

**CITY OF LAKE STEVENS
VETERANS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

Monday, November 6, 2017
Lake Stevens Community Center
1808 Main Street, Lake Stevens

CALL TO ORDER: 7:02 p.m. by Chairman Leif Hamar

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Shawn Frederick, Gayle McCurdy, Stacy LaFlam, Dennis Ives, Melissa Ballou, Richard Russell, Leif Hamar, Cameron Balazic, Kim Daughtry, Kurt Hilt, Richard Russell, Kurt Hilt, Marcus Tageant

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Melissa Ballou and Stacy LaFlam

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Deputy City Clerk Kathy Pugh

OTHERS: Lori Grant, Operation Military Family Cares, Tom Thorleifson, American Legion

Call to Order: Chairman Hamar called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: Chairman Hamar led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Moved by Commissioner Ives, seconded by Commissioner Russell to excuse Commissioners Ballou and LaFlam. On vote the motion carried (9-0-0-2).

Approval of Minutes: Moved by Commissioner Daughtry, seconded by Commissioner Russell to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2017 meeting. On vote the motion carried with Commissioner Hilt abstaining (8-0-1-2).

Discussion Items:

Work Program:

Ms. Grant led the discussion and updated that most of the interviews with commissioners have been completed. Once they are completed, she will provide transcripts and summaries of the interviews. These interviews will help to develop common themes and priorities.

Referencing the handout, Ms. Grant said that the survey of the Homeless Veterans Population at page 3 represents a point in time; at page 4 of the handout she commented that the survey does not include the cold war era and estimates a veteran population of approximately 2100 vets in Lake Stevens and 53,000 countywide.

Commissioner Hilt requested that metrics for other cities be provided.

Returning to the interviews, Ms. Grant will provide transcripts in Word so that all can review them and correct for accuracy. She said the interviews identified the following priorities: (1) the need to move forward in a transparent manner, (2) identified goals such as collaborating with other agencies and bringing resources into Lake Stevens, and establishing framework a for

these goals, (3) fine-tuning the goals for relevancy and effectiveness, being consistent and predictable in pursuing initiatives without over extending, (4) identified a number of priorities including crisis management and emergency preparedness, and setting realistic goals, (5) identified the three top priorities as establishing a support system, partnering and networking with other organizations within the city, such as Lions Club and Rotary, and connecting with local churches, and (6) establishing a multi-use community center.

Ms. Grant said the next step was to identify large areas of interest which were employment, economy, quality of life and health, and then rank them based on the priorities identified in the interviews. A lower ranking represented a higher priority in the scheme with quality of life ranking as number one. Identifying and ranking these priorities will give the commission the ability to move forward with its initiatives.

Ms. Grant next reviewed resources available to veterans in the community and the region at large. These include housing, employment, financing, health, education and legal services. There are resources in the city, but resources are also located in other jurisdictions. She will bring data with service categories and a detailed map to the next meeting.

Ms. Grant summarized where the commission is at this point and said that in January the commission will work on a playbook for identified priorities and possibly develop subgroups, with the goal being to actively move forward in January.

Commissioner Hilt commented a lot of information was provided this evening and thanked Ms. Grant for her work.

Commissioner Hamar commented on how difficult it is to complete a survey of veterans. Ms. Grant agreed and said survey results of veterans identify employment, housing and legal/benefits as priorities.

Commissioner Daughtry commented the most difficult thing to do is to get vets to come forward, and he noted that many have moved on once they are no longer active military.

Discussion ensued on different ways to reach veterans in the community including use of blogging and social media. Deputy City Clerk Pugh cautioned about use of social media due to various legal implications including the Public Records Act.

Commissioner Tageant suggested conducting surveys during city events.

Commissioner McCurdy shared there is a military Christmas party at the high school, and Commissioner Daughtry commented on the Veterans Day events in the school district.

Public Comment:

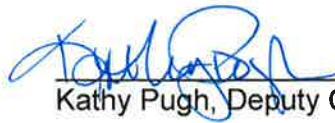
Tom Thorleifson, with the American Legion, said that Veterans Day assemblies are required by state law, and that Lake Stevens High School has one of the best programs. He suggested that veterans would be welcome at those assemblies, and that veterans in uniforms add to the program.

Commissioner Ives said that the recent flag retirement ceremony was very successful with 640 flags being retired.

Adjourn:

MOTION: Moved by Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Hilt, to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m. On vote the motion carried (9-0-0-2).


Leif Hamar, Chairperson
Richard Russell, Vice


Kathy Pugh, Deputy City Clerk