

**COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
MINUTES****REGULAR MEETING
February 18, 2014**

The Commission on Veteran Affairs convened in a regular meeting on February 18, 2014 at City Hall, 301 West 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Vice Chair Phillip Gutierrez called the Board Meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Phillip Gutierrez, Vice Chair
John Conley
Chis Garcia

Gary Linder
Bill McLellan
Linda Yoder

Staff in Attendance: Tina Lee

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Vice Chair Phillip Gutierrez asked Commission members to review minutes from the meeting on January 21, 2014. Commissioner Bill McLellan moved to approve the January 21, 2014 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 asked the board Liaison to attend the next ECHO meeting on the discussion to support homeless Veterans. Chris would also like to discuss ideas on how to gain more landlord support in Austin to accept section 8 vouchers from the VA.
 - Female Veterans- The next working group meeting is to be determined and will be supporting the Rock your Camo 5K event in partnership with Texas Veterans Commission during Women Veterans Month.
 - Employment and Education – John Conley and Phillip Gutierrez will re-circulate the draft on employment and education to the board members and determined the next step forward.
- The possibility of the tour at the VA with the Mayor and Council members is to be re-scheduled and discussed at the next meeting.
- The board discussed the idea of creating a list of networks with Veteran service providers and a City directory for the “One Stop Shop”. They have also discussed the possibility of developing a survey to facilitate and find out what the Veteran’s priority needs are. A motion to find resources to put a directory together was initiated by Vice Chair Phillip and Commissioner John Conley seconded the motion with no objections.
- The goals and future accomplishments of the Veteran’s Commission will be discussed at the next meeting.

3. NEW BUSINESS

- Christa Noland, Executive Director of Green Doors presented to the board on the organization's efforts to support Veterans and help transform lives and communities. Green Doors offers a Veterans Transitional homeless program which is screened at Veteran Affairs for eligibility. Green doors also offer permanent supportive housing which is the largest house placement for the HUD-VASH vouchers in Austin. Case management is staffed from the VA at Green Doors.
- The presentation from Kay Fohn, Caritas Program Manager for SSVF will be rescheduled due to an emergency meeting.
- Discussion on AHRMA (Austin Human Resource Management Association) event was removed due to an illness.
- Zoning laws was discussed by Christopher Johnson from the City of Austin Planning and Development Review about how they will help fast-track affordable housing and transitional housing projects. Once they are identified, they would be assigned a go-to team at zoning to follow the project from zoning, building permits, inspections. Housing projects in Southwest side of Austin was also discussed that there are ordinance regulations that prohibit more than 25% impervious cover on the build lot. (i.e. footprint o the structure being building like driveways, sidewalks and more cannot cover more than 25% of the grounds) Chris also mentioned that light industrial and commercial zoning would be okay to build transitional housing with a variance to zoning which is an area near the VA outpatient clinic.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

N/A (No public hearings during this meeting)

5. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

- Phillip, a representative from the Society of 40 Men and 8 horses informed the board about the Merci Boxcar exhibit grand opening on February 21, 2014 and for the Commission's support in attendance.

6. STAFF BRIEFINGS

N/A (No Staff Briefings)

7. ADJOURN: Vice Chair Phillip Gutierrez adjourned the meeting at 3:08 P.M. Without objection