

Monuments and Ceremonies Commission Meeting Minutes March 13, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 3:34 PM by Chairman Phil Kraft. Commissioners present were: John Geoghegan, Roland Holub, Ken Reiss, Charles Scribner, Sueann Schorr, George Walsh. Also present was Calvin Chung, representing Troop 53, BSA.

The minutes of the prior meeting were accepted as written.

Phil Kraft announced that he had stepped down as Grand Marshal of the 2012 parade in favor of John Geoghegan. The commission formally endorsed Geoghegan as Grand Marshal, and he accepted.

John Geoghegan recommended that Craig Schorr be this year's speaker. This was approved by vote of the commission. Sueann Schorr was invited to join her husband in delivering the address.

A discussion followed as to how the Commission should spend its parade budget; the choice would depend on whether contributors could be found to back either of two pending alternatives:

--A 15-piece marching band, the Patriot Brass, has been tentatively engaged for the parade. Their fee is \$2,500. The Masons have agreed to underwrite \$1,000 of this, and it is hoped that another sponsor, perhaps a local bank, could be found to pay the rest.

--A portable aluminum reviewing stand would cost in the \$2,500-\$3,000 range. The Senior Men have been approached to see if they would consider a major contribution to the stand as a memorial tribute to Phil Morehouse. SM president John Pudlowski indicated that a contribution in the neighborhood of \$400 would be more likely. George Walsh raised the possibility of a direct appeal to members.

The allocation of the M&C budget would be determined by how these alternatives worked out. Phil Kraft will contact member Dave Polett, who initiated both projects, to determine if we needed to lock in the Patriot brass with a deposit.

Other Parade items covered included:

--We need to determine if the six cars used by the Senior Men can be run two abreast or staggered to reduce the length of their unit;

--Calvin Chung agreed to supply older scouts from Troop 53 to help oversee the Cub Scouts during assembly and on the route of march;

--Phil Kraft will attempt to get a commitment from the SOS group at the High School to help during the parade assembly.

--There will be a training session scheduled for the parking lot/assembly helpers. It was suggested that Phil contact a cartographer about making a map of the assembly site.

--The flyover has been requested. It will likely be the civilian-type Lear jet that we have had in the past couple of years. John Geoghegan offered to contact the Fairfield police about the possibility of getting their helicopter to fly over.

--Clergy need to be recruited for the invocation and benediction. John Geoghegan has a contact who can ask the ne Congregational minister; Sueann Schorr will ask Msgr. McGrath.

--Police Dept. representatives will attend the April 10 meeting of the Commission.

Phil Kraft then went over a list of parade invitees who had not yet responded to the invitation.

Other Business:

--The need to permanently place the old plaque from the White Bridge had been mentioned to Jaime Stevenson, but we have heard nothing back from the selectmen as yet.

--We have been assured by the Darien Housing Authority that both the Fitch Home plaque and the memorial tree from Gettysburg will be safe during the construction at the Allen-O'Neill site.

--A vote of thanks was offered by the Commission to Cub Scout Pack 155 for their work in removing the holiday wreaths from the Fitch Veterans' Cemetery. Secretary Karen Polett is requested to convey his appreciation in a note to Pack 155.

--Chairman Kraft invited Calvin Chung to become a member of the Commission. He accepted.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM. The next meeting will be April 10, at 3:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Reiss, for the Secretary.