



**COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS  
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING  
August 30, 2013**

The Commission on Veteran Affairs convened in a regular meeting on August 30, 2013 at City Hall, 301 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair Cassaundra St. John called the Board Meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

**Board Members in Attendance:**

**Cassaundra St. John, Chair  
Phillip Gutierrez, Vice Chair  
John Conley  
Chris Garcia**

**Gary Linder  
Bill McLellan  
Linda Yoder**

**Staff in Attendance: Allen Bergeron, Tina Lee**

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. Chair Cassaundra St. John asked Commission members to review minutes from the meeting on July 31, 2013. Chair Cassaundra St. John moved to approve the July 31, 2013 minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Chris Garcia. 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-Cassaundra St. John
  - Employment and Education – John Conley
- Veterans Park- PARD gave an update on the status of Veterans park which started in 2008. The plan is to relocate the three memorials representing our Veterans to this new park and in 2014 the design for the space will be initiated.
- Veterans Day Parade- The commission has discussed and decided to participate more next year with a float and to serve as a supportive role for 2013 Veterans Day.

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

- U.S. VETS updated the commission on their mission of having 12 housing facilities for homeless Veterans in the United States. Tom Mitchell will like to be on the agenda for the October meeting to give an in-depth presentation to the board.
- Committee working groups (Funding)
  - Vice Chair Philip Gutierrez will head the funding committee so that the board will be able to fund future projects.
  - Commissioner Chris Garcia will be assisting and consulting with Commissioner Gary Linder when needed.

- **Support for our young Veterans was discussed and decided by the board to invite the Veterans student services officers from each college in Austin to the meeting in September. Each officer will present and provide demographics of the Veterans at their school and provide feedback to better support our younger Veterans to the board.**
- **Chair Cassaundra St. John briefed the board on conflict of interest, and to be focused on representing the City at each meeting and in the community.**

**4. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**N/A (No public hearings during this meeting)**

**5. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL**

- **James Deunu- Talked about the “One Stop Shop” in San Antonio to support Veterans in one single location with the projected opening of Fall 2014**
- **Bob Gear- Briefed the program at Workforce solutions and what services they offer to Veterans in terms of employment and outreach**
- **Pam Maercklein- Informed the board of the education, employment opportunities and the Entrepreneur program for Women Veterans.**
- **Randy Patterson- Requests the board to assist in the campaign to get a Navy ship named USS Austin once again.**
- **James Towers – Informed the board of the Annual stand down for homeless Veterans at the VFW Post 856 and to support the cause. Also would like to see a permanent facility for homeless Veterans in Austin to get care and get off the streets.**

**6. STAFF BRIEFINGS**

**N/A (No Staff Briefings)**

**7. ADJOURN: Chair Cassaundra St. John adjourned the meeting at 2:23 P.M. Without objection**