

**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*

**February 5<sup>th</sup> 2026 Meeting Minutes** (approved on 03/05/2026)

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup> 2026; **Meeting Time:** 4:30p – 5:30p EST

**Location:** \*REMOTE/Virtual Meeting

**Members Present on Zoom:**

Kevin Dickinson, Tom Gorman, Ellen Sullivan-1650, James Marques

**Members Absent:** Jodi Vachon, *^Tom White-Chair*

*^=non-voting member*

1. Meeting was **Called to Order at 4:32pm** *Adjourned at 5:19pm*

2. **Prior Meeting Minutes:** *Motion to approve 01/08/2026 MINUTES by JMarques, 2<sup>nd</sup> by TGorman APPROVED.*

3. **Meeting Motions, Actions & Summary:**

a) **Meeting Motions**

- Motion by JMarques to hold one annual Hero Salute ceremony during Veterans Week, with a second ceremony added only if more than nine honorees. second by TGorman. *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. Begin planning for 2026 May Heroes Salute Ceremony.
4. Begin planning for the 2026 Salute Service Parade & Memorial Day Ceremony.
5. Begin outreach for 2026 Parade Grand Marshal nominations.

c) **Summary**

Hero Square Dedications:

- The Commission received information from the Escott brothers; maybe eligible for next round in November 2026.
- Sign Crew and Traffic & Parking received family-selected locations and sign text by the Feb. 13 deadline

Monuments & Memorials:

- CPA FY26 grant (\$306,250) approved for the Veterans Cemetery and multiple city monuments; now advancing to City Council for final approval.

- Additional grant opportunity: Massachusetts Preservation Project Funding Grant (matching). Commissioners invited to submit project ideas
- IFB for cemetery restoration drafted and submitted to Procurement; goal is spring restoration work ahead of Memorial Day.

Events:

**February 2026 Veterans Office Events**

- 2nd Wednesday: Lunch & Learn at Central Library – 2/12/2026
- 4th Tuesday: COA Veterans Group
- Thursday: Veterans Breakfast at Highlander Café – 2/22/2026, 9:00–10:30 AM

**Upcoming**

- **February 19, 2026 (11 AM–1 PM):** COA & Veterans Services present *The Singing Trooper*, followed by a luncheon.
- **March 5, 2026:** Women’s Wellness Spa Day (Women’s History Month) hosted with Somerville High School CTE Cosmetology for women veterans.

Discussions:

**Public Comment** - Two guests attended. Holly (Chair, Somerville Disability Commission) joined as a resident observer; shared updates on the Commission’s work advocating for accessible housing in new multi-family construction. Discussion of potential collaboration with Veterans Services on accessible housing needs and Chapter 115 program.

**New Business & Planning**

- **Memorial Day Parade (May 16, 2026):** Planning underway with a 250th-anniversary theme; outreach initiated for sponsorships, vehicles, and military display groups.
- **Grand Marshal Nominations:** Submissions are open; final list will be prepared for a vote at the March 2026 meeting.
- **City Staff Liaison Update:** A new liaison has been assigned; board appointments and structural changes are paused pending the city’s audit review.
- **March 2026 Lunch & Learn:** With the external presenter unavailable, the session will focus on internal refresher training on commission procedures and responsibilities.
- **Wreaths Across America:** The Commission expressed interest in participating and may partner with a neighboring community to support wreath placement at local veteran burial sites.
- **FY26 Meeting Schedule:** Remaining meetings will continue the first Thursday of each month (March–June 2026).
- **Women Veterans Network Luncheon:** Scheduled for March 16, 2026; commissioners encouraged to share event information with women veterans.
- **Community Salute Event:** Scheduled for April 19, 2026 at Gillette Stadium for students entering military service.

*Next monthly meeting: Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup> 2026 - REMOTE*

**4. Motion to Adjourn by TGorman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by ESullivan. Adjourned at 5:19pm**