

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: Stephen S. Rollins
Town Manager

DATE: December 1, 2010

RE: RESIGNATION AS ASSISTANT VETERAN'S AGENT

Effective December 10, 2010, I hereby resign as the Assistant Veteran's Agent for the Town of Hanover. I have served since December 9, 2009 due to the absence of the then Veteran's Agent.

During this time, I have guided the office through the transition from a paper only system, to the State's recent electronic system, purchased an in-house computer, created an on-line internet connection, and developed an account with the Department of Veteran's Services that now processes our expenditures and receipt vouchers in a very timely fashion.

I would also like to report that I was able to hire Mary Whitman who did a good job for us but eventually could not continue, and after that was able to hire Pricilla Bracket who has turned out to be a true gem in terms of both helping clients in a very compassionate way and being very professional about all the paperwork with the State and Federal Government.

More recently, as you know, effective March 1, 2010 we have been able to appoint Michael Thorp to be the Assistant Veteran's Agent here in Hanover. I trained with Michael and can attest to his professionalism. Michael also serves as the Assistant Veteran's Agent in Duxbury which continues the tradition of a "district" between Duxbury and Hanover which has been accepted by the State Department of Veteran's Services for many years. This is important because it allows us different considerations relative to whether we need a full time Agent for one town due to the population being over 12,000, or whether we can actually share as a district the one Agent, Mike fills that bill.

Now, effective August 19, 2010, the Veteran's Department is under the Community Services Department. The Director of Community Services is Tony Marino who is also a veteran. If need be, the Town can have Tony become the Veteran's Agent and have the option of having a full time Agent in-house all of the time.

I have enjoyed my tenure working directly with this needy population of the Commonwealth. The needs are growing very fast in today's post-Iraq conflict and continue in the Afghanistan conflict with veterans arriving home to a very poor economy and needing transitional benefits.

Additionally, we are finding that the seniors, whether they are veterans or the spouses of veterans, are being financially squeezed to the degree that they need assistance with their medical benefits. This means that the Town will undoubtedly have to increase its appropriations for benefits to the veterans. On the other hand, at a later point, the State reimburses the Town at 75% of those expenditures.

Finally, I've made provisions for the Veteran's Office to be moved to the lower level of Town Hall, my thanks to Tony Marino for facilitating this. This has been a decision that is a long time in the making. It has been agreed upon for quite a while that the access for clients who do not wish to be well known, would prefer the entrance at the lower level. This means an applicant only goes by one office as opposed to the front door entrance where many offices intersect. It is also an excellent ground-level access for older veterans or spouses of veterans who might have trouble navigating the stairs or the ramp. I think the Veteran's Agent will be pleased with these quarters which were recently vacated by the Recreation Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I'm proud to be associated with the veterans in any way.

cc: Director of Community Services
Personnel