



## Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee

---

**April 15, 2022 – 10:00 AM MT**  
**Virtual Meeting on Microsoft Teams**  
**Live Streamed via City's website:**  
**<http://www.elpasotexas.gov/videos>**  
**Television on City15**

**YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofelpasotx/videos>**

### **MINUTES**

#### **Members Present**

Laura Butler  
Jonathan Bohannon  
Hope Jackson  
Bruce Biegel  
Melissa Harcrow  
Rodney Washington  
Justin Rotti

#### **Members Absent**

Lance Lehr

- 1. Call to Order. Meeting started at 10:01AM**
- 2. Roll Call. Quorum. 7 of 8**
- 3. Discussion and Action to Approve Minutes of:** March 18, 2022. Approved
- 4. Citizen Comment Period:** Individuals limited to 3 minutes; no specific action may be taken
  - a. John Martin Opportunity Center for the Homeless: Raised 50% of the funds required for the new Veterans Transitional living center. Total cost \$2.7M. There will be an event to promote the VTLC on April 30, 2022 at the VFW post 812. The address of the VTLC will be on the 1200 block on Magoffin Ave
  - b. Sarah Kamalipour VA caregiver support program: Two programs; A stipend program and a resource program. Sarah can be reached at 915 564-7522. 915 564-6100 ext 6050.
- 5. El Paso VA Health Care Clinic Update Associate Director –Blanca Aragon Nurse Executive**
  - a. COVID Boosters are offered for anyone 50 years of age and over. Administered Tuesday and Thursdays at the main clinic and satellite clinics. There are new programs for whole health coming on board soon. VA will hire two Chiropractors; have programs that provide Acupuncture, Healthy living, tobacco sensation,

Health Coach... and more. Located on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor as a part of the Whole health team.

- b. VA will provide transportation. Need to call in advance and will be picked up from home if referred to WBAMC or other specialty care. The demand for WBAMC transportation is low. Veteran Transportation Service (VTS) 915-564-6114. First come, first served. Qualify as long as they are going to a scheduled appointment at any VA facility or community provider VA has referred the patient to. First pick up at 0630 and last scheduled drop off 1530. Las Cruces area is also serviced
  - c. There are still nationwide shortages of prosthetic devices. Last month's update: *The VA has experienced a delay with the delivery of prosthetic devices, wheelchairs, scooters, braces, canes ect... Supply chain issues are causing delays. Please call 915 564-6100 ext 7961. If anyone is experiencing issues they can reach out and receive an update on delivery.*
- 6. El Paso County Veterans Assistance Program Manager – Carl Dwyer.** No Update, County Office is closed.
- 7. Community Update:**
- a. El Paso County Veterans Advisory Board Chair update - Alexis McCray.
    - i. Commissioner's Court will present a resolution for Bill Sparks.
    - ii. The Veterans Business Association is hosting a Golf tournament on May 21, 2022 at Painted Dunes Golf Course.
    - iii. A Resolution for Mike Amaral will be presented on Monday April 25<sup>th</sup>.
    - iv. The Noreaster parade is April 16<sup>th</sup>.
    - v. The County Veterans Advisory Board has a vacancy, Please send recommendations to Carl Dwyer. Opening is for Precinct 3 and the Veteran is recommended to reside in that precinct.
    - vi. Old Glory memorial Clean up will be on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup>.
    - vii. County will host an El Paso County Woman's Veterans day brunch on Friday June 10<sup>th</sup> at Ascarate park. Alexis McCray is the POC.
  - b. El Paso Coalition for the Homeless update- Camille Castillo
    - i. One Staff member has transferred to the VA. This will help with Data collection and help with the overall process.
- 8. Discussion and Action:** Amend VAAC Bylaws in Section 6.
- a. The By-Laws need to address Sub Committee attendance. Recommend after missing three subcommittee meetings a letter is written by the VAAC officers to inform Mayor and Council.
  - b. Paul Albright presented a paragraph attempting to help clarify what could be written in the bylaws.
  - c. Motion and Second. Amendment approved unanimously.
- 9. Discussion and Action:** Assign new Committee members to Subcommittees. No action taken
- 10. Discussion and Action:** Semi Annual Update to Council – Monday, April 25, 2022.
- a. Update will be Monday April 25· 2022 at will be at Council chambers. Those that cannot be present will be on Microsoft teams. The meeting takes about 30 minutes to an hour. Please report at 9AM.

- b. Bruce Biegel will discuss how to get the rest of the employers in the City to hire Veterans and stress how the City can help message the importance of Veteran Hiring. The Slides are a summary of where we are and what is to be next. The committee will charge the Mayor and City Council to talk to employees about hiring Veterans.
- c. Hope Jackson states that the concerns are the same. Hope Jackson announced her resignation from the committee. Continue to support the VTBRA program, Examine criteria to provide services to Veterans and have flexibility in programs. Mandate that all Veterans be placed into HMIS. Melissa Harcrow will be the new subcommittee chair.
- d. Rodney Washington will get with Lance and coordinate to move forward on the presentation.

**11. Discussion:** Subcommittee Chairs update on assigned focus areas.

- a. Bruce Biegel – Employment- After the brief to Council the Sub Committee will meet to discuss the next 6 months.
- b. Hope Jackson – Homelessness- Justin stated that there is a plan to attend all Master List Meetings.
- c. Rodney Washington – Marketing and Outreach- Rodney Washington is putting together an event with multiple employers in support of Military Appreciation Month. 2 weeks of Virtual Hiring events in May.

**12. Division of Veteran and Military Affairs Update.**

- a. CMO Will have meetings with Ft. Bliss on the second Wednesday of each month.
- b. Our Community Salutes is a national program that recognizes High School Seniors who chose to enlist into the Armed Forces. The event will be held on May 19<sup>th</sup> at the Starlight Event center.
- c. Old Glory memorial cleanup will be supported by the City's Environmental Services Department. April 23<sup>rd</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup>.
- d. Texas Women's Veterans Day will be on June 11, 2022 . This is an event hosted by Senator Blanco's Office and the City of El Paso. Looking for Women Veterans to have a resolution read on their behalf. Will be at the Old Glory memorial at 10AM.
- e. City of El Paso hosted the DoD's Building Healthy Military Communities. This is a program designed to synchronize resources.

**13. Announcements:** Limited to Veteran and Military Events pertinent to the El Paso Region.

- a. VA Baby Shower until May 2, 2022.
- b. Endeavors mental health summit. May 4-5. Zoom event. See flyer.
- c. Fort Bliss expo July 20 – 21, 2022.
- d. Armed forces day parade on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Application deadline April 25<sup>th</sup>.
- e. Recreational passes are available to get on Ft. Bliss.
- f. UTEP is hosting a Military Mental health initiative on April 20, 2022 5-8PM

**14. Next VAAC Meeting:** May 20, 2022, at 10:00 AM MDT Virtual Meeting online.

**15. Adjourn.** 11:30AM

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC:**

*The Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee of the City of El Paso may retire into EXECUTIVE SESSION pursuant to Section 3.5A of the El Paso City Charter and the Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapter D, to discuss any of the following: (The items listed below are matters of the sort routinely discussed in Executive Session, but the Veterans Affairs Advisory Community of the City of El Paso may move to Executive Session any of the items on this agenda, consistent with the terms of the Open Meeting Act.) The Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee will return to open session to take any final action and may also, at any time during the meeting, bring forward items for public discussion, as appropriate.*

*Section 551.071 CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY*

*Section 551.072 DELIBERATIONS REGARDING REAL PROPERTY*

*Section 551.073 DELIBERATION REGARDING PROSPECTIVE GIFTS*

*Section 551.074 PERSONNEL MATTERS*

*Section 551.076 DELIBERATION REGARDING SECURITY DEVICES*

*Section 551.087 DELIBERATION REGARDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*

**NEGOTIATIONS**

*Sign Language interpreters will be provided for this meeting upon request. Requests must be made to the Community Development department at phone number 915-212-1654 a minimum of 48 hours prior to the date and time of the meeting. Copies of these Minutes will be provided in Braille, large print or audiotape upon request. Requests must be made a minimum of 48 hours prior to the date and time of the meeting.*

**POSTED THIS** 28 **DAY OF** July **AT** 12:15PM **BY** Paul Albright  
**PAUL ALBRIGHT.**