

Newburyport City Council Committee Report

Committee:	Neighborhood & City Services
Event Date:	Tuesday Oct 25, 2022 – 5:00 pm
Recorder:	Christine Wallace
Format:	Remote Only
Location:	N/A
Recording Link:	https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/49_L_-lGpKH18MXXZGDg8iR4BFmHDLjTk0i66HPMlvFTSxoKdUZDW3JmDXCdfmU5.ezTZ5g-AO1tEq3IB (Passcode: FbU@Ezu5)

Councillors Attending			Staff, Public, Other Attending	
Ed Cameron, At-Large			Kevin Hunt	Veteran's Agent
Jennie Donahue, Ward 2	x		Andrew Levine	Chief of Staff
Afroz Khan, At-Large				
Byron Lane, Ward 6				
Jim McCauley, Ward 5				
Heather Shand, Ward 3				
Connie Preston, At-Large	x			
Bruce Vogel, At-Large				
Christine Wallace, Ward 4	x			
Mark Wright, At-Large				
Sharif Zeid, Ward 1				

Agenda Item	Action Taken
APPT339 9_12_2022 Reappointment of Kevin Hunt, Veteran's Agent	Motion to Approve to full Council by J. Donahue, Seconded by C. Preston. Roll Call Yes J. Donahue, C. Preston, C. Wallace. 3 to 0 So Voted.
Approval of Meeting Minutes: 7/19/22, 8/17/22, 9/20/22, 9/22/22	Motion to Approve Collectively Minutes from July 19, August 17, September 20, and September 22 by C. Preston, Seconded by J. Donahue. Roll Call Yes C. Preston, J. Donahue, C. Wallace. 3 to 0 So Voted.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/DISCUSSION:

- K. Hunt – Director of the regional program with Amesbury, Merrimac and Salisbury. Have an office in Amesbury and one in Newburyport. Been doing this since September 2007.
- C. Preston - Beyond the resources of another person, what more would you like to see the city providing not only to you and the services that you provide, but to serve to veterans as a whole?
- K. Hunt - We primarily serve the lower income veterans, those are the ones that are seeking our assistance. What we could do would be housing, some way to increase the housing stock for the low-income veterans or the homeless veterans. We don't have a lot of homeless, but at the same time, we do have an issue.
- C. Preston – Do we have a fast track or a way Veterans can become prioritized as we choose people for low-income housing?
- K. Hunt – On the books, the veteran is supposed to be prioritized moves to the top of the list, the only person that would be higher than the veteran would be a homeless individual. In reality, that does not happen. And I'm not exactly sure why I've heard two stories, I've heard that the local authority no longer has the power that the state has usurped the power of determining who is on the list and that pushes the veterans back down the list, so that state could put whoever they wanted up there. And that just came out as a matter of fact, in training here in the last couple of days, so I don't have an adequate answer as to why the veterans are not at the top. But I will say from experience, just because he's a veteran or she's a veteran and walks into the public housing authority, they don't get moved to the top.
- J. Donahue – I've known Kevin for some time. I know, he's very committed, I have a lot of praise. I want to thank you for all that you've done. All the years that you've served the city in the community surrounding the city.
- C. Wallace – Approximately how many veterans do we have In Newburyport?
- K. Hunt – 15 years ago, had about 1100 veterans, and that represented the list of people who had checked off veteran when they voted. That list now has about 700 and something veterans on the list. That probably doesn't encompass every one of them. My guess would be 800 to 900.
- C. Wallace - What do you think is the age split? I would assume we're starting to see more and more younger veterans?
- K. Hunt - Yes, we will. We're obviously losing the older veterans, the preponderance of the veterans, if you went back 10 years or even more, hundreds of the veterans would have been World War Two, followed by Vietnam. All of those veterans and many of the World War Two people have passed. Vietnam represents the bulk but not by much. So the younger veterans are probably at the 50% level. The average age for the veteran that I'm dealing with is over the age of 67.

ADJOURN

Motion to Adjourn by C. Preston, Seconded by J. Donahue. Roll Call Yes C. Preston, J. Donahue, C. Wallace. 3 to 0 So Voted.