



THE AMERICAN LEGION  
JEFFERY S. HOLMES POST 84

November 2, 2023  
MEETING MINUTES

The meeting convened at 1800 hours by Commander Dennis Brown.

Roll call by Sergeant-at-Arms Sam Zucker. Present were: Commander and Judge Advocate Dennis Brown, First Vice Commander and Historian Howard Bixby, Adjutant and Finance Officer Scott Holmes and Chaplain Luther Johnson. Second Vice Commander Penny Johnson was excused. Visiting guest was Patti Holmes.

**Meeting Minutes:** Minutes of the October 5<sup>th</sup> meeting was read by Sergeant-at-Arms Sam Zucker. Motion to accept by Scott Holmes and seconded by Howard Bixby. No discussion. Unanimously approved.

**Finance Report:**

1. Finance Officer Scott Holmes reported that we have \$13,385.68 in the bank.
2. Thank you to Big Fatty's for their \$100 overpayment of their golf fee.

3. Scott stated that in the future the Finance Report will be sent to officers only.
4. The report was accepted and filed for audit.

**Service Report:** None

**Membership:**

1. We have 31 paid up members for fiscal year 2023-24. Our goal is 40 members.
2. There is ongoing membership recruitment.
3. Adjutant Scott Holmes has been informed that National will be raising the dues. In order for our Post to avoid any monetary losses, Scott made a motion that Post 84 raise our dues to \$40 as of January 1, 2024. Motion seconded by Luther Johnson. Unanimously approved.
4. Some exceptions may apply as determined by Finance Officer Scott Holmes. Also approved as part of the previous motion.

**Americanism:**

1. Scott Holmes and Luther Johnson will remove the Flags along route 5 as soon as possible after Veterans Day, November 11, as weather permits.
2. Norwich University's football game on November 11 will have free admission for all vets with ID.

## **Children and Youth:**

1. Athletics – Baseball – results of meeting of October 15, 2023.
  - a. Rule changes for playoff games.
  - b. Any adult person who will be on the coaching staff or in another capacity with Legion baseball will require a background check.
  - c. Any team member who is 18 years or older cannot share a room with a younger team mate at away games. Exception to this rule is possible with parents' permission.
2. The Haven Christmas party will take place on December 21<sup>st</sup>, from 3-5 PM at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in White River Junction. We need to provide gifts for 13 children even though only 10 will be at the party (3 children are too young to party). Entertainment provided by Will. Ice cream provided by Luther and Penny Johnson. Paper goods and water provided by Patti and Scott Holmes. Howard Bixby will provide cake. Pizza Chef of Quechee will provide the pizzas. United Church of Greater Hartford will donate knitted mittens and hats.
3. A BIG THANK YOU to Patti Holmes for organizing this year's Christmas Party.

## **Old Business:**

1. Veterans Day ceremonies will take place as follows:
  - a. 10:30 AM at the Maple Street Cemetery and then proceed to the Town Hall and Veterans Park.
2. Next Vet Council meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2024.

3. A conflict of veteran ceremonies in Hartford was discussed. The VA Hospital has ceremonies starting at 10 AM. The Vet Council schedules its ceremonies to start at 10:30 AM. Our Post decided to ask the Vet Council, via Commander Brown, to start at 11 AM so that members could attend both the VA and Hartford ceremonies.
4. First Vice Commander Howard Bixby stated that he will not be attending this year's Veterans Day ceremonies and informed us that Lannie Collins will bring the rifles.
5. Commander Brown reminded us that we still need to plan for the American Legion Family Day in 2024.
6. WWI/WWII Monument News
  - a. A motion was made by Sam Zucker and seconded by Howard Bixby to donate our pledge now. Motion carried.
  - b. Post 26 has donated \$1500.
  - c. The Vet Council confirmed their pledge of \$500.
  - d. Denis Backus stated that the DAV will contribute.
  - e. Commander Brown reported that as of November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the hole for the base has been dug and the concrete pour has been delayed due to illness of our volunteer Clint Potter.
  - f. Commander Brown also reported that funding for the monument has been met and if no snafus, will be ready for dedication on Memorial Day 2024.
7. Blue Star Memorial
  - a. Clean-up on going thanks to Commander Brown.
  - b. Scott will trim the evergreens on either side of the monument so that it will be more visible to the passers-by.

8. Hometown Heroes Banners (see Appendix A for Commander Brown's report)

**New Business:**

1. The Fall Conference report from Commander Brown and Adjutant Scott Holmes:
  - a. Veteran suicide prevention program Be the One – depression signs to watch for:
    - i. Death in the family
    - ii. Homelessness
    - iii. Loss of a job
    - iv. PTSD/TBI
    - v. Excessive debt
    - vi. Military Sexual Trauma
  - b. State wide membership over 20 years has dropped from 40,000 to 30,000. To encourage young members to join, “gaming” was suggested. Many younger vets communicate via phone or computer technology.
  - c. Chittenden County, the largest in the State, has only one Post.
  - d. The Dodge House in Ludlow has re-opened since having flood damage. They provide: 5 beds for males and 3 for females along with homeless Management Information System screening; food shelf and new shoes and boots for residents. The goal of the Dodge House is to rehabilitate veterans so that they can return to society and the work place within one year.

- e. The Veteran Place in Northfield has 30 beds.
  - f. Post fund raiser suggestions – Booths at Fairs, knock on doors and leave Post information leaflets.
  - g. Service Officer Lawrence (Larry) Thompson works at the WRJ VA and can be contacted at 802-295-9363X5166 or 802-296-5166. His e-mail is:  
[Lawrence.thompson@va.gov](mailto:Lawrence.thompson@va.gov)
2. Commander Brown asked those present if he should ask service officer Larry Thompson to speak at our next meeting in December. Members voted yes. Commander Brown will contact Larry and determine if he is available.
3. Winter conference info:
- a. When – January 19 and 20, 2024.
  - b. Where – Hampton Inn, Colchester, VT.
  - c. For further information contact Adjutant Scott Holmes at: [thordog.holmes@gmail.com](mailto:thordog.holmes@gmail.com) and refer to Appendix B.
4. Special thanks from Commander Brown went to:
- a. Sam Zucker for recording our meeting minutes and for getting our web site on line.
  - b. Patti Holmes for the October meeting minutes due to Sam's absence.
  - c. Scott Holmes for transporting the Commander and himself to the Fall conference.
5. The Post sends an "atta boy" to Commander Brown for his leadership and for the thank you notes to last meeting's guest speaker, Ben Gardner and for the generous donation from Stevie Hillard in memory of Dan.

The meeting adjourned at 2012 hours.

Sam Zucker, Sergeant-at-Arms for Scott Holmes, Adjutant

Next meeting, Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 6:00 PM, at WRJ VA, Freedom Building (formally Building 44), Room 103a.

## **Appendix A**

I had a meeting with Scott Haulser of Parks and Recreation and Lori Hirshfield of Planning and Development. We met for an hour and discussed mostly generalities as this project is just starting.

### **Topics of discussion:**

1) Find out about the existing flag brackets and if the banners will fit? A sample banner is being sent along with a new sample of bracket/posts. There are 3 sizes of banners, 18"x 36", 24"x 48" and 30"x 60". The 30x60 was quickly ruled out, so we'll have to pick one of the smaller sizes.

2) Form a committee? We will most likely need a committee to work on this. I'm meeting with John Haverstock, our new town manager next week (Thursday, November 9) to discuss this and some other things, including the Monument Project. I want to learn how he feels about this project and what role the town is going to want with this. This is very important and I'm hoping for his support (which I think he'll be on board), so we'll see. In the meantime, Scott will try to contact the town manager to let him know of this project. Scott is also going to send a copy of the 'charge' the pool committee used as a possible example of what this new banner committee can work from to create its

charge. To initiate a committee, a charge should be written so the new committee will know what they are being tasked to do and for how long.

3) Location of the banners. This went from exploring different villages locations or to start out with just putting them downtown. There are banner brackets around S. Main St. and the Coolidge Block, but none along Railroad Row (Veterans Park) where the new monument is going to be.

4) How many to put up, on every pole, every other pole, or just in a certain area? This is still undecided. Putting HHBs on every other pole might work and then putting a 'Welcome to Hartford' in between. There is also an option to have hanging plants on some of the light poles.

5) Figure out who qualifies for a banner. For veterans that should be easy by just verifying by their form DD214. If a first responder or teacher or others are proposed, perhaps those entities can evaluate who qualifies.

During this meeting Lori mentioned some funds that may be available, such as a Downtown Vibrancy Award, and some money that wasn't used during the reconstruction (the TIF Project) along S Main St. More to come on that.

Scott and Lori spoke about repairing the Kiosk that's in Veterans Park. It is scheduled to be taken apart before winter and have the bottom parts replaced with galvanized pieces (so it should last a lot longer than the original). They are going to keep the existing roof. The side panels will be changed as needed as



some currently have typos and incorrect information. The Kiosk will be re-installed in the spring.

## Appendix B

# THE AMERICAN LEGION DEPARTMENT OF VERMONT

# 2024 MID-WINTER CONFERENCE BANQUET

HAMPTON BY HILTON, 42 Lower Mtn View Dr., Colchester, VT

Friday, January 19, 2024

## COCKTAILS – 6:00 P.M

DINNER – 6:30 P.M.

Chicken Marsala & Cider Glazed Pork will be served with Herb Roasted Red Potatoes, Pasta Primavera, Sauteed Vegetable Medley, Chef's Choice Dessert Table – Coffee, Tea and Lemonade

**\$35.00 per person – All Inclusive**

Make Checks Payable to American Legion Department of Vermont

**SEND CHECKS TO:**

Dept. HQ, P.O. Box 396, Montpelier, VT 05601-0396

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS IS: January 8, 2024

 PLEASE RESERVE: # \_\_\_\_\_ Banquet Tickets

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Post/Squadron/Unit: \_\_\_\_\_ (Circle Legion Sons of  
the American Legion Auxiliary)