

**VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 19, 2022**

**MINUTES**

**1. Meeting Called To Order at 10:04 AM**

**2. Open Public Meeting Statement**

In compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act, the notice requirements have satisfied. Meeting dates are confirmed at the Annual Meeting. Notices of this meeting was provided to the Record, Star Ledge, and Cablevision. These minutes are posted on two municipal public notice bulletin boards, published on the borough website and veterans committee's website and on file in the Office of the Borough Clerk.

**3. Roll Call**

<b>Roll Call</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Excused</b>
Alexandra Rodriguez, Member		X	
Thomas Lang, Member	X		
Rafael Marte, Council Liaison	X		
Richard Morf, Member	X		
Willie Morce Jr, Member	X		
John Opatovsky, Vice Chairman	X		
Dr. Samuel Paul, Chaplin	X		
Fred Sahlberg, Member	X		
Joseph Sokol, Member	X		
John Smith, Chairman	X		
Wilfred Selby, Member		X	
Benjamin Whaley, Member	X		
Amos White, Member	X		
Warren Williams, Secretary	X		

**4. Salute to the Flag**

Pledge of Allegiance led by Committee Member Amos White

**5. Invocation**

The Invocation given by Chaplin Dr. Samuel Paul

**6. Changes to the Agenda**

No Additions/Deletion or Revisions

**7. Presentation**

**A. Presenting New Committee Member (Benjamin Whaley)**

Committee Chairman Jon Smith, welcome Benjamin Whaley as a new member to the Bergenfield Veterans Advisory Committee, as the American Legion Liaison. Mr. Whaley was presented the BVAC Challenge Coin and was given the veteran's oath of commitment to support our local veterans.

## **8. Correspondence**

Committee Secretary Warren Williams submitted letter to the Chairman/President/CEO of PSE&G Corporations, to obtain permission to utilize the street poles to place the banners. The Office of the Chairman of the Board, President & CEO for PSE&G has approved and given permission to the street poles for the banners in honoring our veterans. This was approved as of February 15, 2022

## **9. Approval of Minutes**

**Motion Offered** by Committee Member Fred Sahlberg and **Second** by Committee Member Joseph Sokol approve the minutes for January 15, 2022 regular committee meetings minutes and publish to the committee's website. All present voting in favor and none opposed.

## **10. Treasury Report**

Committee Member Warren Williams update the committee with the monthly treasury report for period of January 15, 2022 through February 19, 2022. No change addition funds added to committee's treasury. Current balance of funds available is \$2,507.32.

**Motion Offered** by Committee Member John Opatovsky and **Second** by Committee Member Amos White to approve the committee's treasury report for the period of January 15, 2022 to February 19, 2022. All present voting in favor and none opposed.

## **11. Unfinished Business**

### **A. Shirts/Caps/Jacket Logo Ideas (Special Project Team)**

Committee Members Amos White, presented committee an update of the shirts. The shirt company refunded the money that the September 2021 order was lost do to the shipping crisis during Covid-19 pandemic. The company reordered the committee's shirts at no cost and no shipping fee. The reorder is still pending delivery. Committee Amos White will continue to track and following up the status for delivery.

### **B. Street Pole Banners for Veterans (Update)**

Committee Secretary Warren Williams presented an update pertaining to the letter to the Chairman of the Board, President & CEO of PSE&G Corporations, to obtain permission to utilize the street poles to place the banners. It was approved as of February 15, 2022. The Committee Secretary Warren Williams, presented other committee members the guideline requirements given by PSE&G and must forward the street locations, pole number and liability insurance within next 2 weeks. Committee Chairman John Smith, asked Councilman Rafael Marte for assistance in getting the Mayor & Council to approve the Liability Insurance and recommend that assist in purchasing the Street Pole Banner Brackets kits or recommend that the veterans committee be given a budget to buying the bracket kits. Committee Chair John Smith also recommend that Boro DPW to install the banner bracket on the assigned street poles that the committee has the selected locations. The street locations are; West Church Street, New Bridge Road (Veterans Memorial Park), South Prospect Ave and South Washington Ave. Committee Chairman John Smith, give street assignments to the committee members to conduct street pole assessment and pole ID numbers. The committee members assignment as follows: Church Street: Amos White, West Main Street: Willie Moree, New Bridge Road: Warren Williams, South Prospect Ave: Richard Morf & John Smith, South Washington Ave: John Smith & Warren Williams, West Clinton Ave: Fredrick Sahlberg. The street pole assessment report must be completed no late than March 10, 2022 for final review by Committee Secretary Warren Williams and to submit the information back to PSEG for the street pole locations for placement of the banners.

## 12. New Business

### A. Memorial Day Parade Route (May 2022)

Committee Chairman John Smith, presented to the committee, the plan for the 2022 Memorial Day Parade information. (1) The parade route for 2022 Memorial Day start at the Bergenfield Borough Municipal Building at 198 North Washington Ave. The parade route will continue head down on North and South Washington Aves and preside to the Bergenfield VFW Post 6467 and end at the reviewing stand at the VFW Post. (2) All organizations participating in the parade will be assembling in the rear parking lot of the Bergenfield Borough Municipal Building at 10:00 -1100 AM. (3) The Memorial Day Ceremony will be at 11:30AM in front Borough Municipal Building. All organizations participating in the parade are required to attend the Memorial Day Ceremony, along with special guest, borough officials and residence. (4) the official start of the parade will be at 12:15, after the closing the of morning ceremony. **Motion Offered** by Thomas Lang and **Second** by Joseph Sokol, to approve the 2022 Memorial Day Parade Route along the parade assembly location and time. The start time (11:30AM) the morning ceremony and the start time of the actual parade start time (12:15PM). The Committee Chairman, will present this information at the next Mayor and Council meeting on March 1, 2022. All present voting in favor and none opposed.

### B. Parade Grand Marshal Guidelines

Committee Secretary Warren Williams presented to the committee, the guidelines and biographical sketch format the 2022 Memorial Day Parade Grand Marshall. The biographical format will be in a military format with photograph. All grand marshal nominee biographical must be submitted no later than April 1, 2022 to the veterans committee for final selection of the 2022 Grand Marshal by April 16, 2022. Sample of the biographical format will be available at the next committee meeting for March 19, 2022.

### C. Create Meeting Sharing Zoom Link

Committee Chairman John Smith presented a suggestion that the committee, need to create zoom link, for committee members who are unable to attend committee's meetings came use the zoom link. This zoom link will be a good opportunity for absent member to be up to date with the committee's process. Chairman John Smith, recommended that Committee Member Thomas Lang to create a zoom link for the Veterans Committee. **Motion Offered** by Committee Member Fredrick Sahilberg and **Second** by Committee Member Willie Moree, to approve the creation of the zoom Link for the Veterans Committee for members who are unable to attend monthly committee meetings in person. All present voting in favor and none opposed.

### D. Discuss Ideas/Plans for Special Golf or Bowling Events

Committee Member Warren Williams presented a suggestion that the committee coming with an ideal and plan a community special events. The ideal is the plan for a special Bowling and Golf events that the committee can gain more notability and as a fundraiser in support the veterans. Chairman John Smith like this ideal that the committee have some type of special annual in support for the veterans committee. Chairman John Smith assigned Committee Member Benjamin Whaley to check with some of the local Bowling Center for event information. Committee Member Joseph Sokol to check with some the Golf Course Country Clubs for special golfing event information and have some some information for the next committee meeting.

### 13. Verbal Communications

#### A. Congressman Gottheimer Virtual Meeting

Committee Chairman John Smith and Committee Secretary Warren Williams attended Congressman Josh Gottheimer Virtual Veterans Stakeholder Zoom Call on February 4, 2022. The virtual meeting was with a panel of 17 veterans from various veterans organizations and state and federal veterans service officer. This meeting with Congressman Gottheimer to talk about some of the issues and concerns that are affecting some of veterans benefits. A couple concerns was the cost of SGLI vs. VGLI monthly premium rates should not change to the high cost rate when an active duty service member pays a low monthly rate until these service member leaves the military are paying a higher monthly rates for VGLI. The other concern is the VA Caregiver Program, made regulatory changes for the New Eligibility Criteria of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers who been in the program before October 1, 2020. The participant are having a reassessment of there eligibility and then are being disapproved to continue with program after being a participant for the last 5 or 6 years. These issues and concerns are being follow up by Congressman Josh Gottheimer and will have some kind of updated information for the next Virtual Veterans Stakeholder Zoom Call.

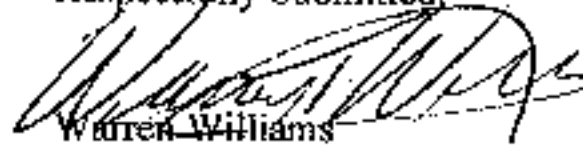
### 14. Chairman's Comments

No comments at this time from Committee Chairman

### 15. Adjournment

**Motion Offered** by Richard Moef, and **Second** by Thomas Lang, to adjourned the meeting. The announcement for next month meeting is on March 19, 2022; Time 10:00 AM, location VFW Post. There being no further business to come before the Veterans Committee. The meeting was adjourned at 12:21 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Warren Williams  
Sgt Major (Ret), U. S. Army  
Committee Secretary