



**COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
September 19, 2013**

The Commission on Veteran Affairs convened in a regular meeting on September 19, 2013 at City Hall, 301 West 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair Cassandra St. John called the Board Meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

**Cassandra St. John, Chair
Phillip Gutierrez, Vice Chair
John Conley**

**Chris Garcia
Bill McLellan
Linda Yoder**

Staff in Attendance: Allen Bergeron, Tina Lee

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Chair Cassandra St. John asked Commission members to review minutes from the meeting on August 30, 2013. Vice Chair Phillip Gutierrez moved to approve the August 30, 2013 minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner John Conley. Motion passed with no objection

2. OLD BUSINESS

- Updates by the Committee working groups lead on the top three priorities for our Veterans.
 - Homeless Veterans-Chris Garcia
 - Female Veterans-Cassandra St. John
 - Employment and Education – John Conley
- Veterans Day Parade- The commission will invite Travis County Veterans Services Officer Olie Pope to the next meeting to discuss and inform the board of what assistance will be needed from them.

3. NEW BUSINESS

- Each Veteran Services representative from the University and College in Austin spoke to the board about the younger Veteran population.
 - Ben Armstrong with University of Texas informed the board about the process of their services to their Veteran students along with programs and incentives to get their students involved with the community.
 - Southwestern University informed the board that they have a small Veteran population but they continue to grow. Services they provide include credit and benefit transfers and the mentorship program they have for their Students and many more events to get their students involved.
 - St. Edwards University provides academic planning and support to their students along with career planning. They also provide counseling and community service

to local Veterans and services to their Veterans about their benefits and transfer of credits.

- Austin Community College is dedicated to assisting their Veterans and includes four Veteran service representatives at their campuses. They schedule many events to show their support and appreciation to Veterans and assist with outreach and transitioning.
- Jim Brennan briefed the board about the upcoming VBE (Veteran Business Enterprise) effort and progress of the House bill 194. Informed the board about the disparity study of VBE and that they hope to see its completion in January 2015.
- Sandra Sponsler, Family support services briefed the board about the resources and services they offer to Veterans and recommends services for employment and where the need is not filled. Sandra also informed the board to support their women employment event on February 16 and a new partnership to better serve Veterans and Guard and Reserve members.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

N/A (No public hearings during this meeting)

5. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

N/A (No citizen Communication during this meeting)

6. STAFF BRIEFINGS

N/A (No Staff Briefings)

7. ADJOURN: Chair Cassandra St. John adjourned the meeting at 2:37 P.M. Without objection