

COMMISSION ON VETERAN AFFAIRS MEETING MINUTES



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REGULAR MEETING
January 15, 2020

The Commission on Veteran Affairs convened in a regular meeting on January 15, 2020 at Austin City Hall located on 301 West 2nd Street in the Executive Session Room 1027.

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

Board Members in Attendance:

Jason Denny- Chair	Josephine Hinds
Pete Salazar- Vice Chair	Manuel Jimenez
Alfred Bingham	Doris Williams
Chris Ehlinger	

Staff in Attendance: Karen Haywood, Tina Lee

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Chair Denny asked the Commission members to review the minutes from the regular called meeting on September 18, 2019 and November 20, 2019. Vice Chair Salazar made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and Commissioner Josephine Hinds seconded the motion. Motion passed with no objection.

2. BUSINESS

- Parks and Recreation updated the Commission on the status of Veteran's Park and construction started on November 15th. They currently have placed an erosion control and fencing, irrigation, planting materials and working on the right of way permit. Projection for completion for May 2020. More information on the background, purpose and schedule can be found at <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/veterans-park-plan>. Plan to schedule a ribbon cutting ceremony 3 months prior to completion.
- Recommendation to create a Department of Veterans and Military Affairs was approved by Board Member Manuel Jimenez motion, Board Member Doris Williams second on a 7 vote and the 1 abstain, 6 yes.
- Manuel Jimenez discussed the resolution for the creation of Veterans Courts at the municipality level. Resolution was sent to Council and no current updates have been made.
- The motion to postpone item 3D, Transition Assistance Program, to the next meeting was approved on Board Member Pete Salazar's motion, Board Member Josephine Hinds seconded on a 7-member vote

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- Officer elections: Manuel Jimenez nominates Doris Williams and approved with no objections. Doris Williams nominates Manuel Jimenez to be the Vice Chair,
- Sam Haytham from Kiro Action presented to the Commission on the possible solution to Veteran Homelessness in Austin. These structures are easy to install, quick to deploy and transport to other areas if needed. These structures could house up to 4 people with the needed amenities-built in such as a bathroom and kitchen. The structure is 200 sq. feet that would take 3-4 people to put together and could sit on a steel foundation or concrete. This is a plan for affordable housing for the future and requests from the City of Austin to deploy approximately 15 structures on unused land such as a parking lot or field. Kiro Action also requests to have City services such as water and energy available to these homes but if not possible, there are other solutions to provide these services to the homes. Commission to create resolution and get Kiro Action on a future agenda for a Council meeting to discuss the effort and solution to ending homelessness.
- Discussed the possibility of requesting an alternative day off for November 11th for AISD so that more participation is available. Suggested to write a letter of support to the superintendent and create the language at the next meeting.
- Discussed the update of the bylaws to reflect to meet bi-monthly instead of monthly. Tres Hinds made a motion to update the bylaws and Pete Salazar seconded the motion. The motion was passed with no objections. e

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- N/A (No public hearings during this meeting)

4. STAFF UPDATES

5. CITIZEN COMMUNICATION: GENERAL

ADJOURN: Chair Denny adjourned the meeting at 8:24 PM without objection