

West Suburban Veterans District – August 1, 2019

Location: Weston Town Hall

Present: Chris Coleman, Leon Gaumond, Meghan Jop and Louise Miller

Also present: Sarada Kalpee and Sally Rose

Call to order: Meeting called to order at 2:30 pm.

Business:

1. Citizen Speak

None

2. Minutes

The Board voted (2-0-2) to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2019 meeting. Both Louise and Meghan abstained as they had not attended the January 15th meeting.

3. Outreach Events

Sarada reminded the Board that Purple Heart Day is Wednesday, August 7th. The Purple Heart flag is supposed to be flown in front of the Town Hall from sunup to sundown on August 7th. Discussion transpired regarding the remaining FY19 funds of \$76,945. The Board voted 4-0 to put \$15,000 in Unappropriated/Unassigned, and to distribute the remaining \$61,945 to the four communities, based on population. The total for each town is as follows:

Needham = \$22,057

Wayland = \$9,922

Weston = \$8,599

Wellesley = \$21,367

Total = \$61,945

Chris asked for a breakdown of hours worked and individuals who comprise the Financial Support line item of the Personal Services Budget. Meghan said that she could provide that to him. When asked Sally said that roughly 25% of her time is devoted to WSVD.

The Board is looking to hire a benefits eligible Head Administrator on a part-time, 20-25 hrs./wk basis to cover Sarada's responsibilities while Sarada is away for any long term military training with the understanding that that individual would continue on a full-time basis beginning in August 2020 to cover for the year that Sarada is overseas with the military. Meghan was going to distribute the Deputy Director job description and talk with Wellesley's HR Department about needing to fill the position.

4. Director's Update

Sarada said that Representative Denise Garelick is promoting the Valor Act for Veterans. Wayland is a strong advocate for the Valor Act. Sarada said that the \$2,500 earned is taxable income so some Veterans are not that enthusiastic about it. They prefer the tax write-off program

offered through the COA. All Veterans, ranked at least 40% disabled, are automatically tax exempt on property taxes so the write-off programs enable them to double dip.

Sarada is interested in a Graduate to Guardian program where a member of the military attends the high school commencement ceremonies and pins a pin on those high school seniors planning to enter the military. She will contact the four School Superintendents about offering this recognition at graduation. Leon said he's all for the program but cautioned that Superintendents may be wary as it could open up other groups wanting to offer special recognition to their special interests.

Sarada wants to promote the District and benefits available to Veterans and their families by creating a media presentation to air on each town's public access television channel. She will work with Stephanie Hawkinson, Wellesley's Communications and Project Manager, or Needham's VFW to create a program that can be used by all four communities. Each town may choose to personalize part of the presentation to make it town specific.

Meghan asked Sarada about her responsibility when a Veteran dies. Sarada said that she verifies the DD214, but that the Funeral Homes arrange for military honors. Sarada takes care of providing burial benefit information to family members.

5. Old/New Business

The next meeting is scheduled for 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 15th at the Wayland Town Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.