

**Town of Winchester
Soldiers' Monument Commission**

P.O. Box 322 • Winsted, CT 06098 • www.SoldiersMonumentWinsted.org

Mission Statement

The commission recognizes the historical importance and aesthetic value of the Soldiers' Monument, a symbolic icon of the town of Winchester. Our mission is to protect, preserve, and enhance this nationally-recognized landmark while providing a clean and safe park for all residents and visitors.

MINUTES

For the Monthly Meeting

August 3, 2016

Held in the third-floor conference room, Winchester Town Hall, 7 p.m.

**Virginia Shultz – Chairman
Noreen Marchand – Vice-Chairman
Deborah Kessler- Secretary
Lynn Kessler –Treasurer
Jack Bourque**

**Steve Dew
Sheila Sedlack
Steven Silvester
Douglas Werner**

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:05 P.M. by Virginia Shultz-Charette, Chairman.

2. Roll Call

Steven Silvester and Steve Dew were not in attendance.

3. Public Comment

Curt Werner addressed the commission regarding his concerns about security, in particular drug usage and dealing, at the monument. As a next door neighbor to the monument, Mr. Werner has observed quite a bit of illegal activity. He states that cars come to the monument, both during the daytime and evening hours and park behind the monument to conceal their activity. He has observed multiple visits in a day by the same vehicles. Mr. Werner has spoken to the Police Chief about his concerns. He would like to see the chain on the driveway in place year round and moved only when the monument has a special program.

Phillip Allen, Chairman of the EDC and on behalf of the Friends of Main Street (FOMS), addressed the commission to give advice on possible avenues for fundraising and volunteer participation. He stated that the commission is restricted in terms of many grants and fundraising since the monument is owned by the town. One potential way to raise funds would be to have the FOMS apply for appropriate grants. He feels that our best option however is to establish a SoMo Auxilliary Corps(Corps) whose purpose

would be to do fundraising and volunteer work for the monument. If we establish this Corps as an independent 501C3 they are able to fundraise and designate the money raised for the monument. Mr. Allen feels that this sort of Corps will allow for long term fundraising and stability for the monument in future years. He estimates that the startup fees, including legal and filing fees to be roughly \$1000 which could be waived in a pro bono situation if that applies. Mr. Allen stated that FOMS would be able to assist in establishing and promoting the Corps.

Sheila questioned whether the BOS would have to have authority over the establishment of the Corps. Discussion by the commission recommended checking the Charter for any particulars. Virginia noted that the establishment of the Corps would allow us to reach far beyond the geographical border of the town in maintaining the monument.

4. Approval of Secretary's Minutes

The minutes for the July 2016 meeting were approved. The motion was made by Sheila and seconded by Noreen. Unanimous approval. They will be emailed to Town Hall per procedure.

5. Approval of Treasurer's Report

Lynn is still awaiting the completed town fiscal report in order to determine the exact figures for the monument accounts. Sheila brought proceeds from the candy sales in her office. She asked Noreen to purchase more candy to keep the supply consistent. Sheila reimbursed Noreen for her candy expenditure and will provide a receipt. Virginia brought in the proceeds from the donation jar at the monument. The report as presented was approved by the commission. The motion was made by Noreen and seconded by Sheila. Unanimous approval.

6. Communications

An email was received by Deb from Klebe Fuel. The email was read to the commission and a copy is attached in documentation. Klebe Fuel is offering to assist the monument by sponsoring an upcoming event. There was discussion about this and the question arose as to whether the donation could be used toward a security system at the monument. Deb will contact Klebe Fuel and let them know that we are very interested in the donation but at this time do not have a definite program to devote it to.

7. Old Business

Review of summer concert and summer monument openings

All agreed that the concert at the monument was fabulous and would like to see this become an annual event. Deb will speak to Helen Bunnell at FOMS regarding next year. The openings have been going very well with anywhere between 6-20 visitors each weekend. The visitors are from all over the country. Some from Hawaii, California, Wisconsin and Georgia.

Rick Spencer, August 28- rain location

Virginia is concerned about having a good turnout for this event and wants to be sure advertising is done in advance. She asked Jack about using social media to promote it. Jack also suggested having it announced during the public comment at the BOS meeting.

The rain location is at Whiting Mills. The program will begin at 2 PM and will last for one hour.

2016 Cemetery Walk Update

Virginia has begun to scan the biographies to Deb. Lynn has prepared a flyer for this year. Deb will scan to Virginia so she has it available for the openings. Deb has sent out the preliminary email to all past participants and has had mostly positive responses to both people portraying and to people leading tours.

Thank you notes

Discussion regarding ordering new thank you notes for both Sheila and Virginia to use. Sheila currently sends the thank you notes for donations and Virginia sends thank you notes for volunteers. Virginia got estimates from Goulet Printing to reprint the current thank you notes that Sheila uses and to create new thank you notes for her use using a vintage monument postcard as the background. They will both use the same envelopes. Virginia proposed taking the money to pay for this from Office Supplies. The cost will be \$258 for 500 envelopes and 250 of each thank you note. Sheila made a motion to accept this. It was seconded by Lynn. Unanimous approval.

Fundraising projects

- 2016 fundraising letter campaign. No new information as Steve S. was not at the meeting.

Status of returning \$100K to restoration account

Discussed during the Treasurer's Report. No new information available.

Transfer of \$30K to restoration account

Discussed during the Treasurer's Report. No new information available.

Security signs and security camera

- Steve S. has established that we will need \$100 for the signs. There is no charge for the stakes. Public works will do the installation. It was determined that we should take the money from Maintenance & Structures for this project. We will need a P.O. Virginia made a motion to use \$100 to pay for the signs. Lynn seconded. Unanimous approval.
- Discussion regarding a possible security camera for the monument park. Doug and Sheila met with the Chief of Police to view the police department security camera system. The Chief recommended that Doug and Sheila speak to a representative at the Gilbert School regarding the same sort of security system. This type of camera would be connected with the police department and seen by dispatchers in Town Hall. It would need a router or wifi connection. The camera would likely cover the back of the monument. Jack mentioned that other neighbors at the monument are considering their own security cameras. It was suggested that Doug and Sheila finish gathering the information and that we invite the Chief of Police to our next meeting for his insight on what is the best security measure to consider. The discussion was tabled until the September meeting.

Garbage Can Emptying

Dept. of Public Works has been emptying the can. If we choose to put the chain back up across the driveway, Doug and Sheila offered to pick it up.

8. New Business

Bid package to repair monument roof-status

The bid process is slated to begin on August 9th at 10 AM. Jack, Virginia and Noreen expressed interest in attending.

Window Repair

Slated to be repaired within the next two weeks. Virginia submitted the PO. A copy is in the documentation for this meeting.

Gravestones

There is no new information from Steve D. regarding gravestone restoration. Virginia reported that the Palmer stone has not be lifted.

Possible patching to defer repointing

Lynn spoke with one of the contractors who may be bidding on the roof restoration. The man does not use scaffolding, but instead learned his trade from his father who was a steeple repairman. The monument is the same sort of structure. Lynn asked him what he would recommend to do for the monument in terms of the missing mortar. He estimated that it would cost roughly \$8K to stop the current holes from getting worse. He explained that the mortar should be convex rather than concave as it is now. It now allows for the water to collect and it accelerates the deterioration. He also noted that the mortar at present is Portland Cement, a substance that is not recommended for historic structures at all. Portland Cement does not allow for expansion and contraction therefore there is no give as the building does so. This is very detrimental to historic structures. It was discussed that we should consider this for next year. There is a current \$3K ceiling before needing to have bids. There was discussion about a possible bid waiver to have this done.

SoMo Volunteers

Trip Advisor

Virginia spoke with Candy Perez about whether we would be eligible to participate in Trip Advisor. We are. Lynn made a motion that Virginia should pursue getting the monument on Trip Advisor. Doug seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.

9. Adjournment

A motion was made by Virginia, seconded by Lynn to adjourn the meeting at 9:08. Unanimous approval.

Respectfully Submitted
Deborah Kessler, Secretary
(Supporting documentation is grouped chronologically.)