



Sullivan County Veterans Committee Meeting Agenda - Final

100 North Street
Monticello, NY 12701

Chairman Luis Alvarez
Vice Chairman Nicholas Salomone Jr.
Committee Member Terry Blosser-Bernardo
Committee Member Catherine Scott
Committee Member Matt McPhillips

Thursday, December 5, 2024

11:00 AM

Government Center

Call To Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Opening Remarks - Luis Alvarez, Chairman

Commander's Reports - Veterans Service Organizations

Reports:

Veterans Service Agency - Director's Report

[ID-6967](#)

Discussion:

Public Comment

Resolutions:

Adjourn

Sullivan County

Legislative Memorandum

File #: ID-6967

Agenda Date: 12/5/2024

Agenda #:

VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY REPORT

December 5, 2024 - 11:00 AM

Director's Report

- *Local Activities*
 - On October 19th, VSO Zackery Jones attended the Alive Again Outreach Event for Veterans and made contact with veterans and shared information with many organizations regarding services available to veterans and spouses.
 - On November 4th, I attended the DAV sponsored Tri-Valley Central School District's *Field of Flags Ceremony*, where each participant placed an American Flag around the flagpole in front of the school, transforming the area into a vibrant and meaningful display of respect.
 - On November 7th, VSO Zackery Jones attended the Liberty Central School District's Veterans Day Ceremony, honoring all veterans.
 - On November 8th, I attended the Tri-Valley Central School District's *Veterans Day Assembly* where I gave a speech to the staff and students about the history and meaning of Veterans Day. I also attended the Veterans Day service held at Morningside Park in Hurleyville.
 - On November 9th, I attended the 26th Annual Veterans Day Parade in Woodbourne which had a nice ceremony at the conclusion of the parade.
 - On November 11th, VSO Joe Putnam attended the Veterans Day Ceremony in Kauneonga Lake.
 - I participated in the Veterans Day Ceremony in the lobby of the Government Center where we honored two 99-year-old veterans. Eugene Weinstein, a WWII and Korean War veteran and Marty Feldman, a WWII veteran and Prisoner of War. Marty was presented with a plaque on behalf of the American Legion, VFW and Sullivan County Veterans Coalition.
 - I also attended the Liberty Elks Lodge's spaghetti & meatballs Veterans Day dinner.
 - On November 11th, our Clerk Sheldon Dillon visited, did welfare checks, and annotated biographical and medical billing data for six veterans at the Achieve Nursing Home.
 - On November 14th, our office participated in a NYS DVA training which provided a lot of

important information on Common Law Marriages. Some of the topics that were covered included eligibility criteria for disability claims, case law review, how to overcome Common Law Marriages when the state the veteran resides in does not recognize such marriages, and the forms required.

- On November 19th, our Clerk Sheldon Dillon helped to distribute pallets of food with Sharon Ferber at the Community Assistance Center.

- *VA & PACT Act Updates*

- The incoming Trump Administration to appoint former US Representative Doug Collins (R-GA) as Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Collins is a veteran and served as a Chaplain in the US Navy and is now a Colonel in the Air Force Reserve.
- Trump also claims that he wants to streamline VA processes and services which may lead to privatization of VA medical care in the future.
- In honor of Veterans Day, Governor Hochul signs executive order and legislation to support the heroes who served our nation.
 - Executive Order to enhance quality of supportive housing available to veterans and military families
 - Legislation to expand the Veterans Tuition Awards Program to non-combat military veterans residing in New York
 - Legislation to expand access to veterans' benefits for individuals who served outside of wartime
 - Legislation to require State Agencies to establish a veterans' liaison to coordinate with the Department of Veterans' Services
 - Legislation to improve veterans' access to information about their benefits
 - Legislation to provide additional financial support for veterans' funerals
 - Eight new laws will rename State Roads and Bridges to honor the memory of our fallen heroes

- *The Good News*

- On November 6th, our office received donations of cards and gifts consisting of personal hygiene items, socks, household essentials, playing cards, word search books, and assorted candy from the Kiwanis Clubs of Monticello and Woodridge. These items will be distributed to local veterans, including those that are homeless and patients at the local nursing and adult homes, as well as Castle Point and Albany VA hospitals.

- We sent handmade Veterans Day Cards to all of the adult homes and nursing homes in the County as well as to both Albany and Castle Point VA Medical Centers. The cards were made and donated by different organizations within the County.
- We received donations of clothing and personal hygiene items from the Daughters of the American Revolution for veterans in need.
- We delivered turkeys and holiday meals to veterans in need throughout the County.

VETERANS SERVICE AGENCY REPORT

December 5, 2024 - 11:00 AM

1. Veterans referred to Sullivan County Transportation for VA Medical Appointments:

| | <u>Albany</u> | <u>Castle Point</u> | <u>Local</u> |
|-----------|---------------|---------------------|--------------|
| September | 3 | 32 | 23 |
| October | 4 | 46 | 25 |

2. Veterans/Dependents buried in Sullivan County Veterans Cemetery through Nov 22, 2024:

| | | |
|---|--------------|------------------------------|
| Veterans Buried Alone | 1,169 | |
| Dependents | 145 | |
| Veterans/Spouses | 662 | |
| Total Burials in Veterans Cemetery - | 1,976 | (+62 since Dec. 2023) |

3. Contacts:

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| September | 122 |
| October | 155 |

4. Applications:

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|-----------|----|
| September | 18 |
| October | 24 |

5. Homeless Veterans:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| September | 8 |
| October | 8 |

6. New Veterans

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|-----------|---|
| September | 2 |
| October | 9 |

7. Phone Calls

| | |
|-----------|-----|
| September | 614 |
| October | 819 |