



## Middle Township Veteran's Advisory Board Agenda

Township Hall  
33 Mechanic Street  
Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

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MEETING DATE/TIME: September 23, 2015 7:00pm Sharp

LOCATION: Township Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER - Welcome

Members Present:

*Maureen Harden-Lozier, Francey Burke, Ed Dillio, Bill Hawk, Fred Trasatti, Jr., Howard Trout, and Krystel Arana.*

FLAG SALUTE

UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION – concurrent with other Agenda items

*No new contact information.*

WELCOME GUEST SPEAKER: Virginia “Ginny” Tomlin - Cape May County Veterans’ Bureau

*Virginia “Ginny” Tomlin:*

- *There is currently no scholarship program for young adults joining the service and suggests the board organize and establish one.*

*Howard Trout:*

- *Allyn Penkethman and I would be able to obtain the information of those for scholarship purposes.*
- *A list of high school graduates joining the service is usually published every year.*

*Francey Burke:*

- *How many students do you think join the service every year?*

*Virginia “Ginny” Tomlin:*

- *Not very many.*

*Howard Trout:*

- *Two or Three.*
- *It depends on any given year.*
- *Some manage to acquire ROTC scholarships.*

*Francey Burke:*

- *Ok, it's achievable.*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *The board does not have any funds.*
- *Will ask the Mayor for permission to fundraise for the purpose of awarding a couple of scholarships each year.*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *Has worked for Cape May County for 37 years.*
- *Remains an accredited service officer.*
- *Is required to attend training every year.*
- *Has to maintain a certain amount of CEU's to remain accredited.*
- *Certified by the VA through the National Association of County Veteran Service Officers.*
- *Oversees a part-time service officer.*
- *Vince DePrinzio is her volunteer in the field.*
- *Job duties consist of filing for compensation, pension benefits, discharge upgrades, taking care of the Veterans cemetery, etc.*
- *Currently working on benefits for non-service connected people that reside in Assisted Living facilities such as spouses of veterans.*
- *Living expenses at Assisted Living facilities are based on income which in most cases is low and when one takes into consideration the out of pocket medical costs, it lowers their final income basically down to \$0 after expenses.*
- *Another project in progress is expanding the Veteran's cemetery and finding additional space to bury people.*
- *The walkways will be eliminated and stones will be placed where the markers are.*
- *Cremations are becoming more popular.*
- *In order to be buried at the Veteran's cemetery one must be considered a war-time veteran and a year round Cape May County resident for 2 years.*
- *For a short amount of time the Federal Government relaxed their rule and allowed any veteran to be buried at the cemetery but upon allowing this the cemetery was running out of space fast.*
- *The rule was reinstated to only allow war-time veterans to be buried at the cemetery.*

*Fred Trasatti, Jr.*

- *Recently attended a couple of meetings with all of the service groups in the area.*
- *The cemetery was a topic of discussion and for the time being they will only allow war-time veterans to be buried at that location until more burial ground becomes available.*
- *If they opened the cemetery to all veterans, within 2 years or so, the location would be forced to close because there would be no more space.*
- *There is a great amount of veterans in the area.*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *Cremations are not a problem.*
- *Seeing less and less full burials.*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *About how many Veterans are there in Cape May County?*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *About 9,000.*

*Fred Trasatti, Jr.:*

- *Only about 2,500 veterans go to the clinic located in Cape May every year.*
- *The majority of veterans would rather go to Philadelphia.*
- *The people who did go to the VA Medical Center located in Wilmington, Delaware are now choosing to go to Philadelphia because Wilmington is cutting back services.*
- *There is good medicine in Philadelphia but the site is overcrowded.*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *The Federal Government would like to make government smaller.*
- *The way they achieve making government smaller with the VA is to do away with VA healthcare system altogether, and shut down the hospitals made specifically for the purpose of tending to veteran needs.*
- *As a result veterans should be given a VA Vet Card, just like a Medicare card, and are free to go to the location of their choice.*
- *Subsequently, a large amount of money would be saved due to eliminating the need of having to take care of those facilities.*

*Howard Trout:*

- *Encourage them go to local doctors.*

*Fred Trasatti, Jr.:*

- *Asked about the clinic located in Cape May.*
- *Believes they don't do much.*

*Ed Dillio:*

- *The clinic in Cape May has good service and inexpensive prescriptions.*
- *The problem is that they don't carry everything.*

*Howard Trout:*

- *The VA healthcare system is the largest healthcare system in the world and for what it consists of they are doing a good job.*
- *Mistakes are made just as they are made in the civilian world, and they probably make fewer mistakes.*

*Fred Trasatti, Jr.:*

- *Veterans rave about the system in Florida.*
- *The system is considerably better there.*

*Howard Trout:*

- *It could be because of the amount of veterans that are located in Florida and the political influence they hold as a majority.*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *In the meantime, my job is very rewarding especially when veterans receive compensation.*
- *They are so thankful.*

*Bill Hawk:*

- *How would someone like me apply for the VA?*
- *For example, be added to the records or acquire a card.*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *Healthcare or benefits?*
- *To apply for healthcare one would file a 10-10EZ along with a copy of ones DD Form 214.*
- *An individual can obtain a card whether or not they qualify for healthcare.*

*Howard Trout:*

- *I've had businesses tell me that I need a VA card to receive discounts but even when I present the card, the discounts are not given.*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *Has spoken with representatives from Home Depot and Lowes and explained that just because an individual is not eligible for VA healthcare because their income is too high, does not mean he or she is not a veteran.*
- *They should honor the card issued by the County Clerk but they refuse to do so.*
- *They do accept the card retirees receive.*

*Bill Hawk:*

- *Where is your office located?*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *In the Social Services building.*

*Bill Hawk:*

- *What are your hours?*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *Monday thru Friday from 8:30am – 4:30pm.*
- *I work on getting people benefits that really do deserve them.*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *Does your assistant contain the same knowledge as you do or are they at least in the process of acquiring the same understanding?*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *No, because I have been there for 37 years and every year there are new classes and courses that come with new information.*
- *It takes education and experience but they are well on their way.*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *It is not good for any one person to have all of the knowledge.*

*Bill Hawk:*

- *Based on what you do, do you have any suggestions or advice from your institution to who we are as an entity that would benefit us?*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *The most important thing you could do is know where to direct people according to their situation.*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *Planning on hosting a meet and greet so the board can distribute information and redirect people according to their questions.*
- *Attending the Harvest Festival to hand out pamphlets and make people aware that we are here and trying to get veterans registered with the County.*
- *We have started by adding a link for our board to the township's website.*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *Property tax deductions are achieved through the Tax Assessor.*
- *Veterans have to be approved for the \$250.00 tax deduction before applying for total tax exemption.*
- *The County clerk's office takes care of photo I.D. cards.*

*Ed Dillio:*

- *How would I look up my service record?*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *Google standard form 180 (sf 180).*
- *This form takes care of the request for military records.*
- *The National Personnel Records Center.*

*Ed Dillio:*

- *Could I look up my uncle's record from WWII?*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *Yes, as long as you have his service number.*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *We thank you for all that you do because I think we'd be lost without someone with your knowledge.*
- *You have been a very big help to us.*

*Virginia "Ginny" Tomlin:*

- *Thank you for inviting me and if anyone has any questions don't be afraid to call or stop into my office.*

## DISCUSS AND ESTABLISH BOARD OBJECTIVES

## OLD BUSINESS

Veteran Advisory Board Link on Middle Township webpage

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *Our board's link has been added to the township's website.*
- *You can view the page on [www.middleborough.com](http://www.middleborough.com) under the Boards and Commissions tab at the top of the page.*

Comments regarding Beau Weisman's visit

*No question or comments regarding Beau Weisman's visit last month.*

Update on American Legion Post #198 – new information

- *Ed Dillio and Maureen Harden-Lozier are meeting with Mayor Donohue on Tuesday, September 29, 2015.*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *We'll have an update as to where we are with the American Legion Project at the next meeting.*
- *Will discuss the idea of distributing information pamphlets relating to veterans in schools.*
- *Inquiring the mayor about fundraising or gift certificates for the scholarship idea Ginny suggested.*

*Francey Burke:*

- *We've been hosting a very simple and successful fundraiser at the dealership in the form of a car wash.*
- *It usually brings in 600-800 dollars in a couple of hours.*
- *We can supply the manpower.*

*Ed Dillio:*

- *Court House Pizza will probably help us with a hoagie sale.*
- *The sale consists of selling hoagies for \$6 each, the board makes \$3 on every hoagie sold.*
- *We could also do fundraising in the form of the 10 week club.*
- *The 10 week club entails of selling 333 tickets.*
- *It costs \$1 a week for 10 weeks.*

- *Each ticket has 3 lottery numbers on it from 1 to 999.*
- *The winning number is chosen every Friday night for 10 weeks.*
- *The winning number for the first 9 weeks receives \$100.00.*
- *On the tenth week, the winning number receives \$1,000.00.*
- *A total of \$1,900.00 is given away and a total of \$1,400.00 is made for the board.*
- *The Knights of Columbus in Court House hosts a 10 week club and they run out of tickets.*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *Considering putting the 10 week club idea together for the Harvest Festival.*

*Bill Hawk:*

- *If fundraising isn't an option, would the Mayor consider giving us a minimum budget?*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *I don't think so, at least not this year.*

*Francey Burke:*

- *Is raising money only a concern for gifting scholarships to students or other projects?*

*Howard Trout:*

- *Probably for future projects that require funds.*

Plan for Harvest Festival – name tags, contact Rita regarding registration.

- *Otherwise, County Clerk's office is open Saturday, October 31.*

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *Assign times for the members to work the table.*
- *Still working on creating nametags.*
- *Will be at the Harvest Festival the majority of the day.*

Establish FIRST Veteran's Advisory Board project – Schedule a meet and greet?

*Maureen Harden-Lozier:*

- *Harvest Fest is our first project.*
- *Schedule meet and greet as second project at a location that is easily accessible for the holidays.*

Any other unfinished Old Business

NEW BUSINESS - Contact other Veterans organizations to attend meetings.

*We will have no guest speakers for the next few months due to the holiday season and people's limited availability.*

October, November and December meetings – Change dates

- There will be no official meeting in October. The board will instead be collaborating at Harvest Fest.
- *November's meeting will be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> in the first floor conference room.*
- *There will be no meeting held in December.*

QUESTIONS

ADJOURN 8:29pm

ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES:

Minutes – Krystel Arana

Time Keeper – Allyn Penkethman

***ABSENT***