



City of Biddeford
Veterans Committee
April 27, 2026 at 4:30 PM
City Hall Council Chambers & Teams

[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 269 486 196 830 93

Passcode: K8F9Zs25

Or call in by phone: +1 872-242-8054

Phone conference ID: 882 249 81#

1. Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes
 - 3.a Approval of March 23rd, 2026 Veteran's Committee Meeting Minutes
4. Old Business
 - 4.a Development of Veteran's Committee Ordinance
5. New Business
 - 5.a Purple Heart City Discussion and Next Steps
6. Discussion/Review
7. Adjourn

City of Biddeford
Veterans Committee Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2026 at 4:30p.m.
City Hall Council Chambers

1. Meeting called to order at 1630 hours (4:30pm)

- Members present: Roger Beaupre (chair), Eric Gates (vice chair), Jen Fullmer, Fred Oliver, Paul Therrien, Jake Hammer (staff liaison)
- Members absent: Quang Mihn, Kevin Locke, Ben Neveux (resigned in March)
- Local Veteran Organizations represented – American Legion, VVA, VFW

2. Pledge of Allegiance recited.

3. Motion and second to approved meeting minutes from 27 October 2026 meeting.

Amendment: Paul Therrien pointed out that input from VVA was not captured in the original minutes document. Document was updated to include VVA's two service officers, Joe Armstrong and Conrad Letellier.

VOTE: All in favor of **amended minutes**, motion passed.

4. Old Business

- **Veterans Committee – status and way ahead**
 - Roger provided some draft language for the City ordinance to formally establish a Veterans Committee.
 - Committee members and attendees received a copy for review and comment
 - Initial discussion took place - current recommendations are included in **Attch. 1** (pg 3)
 - Any input prior to April's meeting should be emailed Jake Hammer
 - Proposed timeline:
 - Roger will put this topic on the agenda for the Policy Committee by end of April
 - Current Veteran Committee will finalize & vote on the ordinance language on 27 Apr
 - Policy Committee will review and then send to the City Council
 - Ad hoc committee ends 30 June unless the Council extends it

5. Veteran Organization Updates

- **Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) Chapter 1044 Update** – Ted Sorois
 - National VVA is considering disbanding, but pushed the decision to 2028
 - If any VVA organizations want to remain after national disbands, they can create their own nonprofit in their own state
 - Maine's only VVA is here in Biddeford and they plan on remaining and putting in the paperwork to become a nonprofit to keep VVA afloat for the state
 - VVA provided \$1590 for heating assistance in Biddeford this winter
- **American Legion Post 26** – Rick St. Onge
 - Donated \$100+ in books & CDs for education on Vietnam to Biddeford schools

- Met with Biddeford Intermediate School kids for flag set up and an ice cream social
- Donated \$1000 to their adopted fourth grade class, \$350 to Wreaths Across America, and \$700 to a veteran for needed car repairs so she could get to her appointments
- February, held a successful meal for 50+ and rededicated a wall for the four chaplains
- Local Girl Scouts utilize the post for their meetings
- Each year BHS gets \$1000 for a scholarship for Dirigo State camp

6. Next Meeting & Agenda Items

- 27 April at 4:30pm at City Hall Council Chambers
- Agenda items
 - Biddeford Veterans Committee – finalize draft of ordinance language

7. Meeting adjourned – 5:20pm

ATTACHMENT 1

Veteran Committee Meeting Minutes, 23 Mar 2026

The following recommendations were brought up for discussion at April's committee meeting:

Sec 2-400.1 (a)

- Mention that the city council member on the committee is not a voting member because Roger is the only veteran on the council
- If the council member is not voting, should we say that there are eight members, including a non-voting city council member?
- Should we say no more than one member from the other towns? That would leave two voting members from Biddeford if each town was represented.
- Line 3 – add “voting” after “All”: All “voting” members shall be Honorably Discharged...

Sec 2-400.2 (b) (1)

- Add “veterans” after citizenry: “public hearings to keep citizenry and veterans informed.

Sec 2-400.2 (b) (2)

- Delete the word “monthly” so it does not conflict with the last paragraph Sec. 2-400.6 (c)

Sec. 2-400.3

- Recommendation for three-year terms instead of two for stability and continuity
- Line 2: add “non-voting” – One “non-voting” seat shall be reserved for a city council member...

DIVISION 18 – VETERANS COMMITTEE

Sec. 2- 400.1 Establishment.

(a) There is hereby created and established the VETERANS COMMITTEE, comprised of seven members and a staff member of the General Assistance Office serving in an ex officio capacity. All members shall be Honorably Discharged Armed Forces Veterans, citizens, and reside within the corporate limits of the City of Biddeford, the City of Saco, the Towns of Dayton, Arundel, Waterboro, or Old Orchard Beach.

(b) In appointing members to the VETERANS COMMITTEE, the Mayor and City Council shall seek to appoint members from a cross-section of all citizens, including those living in US Census Tracts within City limits that are considered to be "low/moderate income" by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The VETERANS COMMITTEE is established under the authority of the Biddeford City Council and shall serve under the directive of the City Council.

Sec. 2-400.2 Purpose; responsibilities.

(a) The purpose of the Veterans Committee is to ensure that Veterans in the community receive the support, recognition, and resources they deserve for their service. The Committee will work with existing Veterans organizations to promote collaboration and to foster a Veteran-friendly environment within the City of Biddeford. The committee will focus on four topic areas, including supporting local Veterans, community outreach and education, advocacy for Veterans' services, and Veterans recognition and events.

(b) Responsibilities shall include:

(1) Providing comments and/or recommendations in areas of need, reviewing potential projects, and participating in public hearings to keep the citizenry informed.

(2) Receive information and comments from fellow veterans at the Committee's regular monthly meetings.

(3) Make presentations to the City Council at such times as may be requested by the City Council or as the VETERANS COMMITTEE determines is necessary.

(a) The Committee is strictly advisory in nature. It has no decision-making authority and is prohibited from incurring expenses, making payments, entering into contracts, leases, or obligations, or otherwise binding the City.

Sec. 2-400.3 Membership.

Members shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by a majority of the City Council for staggered two-year terms. One seat shall be reserved for a City Council member, who will be nominated by the mayor and confirmed by the City Council.

Sec. 2-400.4 Vacancies.

(a) A vacancy in the membership of the Committee shall be determined upon the occurrence of any of the following:

(1) The change in a member's primary residence to a place outside the City or Town listed in Section 400.1(a);

(2) The death of a member;

(3) The effective date of the resignation of a member;

(4) The expiration of the member's term of office;

(5) Three unexcused absences during one year;

(6) The removal of a member by the City Council for misconduct or nonperformance of duty.

(b) A member may resign by submitting a written resignation to the Chair of the Committee. Once received by the Chair of the Committee, the Mayor's office will be notified. The resignation may not be withdrawn, and the member's office shall become vacant on the date specified in the resignation.

(c) If a vacancy in the membership of the Committee occurs, the Mayor shall nominate a person to fill the vacancy within a period not to exceed 30 days of its occurrence. The nomination shall be subject to the confirmation of the City Council. The person named to fill a vacancy shall serve out the term of the individual they replace on the Committee.

Sec. 2-400.5 Organization of Committee.

(a) The Committee shall annually elect one of its members as Chair and one of its members as Secretary. The Committee may also elect a Vice Chair.

(b) A quorum shall consist of 50% (plus one if an even number) of appointed members. The Chair shall be counted in determining a quorum and shall have one vote.

(c) A quorum shall be necessary to take any VETERANS COMMITTEE action authorized or required. An issue shall carry by a majority of those voting.

(d) The ex officio member of the VETERANS COMMITTEE is nonvoting and shall serve in an advisory capacity.

(e) Notice of any expired terms and/or vacancies shall be given to the public. The Mayor shall nominate, and the City Council shall confirm all appointments to fill expired terms and/or vacancies. The City Council may remove any member for misconduct or failure to perform duty.

(f) The VETERANS COMMITTEE may adopt and amend from time to time rules to govern the conduct of its administrative business.

Sec. 2-400.6 Meetings.

(a) The Committee shall establish meetings of the VETERANS COMMITTEE. Meetings shall be held at the Biddeford City Hall or at a suitable municipal public location. Meetings may be conducted virtually. Prior notice of any change in meeting date, time, or place shall be provided to all members, the public, and the administrative staff a minimum of 48 hours in advance of said meeting.

(b) All regularly scheduled and special meetings shall have an agenda approved by the Chair.

(c) The Committee shall meet a minimum of four times per year, but may meet as often as the members deem necessary.

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(b) In appointing members to the VETERANS COMMITTEE, the Mayor and City Council shall seek to appoint members from a cross-section of all citizens, including those living in US Census Tracts within City limits that are considered to be "low/moderate income" by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The VETERANS COMMITTEE is established under the authority of the Biddeford City Council and shall serve under the directive of the City Council. **PNT: Define the US Census Tract as "Data reference the Nation's people and economy**

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(b) Responsibilities shall include:

(1) Providing comments and/or recommendations in areas of need, reviewing potential projects, and participating in public hearings to keep the citizenry informed. **PNT:**

Veterans/Citizens informed

(2) Receive information and comments from fellow veterans at the Committee's regular monthly meetings. **PNT: please keep the word "monthly" otherwise the public would be confused.**

(3) Make presentations to the City Council at such times as may be requested by the City Council or as the VETERANS COMMITTEE determines is necessary.

(a) The Committee is strictly advisory in nature. It has no decision-making authority and is prohibited from incurring expenses, making payments, entering into contracts, leases, or obligations, or otherwise binding the City.

Sec. 2-400.3 Membership.

Members shall be appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by a majority of the City Council for staggered two-year terms. One seat shall be reserved for a City Council member, who will be nominated by the mayor and confirmed by the City Council. **PNT: Staggered 3-year terms. Also "nominated by the mayor and confirmed by the City Council" to "as non-voting member"**

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(c) If a vacancy in the membership of the Committee occurs, the Mayor shall nominate a person to fill the vacancy within a period not to exceed 30 days of its occurrence. The nomination shall be subject to the confirmation of the City Council. The person named to fill a vacancy shall serve out the term of the individual they replace on the Committee.

Sec. 2-400.5 Organization of Committee.

(a) The Committee shall annually elect one of its members as Chair and one of its members as Secretary. The Committee may also elect a Vice Chair. **PNT: please change all of this to read "The committee shall annually elect one of it's members as Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary."**

(b) A quorum shall consist of 50% (plus one if an even number) of appointed members. The Chair shall be counted in determining a quorum and shall have one vote. **PNT: Not if the chair is a city councilor.**

(c) A quorum shall be necessary to take any VETERANS COMMITTEE action authorized or required. An issue shall carry by a majority of those voting.

(d) The ex officio member of the VETERANS COMMITTEE is nonvoting and shall serve in an advisory capacity. **PNT: Ex-officio member from general assistance office.**

(e) Notice of any expired terms and/or vacancies shall be given to the public. The Mayor shall nominate, and the City Council shall confirm all appointments to fill expired terms and/or vacancies. The City Council may remove any member for misconduct or failure to perform duty.

(f) The VETERANS COMMITTEE may adopt and amend from time to time rules to govern the conduct of its administrative business.

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(b) All regularly scheduled and special meetings shall have an agenda approved by the Chair.

(c) The Committee shall meet a minimum of four times per year, but may meet as often as the members deem necessary. **PNT: The committee shall meet monthly but may meet as members deem necessary.**

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the City of Biddeford has always supported its military veteran population; and,

WHEREAS, the Purple Heart is the oldest military decoration in present use; and,

WHEREAS, the mission of the Military Order of the Purple Heart is to foster an environment of goodwill among combat-wounded veteran members and their families, promote patriotism, support legislative initiatives, and most importantly – make sure we never forget; and,

WHEREAS, the Biddeford area has a large veteran population, including Purple Heart recipients; and,

WHEREAS, Biddeford appreciates the sacrifices of Purple Heart recipients made in defending our freedoms and believe it is important to acknowledge them for their courage and show them the honor and support they have earned.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that I, Liam P. Lafountain, Mayor of the City of Biddeford, Maine, do hereby proclaim the City of Biddeford as

A PURPLE HEART CITY

and encourage the residents of Biddeford to show their appreciation for the sacrifices of Purple Heart recipients.

Liam P. Lafountain, Mayor

[Revised 28 February 2024]

Military Order of the Purple Heart Purple Heart Trail Considerations Recommended Procedures

General Information:

The Purple Heart Trail program began in 1992 at Mt. Vernon, Virginia. The goal was to make the public aware of the Purple Heart Medal and what the medal represented. Roads, bridges, highways, and trails were designated as a part of the Purple Heart Trail. The Purple Heart Trail grew so did the requests from businesses, colleges, universities, cities, towns, sports teams, airports, buildings, and many others.

The Purple Heart designation is an “Outward expression of an internal desire to recognize and Honor recipients of the Purple Heart”. The Purple Heart is presented to men and women of all military services who have been injured or killed in action against an enemy of the United States.

The Process to become a Purple Heart Designated Location:

Each State has a Department Commander and several Chapters, the process begins when a Department or Chapter Commander is notified that a location is interested in being designated a Purple Heart entity. It is recommended that a meeting be arranged to talk about options, dates of presentation, and other items that will enhance the experience of Purple Heart recipients, their families, and members of the community. You will need to Search for a MOPH Chapter to coordinate a proclamation please use this link:

<https://www.purpleheart.org/findachapter>

Options for types of activities that Purple Heart locations can provide:

1. Many Cities, Towns, and Counties have canvassed their citizens through news releases and notifications to churches and businesses to find Purple Heart recipients. Family members and Gold Star Families will have pictures and stories of their loved ones who have received the Purple Heart. The idea is to collect information, stories, and pictures and develop a booklet that others can see and read about the men and women of their community. Once the information is collected and published date is set for a “Meet and Greet” where the families and recipients of the Purple Heart can have a cup of coffee and a cookie to talk about their family members. At this point, the leadership of the community reads a Proclamation designating the City, Town, or County as a Purple Heart location, and the proclamation will be sent to the Purple Heart trail coordinator and placed on the Purple Heart Trail website.

2. Provide Purple Heart recipients with tax relief, and reduced fees at parks, zoos, parking facilities, and public events. Set aside August 7th each year as National Purple Heart Day, and place signs that indicate that this location is a Purple Heart entity.
3. Businesses, Universities, Colleges, and other Learning Institutions will provide a Veterans Oasis or study area. Provide a reception to honor Purple Heart recipients and other veterans as students or business employees.
4. Sports teams, Stadiums, and Medical Facilities draw from a large area and may not be able to have contact information to canvas individuals who use their facilities. These Facilities can still be a Purple Heart entity and will create an event that will lift our Purple Heart families and recipients with things like a Purple Heart game or Day.
5. Options to provide Purple Heart Recipients, and their families the honor they deserve are not limited to any one option. There are many stories that have never been told, some families receive the Purple Heart in the mail, and they need to be able to tell the story about their loved ones.

**Please Direct Inquiries About the
Purple Heart Trails Program To:
Phone: 703.642.5360
Email: communications@purpleheart.org**

Or

**JOE SUTTON
National Purple Heart Trails Coordinator
Phone: 785.893.2550
PHtrail@purpleheart.org**