

**COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS
MINUTES****REGULAR MEETING
January 21, 2015**

The Commission on Veteran Affairs convened in a regular meeting on January 21, 2015 at City Hall, Bull Pen Room 1029, located on 301 West 2nd Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair Phillip Gutierres called the Board Meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Phillip Gutierres, Chair
Del Kolbe, Vice Chair
Michael Denton

Bill McLellan
David Thomas

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

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Chair Phillip Gutierres asked Commission members to review minutes from the regular meeting on December 16, 2014. Vice Chair Del Kolbe moved to approve the December 16, 2014 minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner David Thomas. Motion passed with no objection.

2. OLD BUSINESS

- Updates by the working groups lead on the top three priorities for our Veterans.
 - Homeless Veterans – No new updates are available at this time.
 - Female Veterans – No representative from the working group was present to give any updates
 - Employment and Education – Would to check on the status of submitting the recommendations up to council.
- The commissioners have re-evaluated which commissioners will be assigned to each working group.
 - Homeless Veterans: Michael Denton , David Thomas
 - Employment and Education: Bill McLellan, Phillip Gutierres
 - Female Veterans: Cassaundra Melgar C'De Baca and Del Kolbe
- In regards to updating the legislation concerning the Veterans Property Tax Exemptions and HUD-VASH vouchers, the commissioners have decided on sending the legislature a letter regarding this issue to the appropriate people at the state and city level. This subject will remain on the agenda until this issue is resolved.

3. NEW BUSINESS

- The action item on voting to amend the bylaws did not take place as there was no need to amend the bylaws unless a committee was formed.
- Debra from the SMB (Small Minority and Business) group presented to the commission regarding the status of VBE (Veteran Business Enterprise). Debra is the project manager for this disparity study and serves as the assistant director for the City of Austin Department of SMB. In August 2013, a contract was awarded to conduct this study which is a collection of quantitative data for disadvantaged businesses. They evaluated the types of services, scope of being utilized and the qualitative data and experiences of the focus group for Veterans in August. This draft of data was done in 2008 and recommendations will be given to the city. The final report is due June 2015 and a review will be scheduled for March-June.
- The ACC's one stop shop is ideal area for hub networking for Veteran Services. We will attempt to get a private tour of the one stop shop center and at the moment they are waiting for the City of Austin's Occupancy permit. They did a soft opening in 2014 and the location is nearby all the bus routes and close to Texas Workforce Solutions.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

N/A (No public hearings during this meeting)

5. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

- David Sandavol, recently moved to Austin would like to get involved with Veterans in the City of Austin. Navy retired working for Texas Workforce commission. Asked the commission to keep him in mind and would like to participate in the monthly meetings and help make a difference in our community.
- Aaron Smith with the Texas Veteran's Commission is involved with community outreach and serves as a new outlet for TVC. Informed the commission about the Annual conference summit on February 4th.

6. STAFF BRIEFINGS

- Allen Bergeron did a brief introduction to Mayor Steve Adler regarding his participation with supporting Veterans. Mayor Steve Adler thanked everyone for their service and took time to communicate to the commissioners about his support for Veterans and that he would like to stay involved with any concerns regarding our Military and Veterans in the City of Austin.

7. ADJOURN: Phillip Gutierrez adjourned the meeting at 3:24 PM. Without objection