

## COMMISSION ON VETERAN AFFAIRS MEETING MINUTES



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### SPECIAL CALLED MEETING January 9, 2017

The Commission on Veteran Affairs convened in a special called meeting on January 9, 2017 at the ACC Veterans Resource Center located on 6001 Airport Blvd, Austin Texas 78752.

Chair Jason Denny called the Board Meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

Board Members in Attendance:

Jason Denny - Chair	Molly Potter
Pete Salazar – Vice Chair	David Thomas
Phillip Gutierrez	Guillermo Villarreal
Ramiro Hinojosa	

Staff in Attendance: Karen Haywood, Allen Bergeron, Tina Lee

#### 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Chair Jason Denny asked the Commission members to review the minutes from the regular meeting on November 22, 2016. Chair Jason Denny requested the correct spelling of the organization Serve”d”. Vice Chair Pete Salazar made a motion to approve the November meeting minutes and Commissioner David Thomas seconded the motion to approve the minutes. Motion passed with no objection.

#### 2. OLD BUSINESS

- The commissioners requested to move the items that were previously discussed as a priority to be changed to 1) Veteran Business Enterprise, 2) One Stop Shop initiative and 3) Veterans Plaza. Vice Chair Salazar made a motion to change the original three working groups to the recommendations of Chair Jason Denny and Commissioner David Thomas seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously with no objections.
- City of Austin PARD staff were unavailable to attend the meeting but will try to send a representative at our next meeting to update the commission. Commissioner Phillip Gutierrez requested for the City of Austin PARD to move forward and approve the drawing and concept. This was an agreement between all commissioners with no objections.

#### 3. NEW BUSINESS

- Bo Buell from Austin Furniture Bank presented to the commissioners about his organization and what he offers to local veterans. Front Steps and Caritas have beds in their funding and VA – HUD/VASH does not provide any furniture to their clients.

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They have an online inventory and ordering system. They have filed their 501 c3 status and they work with ECHO to streamline their services. Austin Furniture Bank is also in alliance with Goodwill and Lifeworks, Little guy movers and Two Men and a Truck. Their mission is to 1) Rescue furniture, 2) Transform Homes and 3) Uplift people. The priority at the moment is given to the Veterans and will be open to the public in the future. They have completed 220 deliveries since January 2016. And their next option will be to charge a delivery fee to the agencies requesting furniture and apply for the Texas Veterans Commission Grant.

- The Commission has agreed to meet bi-monthly starting in February on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday at 7PM.

### **4. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

N/A (No public hearings during this meeting)

### **5. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL**

- Jim Cochrun introduced himself and that he works for MVPN and the Samaritan Center. He is a peer specialist and looking to participate in assisting more Veterans locally and wanted to attend to listen to the Commissioners in the meeting.

### **STAFF BRIEFINGS**

- The Soldier Internship program with the City of Austin is expanding to more departments participating. The target is those who are 180 days out of their Army commitment and to intern with the City. Our first intern with the program was hired successfully at the end of the program.
- Veterans Plaza's vision is to have the fountain and five Military branches represented at Vic Mathias shores and to raise money for this concept.
- Honor Flight will be taking Purple Heart Recipients from WWII, Korea, and Viet Nam to DC on Memorial Day. There will be 25 Veterans on the flight and we need to raise awareness of those interested in attending and eligible.
- The Point in time count is scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup>
- February 6<sup>th</sup> – Texas Veterans Commission Annual Summit to be taking place at the Doubletree in Austin from 8-4:30PM

**ADJOURN:** Jason Denny adjourned the meeting at 8:26 PM. Without objection