

**COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS  
MINUTES****REGULAR MEETING  
June 17, 2015**

The Commission on Veteran Affairs convened in a regular meeting on June 17, 2015 at City Hall, Board and Commissions Room 1101, located on 301 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Austin, Texas.

Chair Phillip Gutierres called the Board Meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Phillip Gutierres, Chair  
Del Kolbe, Vice Chair  
Michael Denton

Cassaundra Melgar C' De Baca  
David Thomas  
Nicholas Van Zandt

Staff in Attendance: Tina Lee, Allen Bergeron

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Chair Phillip Gutierres asked Commission members to review minutes from the regular meeting on March 18, 2015. Vice Chair Del Kolbe moved to approve the last meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Cassaundra Melgar C' De Baca. Motion passed with no objection.

**2. BUSINESS**

- Due to the limited amount of appointed commissioners, there are only a few new updates from the working groups regarding the top three priorities for our Veterans. There should be a limit of 3-4 per working group and until the 10-1 transition they will continue to discuss the importance of these priorities at the meeting till the working groups meet.
  - Homeless Veterans: American GI Forum is building a Heroes Lodge in Austin to house Veterans. There should be 220 units to end Veteran Homelessness in Austin.
  - Female Veterans: Working on healthcare and education and would like to request "Tribute to Women" from DC to possibly come to Austin and have a presence in the community. The City Mayor or City Manager must be the one to request their services.
  - Employment and Education: No updates
- Veteran's Park is scheduled to be built in front of the American Legion which has been discussed to not be an ideal location and hardly visible. The commissioners agree that as the Capital City of Texas, the Veterans Park should be noticeable and grand like the other Cities in Texas. The commissioners agree that each branch of service should be represented rather than specific wars and campaigns. The American Legion will keep the three memorials that were scheduled to be placed on Veteran's Park. The ideal location for this park would be on Town Lake or Butler Park and more discussion on this park is scheduled for the next upcoming meetings.
- Chair Phillip Gutierres will mirror last year's annual report and scheduled to be completed this week

- The Samaritan Center and Austin Recovery would like to partner with the City of Austin in assisting Veterans in need of short and long term care. They would like to look at the possibilities of the 30-60 programs on recovery and to discuss more about this partnership with the new commissioners next month.
- A few current commissioners have been reappointed by the Mayor and Council to continue serving on the Veterans Commission when the first meeting of the 11 member board meets in July. The staff thanks everyone who has played an integral part of assisting and making a difference in the Veterans lives in and around Austin Texas.

**4. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

N/A (No public hearings during this meeting)

**5. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL**

N/A (No Citizen Communication during this meeting)

**6. STAFF BRIEFINGS**

- The City of Austin Furniture program for no longer homeless Veterans continues to accept good and like new furniture for our Veterans in the HUD-VASH (Housing and Urban Development – Veteran Affairs, Supportive Housing) program. With the new partnership with Code Compliance, we have been active in picking up and delivering furniture to our no longer homeless Veterans in Austin.
- In July, the first 11 member board will meet for the first time with 4 current members continuing their service with the commission and 5 new members.

**6. ADJOURN:** Phillip Gutierrez adjourned the meeting at 3:01 PM. Without objection