



**COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING
November 18, 2013**

The Commission on Veteran Affairs convened in a regular meeting on November 18, 2013 at City Hall, 301 West 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair Cassaundra St. John called the Board Meeting to order at 2:07 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

**Cassaundra St. John, Chair
Phillip Gutierres, Vice Chair
John Conley**

**Chris Garcia
Bill McLellan
Linda Yoder**

Staff in Attendance: Judy Wallace, Allen Bergeron, Tina Lee

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Chair Cassaundra St. John asked Commission members to review minutes from the meeting on October 14, 2013. Vice Chair Phillip Gutierres moved to approve the October 14, 2013 minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Linda Yoder. 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 informed the board about the duplication process the City is seeing to assist homeless Veterans. The efforts of Mobile Loaves and Fishes were discussed and the board members agreed to invite the founder to present to the board about his organization and efforts.
 - Female Veterans-Cassaundra St. John informed the board about the possibility of the partnership with Department of Labor and Texas Veterans Commission. Agreed to have a coalition with other female Veterans in Austin.
 - Employment and Education – John Conley and Phillip Gutierres presented a draft on employment and education efforts and what recommendations the board should agree on.
- The board will continue to look at success stories of how Cities implemented a “One Stop Shop” and present ideas on how to bring this effort to Austin.
- Commissioner Conley and Gutierres informed the board about the House Bill 194 and that there was no update on the Senate bill for the Veteran Business Enterprise (VBE).

3. NEW BUSINESS

- Commissioner McLellan coordinated and discussed the scheduling of the visit to the new Veteran Affairs Outpatient Clinic with the Mayor to try to get majority of the Council members to also attend and when he was available.

- The board agreed to see if they could involve the community and younger generation through social media. A presentation from the City Clerk is to be determined on this subject.
- Andrew Miller, Housing and Urban Development- Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program Manager informed the board on the eligibility and disqualifying factors of the housing vouchers for our homeless Veterans. His program covers the Waco, Temple and Austin area and is in partnership with HUD to receive section 8 vouchers. Every Veteran is under case management and to qualify they need to experience chronic homelessness for over a year or four times in the past three years. Andrew informed the board about the four categories they seek for the Veteran.
 - Get into housing and work with the landlord
 - Intensive care and stability for a year
 - Reintegration and employment
 - Maintenance
- January 2015 is the end of the five year plan to end Veteran homelessness.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

N/A (No public hearings during this meeting)

5. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

- Mike McNamara from the American Legion 76 informed the board about locating a Vietnam monument and the possibility of relocating it to the new Veterans Park the City is creating.

6. STAFF BRIEFINGS

N/A (No Staff Briefings)

7. ADJOURN: Chair Cassandra St. John adjourned the meeting at 3:22 P.M. Without objection