



# Town of Knightdale

## *Staff Report*

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Title: Hometown Heroes Banner Program

Staff : Heather Smith, Town Clerk

Date: July 16, 2025

Asst. Town Manger Signature: SY

Town Manager Signature: WRS

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### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- The Knightdale Veterans Memorial, home to the Knightdale Blue Star and Gold Star Memorials, was dedicated at Knightdale Station Park on November 11, 2018. The Memorial serves as a permanent reminder of the important sacrifices our local veterans made for our country. In 2019, the Veterans Memorial Advisory Board was established to review applications and make recommendations to the Town Council for names to be inscribed at the Veterans Memorial. The approved names are unveiled annually at a Memorial Day ceremony hosted by the Town. In addition to a Memorial Day ceremony, the Town partners with the Two Green Thumbs Garden Club who host a Veterans Day Tribute and a Wreaths Across America ceremony. The Town also participates in Operation Green Light to support veterans and raise awareness about the challenges they face, especially when returning to civilian life.

### **SUMMARY**

- The Veterans Memorial Advisory Board continues to advocate for the veteran community and has expressed a desire to find ways to recognize and honor living veterans in Knightdale. Staff supports this request and proposes that we implement a Hometown Hero Banner Program.
- The Hometown Hero Banner Program will be structured like the Veterans Memorial Recognition Program, where applicants apply through the Town's website for consideration and the Veterans Memorial Advisory Board reviews applications and makes recommendations to the Town Council.
- Active-duty service members, National Guard and Reserve service members, and living veterans are all eligible for recognition in the Hometown Hero Banner Program. The honoree must currently reside in the greater Knightdale area, must have resided in the greater Knightdale area for a portion of their life, or must have made contributions to the Knightdale community. Honorees must verify military status and/or honorable discharge. All branches of service are eligible to be recognized.
- Staff has identified poles along First Avenue, Wilder Nursery Trail, and Knightdale Station Run that can be utilized for the Hometown Hero Banner Program. Once an applicant is approved, they will be assigned a pole number, and a corresponding map will be shared online showcasing where each veteran's banner is located. Banners will be displayed from July – November of each year.



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- In the event the Town receives more applications than spots available, staff will create a waitlist. Banners will be placed on a two-year rotation to allow for the introduction of new honorees. After two years of display, the applicant will be given the choice to have their banner “retired” and collect it from the town, or to leave it with the town to be placed back into the rotation at a future date.
- The estimated cost for the initial year is \$16,000. This number covers the cost of 30 banners, all necessary hardware, and lift rentals for installation and removal. The amount was approved in the FY26 budget.
- The Veterans Memorial Advisory Board met on June 9, 2025 to review the Hometown Hero Banner Program proposal and voted unanimously to forward the proposal to Council with the recommendation that name, photo, branch, and years of service be displayed on each banner.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

- Authorize the implementation of a Hometown Heroes Banner Program in Knightdale.