



TOWN OF NEWTOWN

SANDY HOOK PERMANENT MEMORIAL MINUTES- SPECIAL MEETING

NHS- Lecture Hall

October 30, 2014

12 Berkshire Road-Newtown

7:00 – 9:00 PM

In Attendance: Commissioners Bacon, Brunetti, Burns, Engel, Krauss, Kyprianou, Lewis
Chairman Lyddy, Vice Chairman Martin, Pinto and VanWaalwijk
Staff: Lynn Kovack and Moderator Fran Pennarola

Meeting was called to order at 7:07PM

Chairman Lyddy opened meeting with having Commissioners introduce themselves. He told them this is the first of two meetings we have scheduled with the parents of SHS students. The next one will be next Thursday November 7, 2014 at 7:00 at Newtown High School in the Lecture Hall.

Commissioner Lyddy and Krauss went through a series of slides. They explained our Mission Statement. The process of meetings and timelines and what the BOS expect of the Commission. Comm. Krauss explained the Commission was formed approximately 1 ½ years ago with 12 members and a Secretary. We are to recommend to the BOS, Commission findings related to the nature, location and funding of a Memorial(s), work with Town departments on determining locations, solicit ideas to be submitted for consideration and review offers and suggestions received from interested persons and organizations including those which have been archived by the Cultural Arts Commission and other Town departments.

Ways of contacting the Commission are as follows:

www.sandyhookpermanentmemorial.com

sandyhookpermanentmemorial@gmail.com

facebook.com/sandyhookpermanentmemorial

@SHPermMemorial on twitter

Fran Pennarola went through the rules and how the meeting will work and he will answer and questions if needed.

Kyle explained the timelines for each group to get back to us. These timelines can be extended. They were just put in place to keep the Commission moving along in the process. Comm will put together a consensus of answers to keep track of particular wants if any. We do not have a manual to go by and have met with other Memorial Commissions to help us get started. Kyle has received approximately 170 responses back from the group SHS students. We are here to continue to gather information in helping the Commission in deciding whether there will be a Memorial(s).

Comm Pinto updates the families monthly with the Commissions progress. She explained how the families have a wide range of ideas. Some families want a memorial and others do not. Some still not ready to talk. Comm Pinto thinks as time goes on and if families see a memorial will be built (if decided) they may want to talk. Consensus is very abstract right now.

Attendees had an opportunity to go through many things with the Commission. Locations that were discussed were FFH and a split between Newtown and Sandy Hook. Whatever the location we need to watch traffic issues that can arise. A public site with easy access to get to. Several people asked if there would be confusion if Memorial was put down by the Catherine Hubbard Sanctuary. The Commission is not ready to choose location yet but will address issue in the future if it comes up. Commissioner Martin went through the many different locations available. We have a State Forest Association, Newtown Forest Association, FFH Authority and private properties. No lack of inventory in Town. Do we select a site or determine memorial and if one will be appropriate.

Another comment was to make sure the Memorial(s) destination is one you do not have to drive by daily and see. A Bridge on Glen Road which is a walking bridge was a thought too. Maybe make the bridge useable and let people drive through Memorial to keep traffic flowing. That is an area that can benefit from being fixed up.

One parent thought the 26 families should guide us with what they want. He has ideas but thinks that the families should have say on what is done. Kyle and Tricia explained that the families themselves have so many different ideas. If trees are decided they should not be bunched to shade off areas. There should always be light around the memorial. Safety and Security was also discussed to avoid vandalism at the site if one is chosen. Virginia Tech Memorial is right on the Campus and not sure how the traffic flows there, but we will address traffic when the time comes. Possible abstract ideas were discussed for the SHS grounds itself if one is decided. Trees, butterfly garden were just a couple ideas. The date was asked about and many feel without a number or something people will not know in 30 years what it is and what it is there for so many think the date is an important factor for the memorial. Whatever is chosen many do not want it to become a tourist attraction.

Kyle told of how we talked with other Memorial Commissions for their input in the process. Columbine parents said it was troublesome and unorganized and they began to disagree. 9/11 was very different because of the number of deaths. Families were involved in the majority of the memorials but at different levels. Columbine went fast and some were not happy about that. They received invaluable insight from the families but with such different ideas.

Funding has not been discussed yet as we are not at that phase at this time. We have approximately \$80,000 in an account from money that came in after the tragedy that was marked specifically for a Memorial should one be decided

Commission also has many items in inventory for Memorial should one be chosen. We may incorporate items that came into town. All stored in Pods across CT. Dan explained anything that needs to lay flat is at the CT State Library in Hartford. Iron Mtn has approximately 6 tractor trailers with 3D items like sculptures, cranes, etc. and all are preserved to incorporate into the Memorial should the Commission decide on one. We can utilize a lot of things but we are not at that stage yet. One man stated no matter what it is he will be sad all the time and many thought each person will have a different feeling when they go to see the Memorial(s).

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM

Submitted by Lynn Kovack and subject to approval of the Commission