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# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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## Press Release

### Former Veterans Officer admits to thefts

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Dedham's former Veterans Services Officer admitted to all of the dozen indictments pending against him in Norfolk Superior Court on March 24, according to Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey.

William J. Aitken served as Veterans Services Officer and Parking Clerk for the town of Dedham from 2013 until November 2019, when town officials came to suspect that he had stolen a \$2,000 donation check from a local bank intended to be used to support local Veterans. A wide-ranging investigation followed, leading to his indictment on 12 counts in June of 2021 reflecting multiple schemes.

The investigation found that in addition to that check, he solicited donations of cash, checks, and gift cards from local Veterans groups to benefit other Veterans and widows in need -- but then kept the money for himself. He stole cash payments made by the public to satisfy parking violations, made unauthorized purchases for gas and food using a municipal credit card, and even put in for mileage reimbursement after buying gas with that town card. He falsely claimed to be facing foreclosure to induce his supervisee to loan him \$2,000 -- which he instead used for personal travel.

Most of the alleged criminal conduct took place in 2018 and 2019.

"The total theft of roughly \$7,000 was substantial, but the breach of trust is hard to quantify," District Attorney Morrissey said. "The Commonwealth asked that he be sentenced to 2 years in the house of corrections, followed by 2 years of probation during which time he would make restitution."

Norfolk Superior Court Judge Douglas Wilkins imposed 1 year of house arrest, followed by two years of probation with GPS monitoring and full restitution to the victims.

"Dedham town officials were very helpful in compiling the necessary information to advance this prosecution, and Dedham Police detectives put a great deal of effort into helping build this case," District Attorney Morrissey said. "It is my understanding that Dedham officials also undertook a review of the controls and supervision of the Veterans Services Officer position. We don't expect to see this kind of problem reoccur."