

## COMMISSION ON VETERAN AFFAIRS MEETING MINUTES



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**REGULAR MEETING  
July 20, 2016**

The Commission on Veteran Affairs convened in a regular meeting on July 20, 2016 at the ACC Veterans Resource Center located on 6001 Airport Blvd, Austin Texas 78752.

Chair Jason Denny called the Board Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Jason Denny	Adrenne Mendoza
Pete Salazar	Pete Phillips
Phillip Gutierrez	David Thomas
Bailey Harrington	

Staff in Attendance: Allen Bergeron, Tina Lee

#### 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Chair Jason Denny asked the Commission members to review the minutes from the regular meeting on June 15, 2016. Commissioner Pete Phillips made a motion to approve the June meeting minutes and Commissioner Pete Salazar seconded the motion to approve the minutes. Motion passed with no objection.

#### 2. OLD BUSINESS

- The former commissioners of the Veterans Commission developed three work groups that concentrated on the top three priorities that Veterans face. With a minimum of three commissioners per group they have decided to continue concentrating on the following work groups
  - Homeless Veterans : Phillip Gutierrez, David Thomas, Jason Denny
    - Austin has reached its goal of functional zero
  - Female Veterans: Molly Potter and Adrenne Mendoza
    - No updates
  - Employment/Transitioning Veterans/Education: Pete Salazar, and George Harrington.
    - No updates
- The Veterans Park's location has been reviewed and park's production is yet to be determined. The next step for the Commissioners would be to submit their recommendations to council and seek the option of raising funds on behalf of the Park if that is a possibility.

## **COMMISSION ON VETERAN AFFAIRS MEETING MINUTES**

- Director of Small Minority and Business Resources office Veronica Lara and Assistant Director Debra Dibble updated the commission on the status of the Veteran Business Enterprise. They will present to the Council and Mayor their budget recommendations in August to seek which department (SMBR/Purchasing) will oversee the VBE program. Their request to council will be to hire 3-5 employees to run the program to certify veteran businesses. Director Lara recommends for the Commissioners on Veteran Affairs to reach out to their council member and give them their thoughts and suggestions regarding the VBE. The budget process for the City of Austin starts in August and if approved it will be adopted in October.

### **3. NEW BUSINESS**

- Adrenne Mendoza is the newly appointed commissioner by CM Delia Garza's office for the City of Austin Veterans Commission. She is the Veteran Services Case Manager for Meals on Wheels and the daughter of a Purple Heart VietNam Veteran. Commissioner Mendoza is very passionate to assisting veterans and being a part of the effort to make Austin a better place for those who served in the Military in the past and present
- Commissioner Pete Salazar informed the commission regarding the Texas Veterans and Family Alliance Grant Program. The grant is requesting certified assessments and data reports for the grant to be approved. The deadline for the grant is scheduled for August 1<sup>st</sup> and will need the City's participation for the grant to be approved. Vice Chair Salazar recommends to attempt the grant process for next year.
- Andrew Mellon, 20 year retired Marine spoke to the Commission regarding the organization "Our Digital Heroes". Their program goal is to help veterans get jobs and the organization created a non-profit to train future technical recruits to give them a skill that would be meaningful and useful.
- The annual report was submitted to the staff liaisons for their edits and approval.

### **4. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

N/A (No public hearings during this meeting)

### **• CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL**

N/A

### **STAFF BRIEFINGS**

- The women veteran flight is scheduled for October 7-8 and the goal is to take 40 women.
- The City of Austin Soldier internship program is starting their interview process in the following week. They will interview and accept three soldiers who are 180 days out of their commitment to work for the City.
- Veterans Parade is scheduled for November 11<sup>th</sup> and the meeting is held monthly. The Commissioners are encouraged to participate.

**ADJOURN:** Jason Denny adjourned the meeting at 7:58 PM. Without objection