



**COMMISSION ON VETERAN AFFAIRS  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

**The COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS convened in a REGULAR Meeting on WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024, at the City of Austin Permitting & Development Center at 6310 Wilhelmina Delco Dr, Austin, TX 78752.**

**Chair CHRISTOPHER WILSON called the COMMISSION ON VETERANS AFFAIRS MEETING to order at 7:07pm CST.**

**Commissioners in Attendance:**

**Christopher Wilson (Chair)  
Armando Gonzales  
Curtis Wyman  
Michael Mcinerney**

**Commissioners in Attendance Remotely:**

**Kevin Lenau (Vice-Chair)  
Mark Balch  
Maria Brown-Spence  
Patrick Bissett  
William Dahlstrom**

**Commissioners Absent:**

**Amber Schleuning  
Philip Reichert**

**Staff in Attendance:**

**Jesus Simental – Veterans Administrator, Office of Civil Rights**

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATION – GENERAL**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. The minutes from the meeting of 1/17/2024 were approved on Chair Christopher Wilson's motion, second by Patrick Bissett on a 9-0 vote. Commissioner Amber Schleuning and Philip Reichert were absent.

### **STAFF BRIEFINGS**

2. Staff liaison, Jesus Simental, Veteran Administrator with the Office of Civil Rights briefed requirement regarding Sexual Harassment Training, FY 25 Budget Recommendation process and attendance/sign-in requirements.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

3. Presentation by Amanda Afifi, Chair Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission and Chair of the Joint Inclusion Committee (JIC) about having the Commission of Veterans Affairs join the JIC.
4. Presentation by Christian Duran, Senior Research Analyst with the City of Austin Housing Department. Discussed federally-funded programming and solicited input/discussion on veteran needs and priorities that federal funding should address.
5. Presentation by Jim Darwin, Chair of the nonprofit Austin Veterans Parade Foundation. Discussed future collaborate efforts between the City of Austin and the Austin Veterans Parade Foundation.
6. Continued discussion and update on nonprofits that service veterans of Austin and Travis County. Chair Wilson has put together a list of about 20 nonprofits and will forward to staff liaison, Jesus Simental, to disseminate to rest of the Commissioners with the intent of soliciting these nonprofits to present at the monthly meeting and see how the Commission can aid these nonprofits in assisting veterans.
7. There was no update from Commissioner Marc Balch on his talk with the Veterans Administration on what they are doing for veteran outreach and solicit them to speak at the Veterans Affairs Commission meeting.
8. Commissioner Maria Brown-Spence will secure a list of nonprofits from I Live Here I Give Here Amplify Austin and will forward to staff liaison, Jesus Simental for dissemination to the rest of the commissioners.
9. There was no update from commissioners on status of Recommendation Number 20230719-006 Recommended Study to Understand Real-World Needs of Travis County-Based Veterans. Commissioner Willian Dahlstrom agreed to follow up. There was a discussion to resubmit recommendation before the 31 Mar 2024 deadline. Recommendation will be added and voted on the next meeting.

### **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

END: 8:12 PM

10. Chair C. Wilson made the motion to adjourn. K. Lenau second the motion. Pass unanimously 9 – 0. Commissioner Amber Schleuning and Philip Reichert were absent.

The minutes were approved at the 20 March 2024 meeting on Chair Christopher Wilson's motion, Michael Mcinerney second on a 7-0 vote. Kevin Lenau, Maria Brown-Spence, and Philip Reichert were absent.