

It is hard to believe that summer is almost over, the continued heat we are experiencing makes fall seem so far away, yet the school year starts in just 2 weeks. City Council activities slow down quite a bit over the summer after the frenetic pace of budget setting & year end closing stresses, but a few events stand out from the past couple months -

The Hampton Ponds Parade on July 4th was fun to be a part of. All of the contingents who participated were so impressive and the organization did a fantastic job, what a great section of the city! The military presence really drove home that the day is not just a day to commemorate our independence but to honor and remember the veterans and currently enlisted military that have fought and continue to fight to keep the USA a free country. I was unable to attend the Wyben Parade that same day but heard it was equally impressive – so fitting that as the downtown construction project wraps up Dan Puza and Ron Zygarowski from North Elm Butcher Block were honored, not many downtown businesses have had to endure more in the past several years!

The 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Ceremony at Stanley Park on July 14th was quite a learning experience. Bob McKean, Barry Plumley, Joe Kalesnik and all the military groups that attended and participated really organized a meaningful and lovely event. Often referred to as The Forgotten War, just researching it prior to the ceremony and being there to hear the poignant stories from those who spoke made it so much more meaningful to me and really drove home the sacrifices these men and women made for their country and also what it meant to the South Korean people.

I sat in on the School Committee meeting August 13th and heard about the work done on several schools over the summer (and ongoing!) through the Green Repair Program and Energy Management Services Program. The repairs, improvements and upgrades made to systems and buildings throughout the city will result in benefits and efficiencies for many years to come. I am impressed with the project management of this massive undertaking and the knowledge P3 Project Planning Professionals has of all stages of this enormous job. I encourage city residents to check out the GRP and EMS Programs and see all that has been completed through the school department web site. Superintendent Dr. Suzanne Scallion shared the details of the new Professional Development programs planned for the coming year and it is heartening to hear such enthusiasm and excitement regarding the sessions our educators will be participating in – much needed & much wanted and the kids will benefit immensely.

I was on vacation in Maine with my family when we saw on Mass Live that a Westfield Police Officer was killed on the job, with no name immediately released we all just instantly had tears in our eyes, so devastating the news, a loss for the entire community. What a wonderful father, husband, policeman, citizen and all around human being Jose Torres was, how privileged the city was to have him in its employ for almost 3 decades and what wonderful memories his loved ones have.

Ward 3 City Councilor Ann Callahan
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