Memorial Day. The podium needs to be placed in Phil's van prior to the ceremony by two able-bodied Commission members. The Noroton Heights FD will supply the generator, bell and chairs as per usual.

Permissions have been received by all parties for the use of Route 1, land in front of Miller Automobile for the reviewing stand, Goodwives Shopping Center management, the State Cemetery by Commissioner Schwartz. Officer Isaac has secured the four benches for the area surrounding the flagpole monument and they will be in place by Memorial Day.

Phil Kraft made special mention of the outstanding communications effort put forth by the Guides and Princesses group from the YMCA. He displayed a newsletter from the group to its members which outlined behavior, theme, and proper display of patriotism and reverence for our fallen soldiers.

The biography for the Grand Marshal was given by Phil to Commissioner Castell who will compose a Press Release for the local papers and include a recent photo of Bill Flanagan. Chick Scribner mentioned that General Logan's Order will be read by First Class Scout Anthony Aoyama. Ann Penrose's nephew will have his restored WWII Jeep for the Grand Marshal.

The set-up crew should meet at the cemetery by 7:30AM on Memorial Day to prepare the speakers' stand. All Division Leaders and their assistants should be at the shopping center by 8:30AM on Memorial Day.

Our next meeting will be June 14, 2011, which is Flag Day.

On a motion by Ed Carabillo, seconded by George Walsh, the meeting was adjourned at 4:32PM.

Submitted by:

Dave Polett, for the Secretary