

**Somerville Veterans' Commission on Monuments, Memorials & Dedications
(VetCMMD) Meeting - *REMOTE***



**JAKE WILSON
MAYOR**



COMMISSIONERS

Kevin Dickinson
Thomas Gorman
James Marques
Ellen Sullivan
Jodi Vachon
^Chair – Tom White

January 8th 2026 Meeting Minutes *(approved on 02/05/2026)*

Meeting Date: Thursday, January 8th 2026 Time: 4:30p – 5:30p EST

Location: *REMOTE/Virtual Meeting

Members Present: Kevin Dickinson, Tom Gorman, Ellen Sullivan, James Marques-1719

Members Absent: Jodi Vachon, ^Tom White-Chair ^=non-voting member

1. Meeting was Called to Order at **4:31pm *Adjourned at **5:36pm*****

2. Prior Meeting Minutes: *Motion* to approve 12/11/2025 MINUTES by KDickinson, 2nd by TGorman **APPROVED**.

3. Meeting Motions, Actions & Summary:

a) Meeting Motions

- Motion to approve Hero Square Dedication Application for Hussey: **Approved**.
- Motion to approve Hero Square Dedication Application for Spingel Brothers: **Approved**.
- Motion to approve the removal of foreign country flags on Vietnam War Memorial & Korean War Memorial; moving forward having just the US Flag and POW(Prisoner of War): **Approved**.

b) Actions

The Board will:

1. Track the progress of the FY26 Community Preservation Act (CPA) Funding Cycle for the Veterans Memorial Cemetery and selected monuments.
2. Assist with implementation of the FY2026 Veterans Heritage Grant (SHRAB) project.
3. Review and act on the next round of Hero Square Dedication applications.
4. Begin planning for 2026 Armed Forces Week and the Heroes Salute Ceremony.
5. Begin planning for the 2026 Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony.

c) Summary

Hero Square Dedications

- The Commission received four total applications for the current cycle.
- Two fully completed applications were reviewed and presented. The Board voted to approve both for installation in May 2026.

- Any applications that were incomplete or missing required documentation will be reviewed once the applicants submit the remaining materials.
- The next Heroes Salute Ceremony will be held during Armed Forces Week in May 2026, with a tentative date of Thursday, May 14, 2026. *pending*

Monuments & Memorials

- Following community input, the Commission approved the removal of non-U.S. flags from the Vietnam War and Korean War memorial plaques. This will be the standard practice moving forward.
- Remaining monuments and memorial components are secured at the new storage location on Cross Street.
- The SHRAB FY2026 Veterans Heritage Grant for the *Somerville Veterans Heritage Documentation & Digital Preservation Project* was approved; volunteers will be recruited to assist with project tasks.
- The CPA FY26 Funding Cycle application for the Veterans Memorial Cemetery and selected monuments is still pending a decision.

Events

January 2026 Veterans Office Events

3rd Wednesday: Coffee Hour at Central Library – 1/21/2026

4th Tuesday: COA Veterans Group

Thursday: Veterans Breakfast at Highlander Café – 1/22/2026, 9:00–10:30 AM

Upcoming

February 19, 2026 (11 AM–1 PM): COA & Veterans Services present *The Singing Trooper*, followed by a luncheon.

Discussions

Public Comment - One guest attended; no public comments were offered.

New Business & Planning

- Initial planning began for the 2026 Memorial Day Parade and Armed Forces Week (May 9–16, 2026), including potential regional partnerships in recognition of the 250th anniversary commemorations.
- Coordination with the vendor and DPW is underway to begin the process for Hometown Heroes streetlight-pole banners honoring Somerville KIA service members to be displayed around the cemetery for Memorial Day.
- Discussion on funding pathways for banners, including donations for specific honorees and coordination with local veterans.
- Planning for the next VetCMMD Lunch & Learn for Spring 2026.
- Remaining FY26 VetCMMD meetings will continue the first Thursday of each month.

- The Commission will explore partnering with Somerville Public Schools to host a send-off event for high school seniors enlisting in the military, demonstrating community support.
- Collaboration with SPS to involve music department students in future Hero Salute events.
- Noted: Community Salute event scheduled for April 19, 2026 at Gillette Stadium for students entering military service.

4. Motion to Adjourn by ESullivan, 2nd by KDickinson. Adjourned at 5:36pm

Next monthly meeting: REMOTE Thursday, February 5th 2026