

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

Monday, February 5, 2018  
Lake Stevens Community Center  
1808 Main Street, Lake Stevens

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Leif Hamar

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Leif Hamar, Shawn Frederick, Stacy LaFlam, Dennis Ives, Kim Daughtry, Kurt Hilt,

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Melissa Ballou, Cameron Balazic, Gayle McCurdy and Marcus Tageant

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Deputy City Clerk Kathy Pugh

OTHERS: Mayor John Spencer, Tom Thorleifson, American Legion

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**Call to Order:** Chairman Hamar called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

**Roll Call:** Chairman Hamar advised that Commissioner Richard Russell has moved out of the City limits and resigned his position.

**MOTION:** Moved by Commissioner Hilt, seconded by Commissioner Frederick, to excuse Commissioners Ballou, Balazic, McCurdy and Tageant. On vote the motion carried (6-0-0-4).

**Approval of Minutes:** Moved by Commissioner Daughtry, seconded by Commissioner LaFlam, to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2018 meeting. On vote the motion carried (6-0-0-4).

**Election of Officers:**

**MOTION:** Moved by Commissioner Hilt, seconded by Commissioner Frederick, to nominate Commissioner Hamar as Chairperson. On vote the motion carried (6-0-0-4).

**MOTION:** Moved by Commissioner LaFlam, seconded by Commissioner Hamar, to nominate Commissioner Frederick as Vice Chairperson. On vote the motion carried (6-0-0-4).

**MOTION:** Moved by Commissioner Daughtry, seconded by Commissioner Hilt, to nominate Commissioner LaFlam as Secretary. On vote the motion carried (6-0-0-4).

**Work Program:**

Chair Hamar commented the commission has received a lot of information, and now it is time to determine how the information will be used and what information is missing.

Commissioner Daughtry said there are a lot of organizations out in the community that this commission has not yet seen. The consultant has only identified two organizations.

Councilmember Daughtry also commented that one of the goals of the commission is to implement a support system and said there is not a way to implement one at this time, as the commission does not have a phone, an office or staff.

Discussion ensued with Commissioner Frederick commenting this evolved from the homeless count, and Commissioner LaFlam agreed that her organization provides services and there are many other service organizations that are beneficial to the Lake Stevens veterans community.

Commissioner Daughtry commented the question is how to identify the uncounted veterans and get them involved. Commissioner Daughtry said there is an organization in Arlington, Growing Veterans, that finds veterans and puts them to work. Another is Project Rubicon, which assembles veterans into teams for support and assistance with natural disasters. Conservation Corps Crewmakers is another that is just for veterans and requires a two-year commitment, with a monthly stipend for conservation work.

Chairperson Hamar summarized that Commissioner Daughtry wants to focus on leveraging veteran talent, which is Thematic Goal #3, and not merely make resources available on a web page.

Commissioner Daughtry provided an overview of the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) and said they do not currently have a veterans board, and there is interest in establishing one. Commissioner Daughtry asked how does this group focus on the support. He suggested this commission could help more veterans by getting them involved rather than simply connecting them with existing services.

Commissioner Hilt commented getting veterans involved was the early focus of this commission. He suggested dividing the labor on Items 2 and 3, and move forward with a plan.

Commissioner Daughtry said that focusing on the multi-use center is a priority triggered by funding that the Lake Stevens Food Bank has provided. He reviewed that the center is envisioned by city leaders to be multi-use facility that would house the food bank, the Family Center and the Veterans Commission or a veterans center of some kind. Commissioner Daughtry suggested putting a stakeholders group together to begin the design process for this new facility.

Mayor Spencer commented there has been a vision that part of this commission's mission is to leverage other bodies and make sure they work in Lake Stevens, and also that they are well known to veterans. Mayor Spencer added that his vision for the new facility is that it is available and staffed at some level, including with meeting rooms. He suggested starting with a programming design.

Mayor Spencer provided an update on the property status. He added that his vision includes the possibility that the new building could operate as an Emergency Operation Center if necessary. He is looking to the Veterans Commission to leverage federal and grant funding for the building.

Commissioner Daughtry suggested the stakeholders for designing a new facility could include the commission and veterans in the community. It will be important to leverage and create partnerships.

Commissioner Hilt suggested there are two lanes of moving forward: one being quick success, and the other being the long-term goals.

Commissioner LaFlam commented on the Hero's Café that meets in Lynnwood and is a place where veterans can get together and for the commission to see where their support is.

Commissioner Daughtry said the Lake Stevens Chamber of Commerce has a Business Expo each year and suggested it might be a good opportunity for the commission to advertise.

Mayor Spencer also said the annual Volunteer Fair is a good opportunity to be visible in the community.

Commissioner LaFlam commented the Expo would be a great place to present the idea of a Hero's Café.

Mayor Spencer suggested developing a mission statement.

There was discussion that the commission has received a lot of information that was directing the commission to go down a road it did not want to go down.

Chairperson Hamar summarized the issues are how to find the veterans, and secondly how to get veterans engaged.

Commissioner Ives suggested including children as a focus because veterans who are parents will come out to support their children. Communication could be done through the school district.

Commissioner Frederick commented that it will take effort, but is uncertain about creating a new event.

Mayor Spencer said much of this is one to two years out, but it is important to get the message out.

Commissioner Frederick said the chiefs on the base have a huge network and would know what veterans are out in the community.

Mayor Spencer shared his experience with a group in Olympia that works to improve the Trestle, and said the effort was to present ideas to improve a single problem, with the goal being to engage funding at both the state and federal levels. This is an example of how to move forward.

Chairperson Hamar suggested focusing on the proposed community center. Commissioner Daughtry agreed and noted there are funding sources available in the community that could be approached. The important thing is to have a game plan and get people together.

Commissioner Hilt also suggested working with Alfie Alvarado-Ramos at the State Department of Veterans Affairs. He added that he will be working on funding when he travels to Washington, DC in March.

Commissioner Daughtry added that the commission needs to be a 501(c)(3) corporation. Discussion ensued regarding the commission attaining 501(c)(3) status, and there was

consensus that Commissioners LaFlam, Frederick and Daughtry would work together to develop bylaws.

As a 501(c)(3) corporation the commission could work to secure funding. This was discussed and there was consensus that Commissioners Daughtry, Frederick and Ives would form a committee to begin identifying stakeholders in the community center and when they can begin meeting.

Commissioner Daughtry said there are no updates on the web site and suggested a Facebook page might be a good outreach source.

Commissioner Daughtry envisions this commission becoming a facilitator reaching out to other organizations to bring services and support together to benefit veterans and leverage their talents. There was discussion that members would identify resources that could be presented at commission meetings and bring those resources to the March meeting.

In response to Commissioner Frederick's comments, Chairperson Hamar suggested allowing time for presentations of other organizations at the April meeting.


**Public Comment:** Tom Thorleifson said the conversation tonight goes to the base and as veterans become stronger they will help others. Although there are a lot of organizations that could speak to this commission, he believes the Hero's Café would be the most beneficial as it provides a gathering place for veterans. He added that stand downs are also supportive of veterans and maybe the City could hold them on a small scale. Another benefit would be a small office that would intake VA claims.

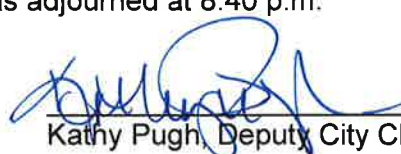
Commissioner Daughtry suggested a parallel path for a Hero's Café.

Commissioner Ives suggested a Veterans Expo with a stand down, and Commissioner LaFlam said this could be done partnering with other organizations for a better turnout. A cafe could lay the groundwork for a stand down.

**Adjourn:**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

  
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Leif Hamar, Chairperson  
*Shawn Frederick, Vice Chair*

  
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Kathy Pugh, Deputy City Clerk