

Seekonk Veterans			
2.26.2024		7:00pm	Senior Center Cafe
Meeting called by	Kevin Kugel		
Type of meeting	Seekonk Veterans Council Meeting, Audio #059		
Chairman	Kevin Kugel		
Audio/Transcriber	James LaFlame		
Attendees	Committee Members: Kevin Kugel (Chair), William Curtis (Vice Chair), Moises Moniz, Russ Pion, Joseph Raez & Matt Pezzullo Other: James LaFlame (VSO) Absent: Adam Tumlinson (excused)		
Meeting Minutes			
Discussion	Meeting minutes for November 20, 2024 approved.		
Action Items	Send to Town Clerk and post on town website		
Deadline	ASAP		
Agenda Topic			
	VSO Updates		

VSO Updates	
Discussion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jim passed his National Service Officer (NSO) accreditation test. His application (VA Form 21) has been sent to the VA by the Massachusetts EOVS and is awaiting his name to be added to the list of NSOs on the VA's website. 2. In the meantime, he may continue to work VA cases with the temporary permission given to MA VSOs from the VA. 3. The amount of money coming into Seekonk monthly via VA benefits is now over \$500,000 a month. 4. Tyler Technology has changed over the state's software to their TVB (Tyler Veteran's Benefits). EOVS transitioned all of the MA VSOs prior to providing any training on the new system. 5. Jim, along with all of the other department heads, recently met with the Finance Committee to discuss the 2026 budget.

Agenda Topic	
Old Business	Holiday Festival AAR
Discussion	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Only 29 out of the 50 trees were sold on the 4th iteration of the Holiday Festival. All of the previous years were sold out with a waiting list.2. Kevin suggested we go back down to 35 trees and can readjust if the demand is there.3. The quality of the trees was much better this past year. We have the name of the company that our supplier used – a tag was found on a tree for a company in Maine. Adam had also tracked down a potential supplier in Connecticut.4. Jim suggested we send out a letter to all past donors. The letter will apologize for the years where our quality was quite low, but assure them that with a new supplier, the trees will be as good as the trees in 2024.5. Bill suggested we ask for 5-6 foot trees, as the 4-5 foot trees we asked for were good quality, but many were undersized.6. The tree lighting ceremony was not as well attended as the previous year. Joe stated that the reason could be that Santa had numerous appearances in Seekonk the week prior to the lighting, so it wasn't as big a deal as the past year.

Agenda Topic		
Old Business	Holiday Festival AAR (continued)	
Discussion	<p>7. Russ suggested getting Christmas carolers to sing at the tree lighting. Jim will look into a cost-free option.</p> <p>8. Kevin mentioned that if we know earlier enough what people want written on their tree signs, we can have them printed. Joe suggested a laminated dry erase sign, so signs don't have to be remade every year.</p> <p>9. Bill had some intel on other tree displays in the area. He mentioned that Slater Park has very strict rules, so he didn't think that us becoming stricter this past year was a big deal. Their trees are \$40, whereas Grist Mill is \$100 a tree. He said that Slater Park always has the tree lighting on the first Saturday of December, so have a set day every year could be advantageous.</p>	

Agenda Topic	
New Business	Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony
Discussion	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Jim will again formally request the SHS parking lot for the rally point. He'll ask about any other events on that day and if Aitken can be used for food trucks. Joe pointed out that Seekonk requires a town permit for food trucks, but any of the brick-and-mortar food establishments will have that permit.2. Kevin said the Seekonk CERT team wants to enter a float in the parade, as well as provide water and first aid. They will try to get golf carts to assist them in that effort.3. Kevin asked if we should make any adjustments to the rally points or routes. Joe suggested having all of the walking groups together, since vehicles generally move faster. There was also an issue with two of the bands being too close together.4. Jim will invite Kathy Larivee to the next meeting.5. Kevin has pictures he can send Joe and Jim for publicizing Memorial Day.
Topic	Adjournment
Motion made by Russ to adjourn, seconded by Mo and voted unanimously	