



COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION  
Commission on Veterans Affairs  
Recommendation Number: 20240320-006

WHEREAS, the City of Austin seeks to be a national leader and community model in bridging the military-civilian divide by intentionally reintegrating those who have served, as well as their families, into our communities with purpose;

WHEREAS, the Council passed Ordinance No. 20130214-043, creating the Commission on Veterans Affairs to serve as an advisory board to the city council concerning the wellbeing of military veterans in the Austin area; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Veterans Affairs has found that Veteran employment, housing, education, training, family counseling, PTSD/mental health, healthcare, and VA benefits counseling are dispersed throughout Austin placing access to vital services out of reach for many with limited economic and transportation resources; and

WHEREAS, City Council has previously recognized the great need for veteran support services, passing Resolution No. 20170622-035 directing the City Manager to draft a business plan to establish a Veterans Resource Center; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Veterans Affairs passed Recommendation No. 20200115-B003 encouraging City Council to create a Department of Veterans and Military Affairs. The Commission's intent is to consolidate all veterans and military-related matters "internal" and "external" under one office. Currently, Veteran's initiatives and programs are dispersed throughout the City of Austin. The office would serve to engage the Veteran community by attending local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), American Legion, and Disabled Veterans of America post meetings. The Veteran's office must work in partnership with the Travis County Veteran Service office.

WHEREAS, City Council has previously recognized the need to provide veterans services, passing Resolution No. 20211209-057 directing the City Manager to explore the establishment of a Veterans and Military Affairs Office. The City of Austin has funded and hired someone to fill the vacant Veterans Administrator position under the Civil Right Office as well as funded a Veterans Consultant position, under the Human Resources Department.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Commission on Veterans Affairs recommends the creation of a Veterans and Military Affairs office. It is recommended that the current Veterans Administrator, and the vacant Veteran Services Consultant (which must be hired in a timely manner) all be placed under a newly formed Veterans and Military Affairs office. This office must report directly to the City Manager. The City Manager shall work with the Commission on Veterans Affairs to receive input and provide updates on the process of creating the new office. The City Manager shall include the Director of the Travis County Veterans Service and the local VFW in the hiring process along with two Veteran Affairs commissioners. The head of the new office should have a minimum of ten years of experience serving in the active-duty armed forces, and the staff should have experience serving in the armed forces. The newly formed office would act as the Commission on Veteran Affairs liaison. The City Manager shall provide physical office space where the Veterans and Military Office will be located.

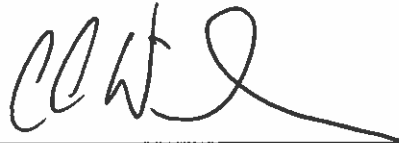
Date of Approval: March 20, 2024

Record of the vote: 8-0

**For:** Christopher Wilson, Mark Balch, Armando Gonzales, Curtis Wyman, Amber Schleuning, Patrick Bissett, Michael Mcinerney, William Dahlstrom

**Not Present:** Kevin Lenau, Philip Reichert, Maria Brown-Spence

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_



Christopher 'Cam' Wilson – Chair, Commission on Veteran Affairs