

MINUTES

LOWELL VETERANS COMMISSION

DATE: Wednesday, 14th, January 2026 at 5:00 PM

Location: Lowell Telemedia Center, 246 Market Street, Lowell, MA 01852

Meeting:

- a. Call to Order: 5:00PM
- b. Pledge of Allegiance
- c. Roll Call Attendance

PARADISE, PAUL

GAFFNEY, JAMES III (NOT IN ATTENDANCE)

COTE, RICHARD A.

PEEPLS, MICHAEL

CEROVAC, ROBERT

GAUTHIER, PHILIAS (NOT IN ATTENDANCE)

PIMENTEL, NAYELI (NOT IN ATTENDANCE)

PEEPLS, JEAN, SUB COMMITTEE MEMBER

ERIC LAMARCHE, DIRECTOR OF VETERANS' SERVICES

Discussion:

How to obtain nominations for the Veterans Recognition program was discussed to honor Veterans who live in Lowell or/or have made contributions to the greater Lowell community. Nomination should consider that a nominee getting paid for performing his or her job would not pertain. Another idea discussed was to ask teachers to have their students tell us about your favorite Veteran, so they may be honored during the Memorial Day, 4th of July, Veterans Day Ceremonies and through the Veterans Recognition Program. The idea was met with approval and more details to contact teachers, the School Committee, and the Superintendent of Schools will be followed up.

The use of the City of Lowell's Website to be used as a voice of the Veterans Commission to ask for nominations to honor Veterans was suggested, as well as being used for communication to the public about community events sponsored by the Veterans Commission was also discussed. Chairman Paul Paradise suggested setting up a meeting with Mellissa of the City of Lowell to discuss the Veterans Commissions use of the City's Website as well as plans for the upcoming events sponsored by the Veterans Commission. Chairman Paul Paradise will schedule a meeting and will invite other Commission members to attend.

Setting up a Facebook page to highlight the Veterans Commission events and activities was discussed. There was approval of the idea, and some apprehension of the idea from a sub committee member cautioning Facebook can be tricky and so the idea of using the City's Website may be a better idea. More discussion will follow during the next meeting.

The monitoring of the Veterans Commission Gmail account was discussed. Chairman Paul Paradise and Secretary Michael Peeples will have a telephone conference call to set up Secretary Peeples to be able to log on and monitor the Gmail account. The use of the Gmail account will help in getting the word out about events, nominations to honor Veterans, and help seek members to serve of the Veterans Commission (the Vice Chairman position is vacant).

Contacting an employee at the Veterans Administration Lowell VA Clinic was discussed. Secretary Peeples stated he recently spoke with someone at the clinic and will reach out to him again so that the Commission has a contact at the Veterans Administration which would be beneficial.

Chairman Paul Paradise gave an update on the Coats for Veterans Program. Coats were distributed to many Lowell Veterans in need. An update on the homeless Veteran with a dog was given by Secretary Peeples. The Coats for Veterans Program gave a donation to a family member of the homeless Veteran and that was a catalyst to reunite the homeless Veteran with his family. The Veteran now has a home for himself and his dog and is working. The former homeless Veteran shared the holidays with his family for the first time in years. Chairman Paradise also stated the homeless Veteran population in Lowell is only 4 Veterans.

Eric LeMarche, Veterans Director of Lowell gave an update on the Hero's Banner Program. Nominations are needed and welcomed to honor Veterans and first responders. Eric also made a donation of a Coat for Veterans to a Veteran in need. Eric also updated the Veterans Commission that the Army Corp of Engineer has provided food for the Food Pantry at the Senior Center of Lowell. The pantry is now full.

Chairman Paradise gave an update on Christian Hero Program at Hanscom Air Force Base. A Fed X Truck full of toys was delivered to families in need this past holiday.

Additional topics of discussion to be followed up at the next Veterans Commission meeting are:

1. Use of Twitter and other social media by the Veterans Commission
2. Contact ROTC, the Scouts of America and other organizations of Lowell to participate in upcoming events.
3. Plan B, alternative for 4th of July Parade (participating in other city or town parades).
4. Details of Memorial Day, 4th of July Parade, and Veterans Day events.
5. Rules of asking for donations for the Veterans Commission.

1. With no other new business, the meeting was adjourned.

Adjourned Time: 5:45 PM

- a. Move –Paul Paradise
- b. 2nd –Richard Cot
- c. 3rd. Michael Peeples,
- d. Unanimous approval