



COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

AGENDA

Tuesday, June 17, 2014

**2:00 pm – 4:00 pm in City Hall Council of Chambers Room 1001
301 West Second Street
Austin, TX 78701**

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Cassandra St. John, Chair (Spelman)	Chris Garcia (Morrison)
Phillip Gutierrez, Vice Chair (Martinez)	Bill McLellan (Leffingwell)
John Conley (Cole)	Linda Yoder (Tovo)
Vacant	

CALL TO ORDER

1. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION

Citizens signed up prior to the meeting being called to order will each be allowed a three-minute allotment to address their concerns regarding items not posted on the agenda.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Consider approval of the minutes from the Commission on Veterans Affairs April 15, 2014 regular meeting.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. OLD BUSINESS – For Discussion and Possible Action

- a. Updates and reports by the Committee working groups lead about the top three priorities for our Veterans in the City of Austin.
 - i. Homeless Veterans:
 - ii. Employment and Education:
 - iii. Female Veterans:
- b. Action and plan to creating a “One Stop Shop” for all Veterans in Austin
- c. Coordinating and rescheduling the Veterans Commission meetings for the fall of 2014.

5. NEW BUSINESS - For Discussion and Possible Action

- a. Presentation and discussion led by Darden Smith, Founder and Creative director with Song Writers with Soldiers. He will be speaking and playing a short sample video about their project success and how they assist Veterans with therapy through music.
- b. Presentation and discussion led by Carrie Sconza, Women Veterans Coordinator with Texas Veterans Commission (TVC). She will be updating the commission about transportation for Veterans and information from the National Women Veterans Conference and how we can bring those best practices to Austin.
- c. Presentation and discussion led by Eric Whitfield and Kelli Backhaus from We Honor Vets about their mission and program for palliative care outside the VA resources.
- d. Presentation and discussion led by Lil Serafine, Chief Operating Officer from Grace after Fire, an organization with the mission to provide the means for women Veterans to gain self-knowledge and self- renewal.

7. STAFF BRIEFINGS

As applicable.

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioners propose agenda items for future meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request. Meeting locations are planned with wheelchair access. If requiring Sign Language Interpreters or alternative formats, please give notice at least 4 days before the meeting date.

Please call Allen Bergeron at the Veterans Program Department at 512-974-3459 or Allen.Bergeron@austintexas.gov for additional information; TTY users route through Relay Texas at 711.

For more information on the Veterans Commission, please contact Tina Lee at 512-974-3306 or visit <http://www.austintexas.gov/content/commission-veterans-affairs-1>