



**Town of Garner
Veterans Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 10, 2025
9:00 am, White Deer Park Nature Center**

Attendees:

Committee Members: John Foster (Chair), Matt Pedone (V Chair) (absent), Helen Carter (Sec), Jeff Hicks, Don Searles, Robert Gregory (absent), Tim Stevens

Ex-Officio: Bob Carter (VFW) (excused), Terry Chatfield (AL), Willis McKoy (DAV) (absent), Phil Mathews (ToG Mayor Appointee) (excused)

Town Staff: Maria Munoz-Blanco (Director PRCR), Shelby Paustian (Events), Colleen Bockhahn (White Deer/Lake Benson Park Rec Program Mgr)

- I. Call to Order: 9:01, John Foster - Chair
 - a. Approval of Agenda Motion: Jeff/Terry. (unanimous)
 - b. Approval of Meeting Minutes (December 9, 2024) Motion: Jeff/Terry. (unanimous)

- II. Petitions and Comments from the Public (none)

- III. Report from Standing Committees and Staff
 - a. Observances
 - i. Salute to Troops: Late April-early May. Screening of: PTSD The Invisible Enemy @ GPAC. Date to be scheduled. (Tim lead)
 - ii. Memorial Day Observance: May 26, 2025 @ 9:30 am. LBP @ the Veterans Memorial. Foul weather location @ LBP Shelter 1.
 - Tours 8-11am
 - Speaker: Willis will reach out to them.
 - PW to clean shelter 1 pre-emptively.
 - Mr. Matthews will M.C. and lead Pledge of Allegiance.
 - National Anthem singer: Hannah? Dana Dixon as backup.
 - Shelby will follow up with Mayor, ToG Honor Guard and Scouts.
 - AL and VFW will provide and place wreaths. Tim will provide stands.
 - iii. July 3rd Celebration @ LBP. Tours 5-7:30 pm. Tents, tables, chairs (dozen), water. Place adjacent to trees near entrance of Memorial.
 - iv. Veterans Day Observance: November 11, 2025 @ 11:00 am, Aversboro Road Baptist Church
 - Keynote for 2025 - Tim recommended BG Lee Major.
 - Need to confirm church early.

- v. Wreath Across America and Gold Star Families: December 13, 2025 @ 10:00 am, LBP at Veterans Memorial. Light Attendance. Additional advertising requested.
- b. VFW, Aux - Dinners being held at Post to raise \$ for Hurricane Helene relief
- c. AL, SAL, Riders, Aux - Thank you to Town for honoring Chris Cook who was elected to Legion Baseball Hall of Fame.
- d. DAV - NTR

IV. Old Business

- a. Memorial brick order - Colleen Bockhahn - No orders to date.
- b. Lake Benson Master Plan
 - i. Pathway around Memorial will change
 - ii. Memorial Plaque for Military Active Duty who died in Garner but who were not residents.
 - iii. No committee appointed yet for public planning/input.
- c. First Responder Memorial. Town discussed placing it at Town Hall vice LBP. Issue closed.
- d. Cleaning of benches @ Rose Garden donated by Veterans (bird feces)
- e. There is a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier traveling exhibit. Committee to investigate this for future booking.

V. New Business

- a. Nominations for FY 25-26 VAC officers. Chair: John nominated by Jeff/Terry. Vice-Chair: Don nominated by Jeff. Secretary: Helen Carter did not accept nomination and requested to not be appointed for second term. Jeff nominated by Helen/John. Nominations will close at June meeting followed by elections.
- b. Tim brought up a 5k/10k race at White Deer Park and surrounds, not crossing roads, to attract younger veterans' attention to the Veterans Memorial and events. Dates/course TBD.
- c. Next Meeting: June 9, 2025 - 0900, 2nd Monday of the month (every third month), White Deer Park Nature Center

VI. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 am.