

# City of Melrose – Veterans Advisory Board

## Meeting Minutes

**Date:** November 18, 2025

**Time:** 6:30 PM – 9:00 PM

**Location:** Cassidy Room, Melrose City Hall

### Attendees:

- Tamara Shovelton, Director of Veterans Services
  - Bob Driscoll
  - Jim Keen
  - Jim Muschett
  - Kathy Childress
  - Karen Burke
  - Michale Bugge
  - Guests: Members of the Cemetery Commission
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### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at **6:30 PM**

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### 2. Discussion with Cemetery Commission

Members of the **Cemetery Commission** attended to discuss a potential **new brick memorial at Wyoming Cemetery** dedicated to all veterans. The Commission expressed support for the concept, and the next steps will involve developing a proposal and formal plans for review.

- The proposed memorial could potentially be funded through the **Monument Fund**.
  - **Bricks** would be available for purchase by the public, with proceeds helping to offset costs.
  - Plans may also include **new flagpoles** representing all military branches: United States, POW/MIA, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Space Force, and Coast Guard.
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### 3. Veterans Day Events Recap

- The community donated **\$1,315 in gift cards for the veteran's department** and **over \$4,000 in cash**, which was divided equally between the two Melrose food pantries.
  - This year's drive was the **most successful to date**, reflecting strong community support.
  - Letters of appreciation need to be sent to **Gately Funeral Home, Shaw's Supermarket**, and other partners for their contributions.
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### 4. Recognition and Community Contributions

- The Board discussed recognizing **Ken Fong** on **Memorial Day** for his volunteer work cleaning veteran headstones.
  - There was also discussion of **Lisa Lord having students engage in** cleaning around veterans' graves over the summer. She will coordinate future cleanups with **Jack Rossi** and **Denise Slane**.
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### 5. Cemetery Flags Discussion

Board members expressed concern over **flags being removed** from graves following Veterans Day.

The **Cemetery Commission** clarified that the flag removal process was not within their purview.

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### 6. Welcome Home Sign Update

Questions regarding the sign and why it needed to come down. Discussed the process for the sign moving forward.

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### 7. Legislative Updates

Discussion regarding new year's cycle

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### 8. Holiday Initiatives and Veteran Support

- Discussion was held on **care packages** for deployed service members during the holidays, including signing cards.
  - **Lisa Lord** will explore obtaining **Pocket Stars** for distribution.
  - The Board discussed arranging a **Quilt of Valor** for **Firefighter Chris Walsh**, a Marine currently residing at the **Chelsea Soldiers' Home**.
    - **Karen Wakefield** will coordinate this effort.
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## **9. Veterans Tax Work-Off Program**

There was renewed discussion regarding **reinstating the Veterans Property Tax Work-Off Program**.

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## **10. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at **8:30 PM**.

Next Meeting set for Dec 16, 2025 at 6:30 in the Cassidy Board Room