



CITY CLERK DEPT
2021 JUL 1 AM11:44

Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee

April 16, 2021 – 10:00 AM
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

Lance Lehr
Bruce Biegel
Justin Rotti
Hope Jackson
Laura Butler
Reginald Daniel

Members Absent

Tephanie Hopper
Don Parrott

Unfilled Positions

District 8

1. **Call to Order.** Meeting Called to Order at 10:00 AM MDT.
2. **Roll Call.** Quorum. 6 of 8 present.
3. **Discussion and Action: Vote for New VAAC Chairman.** Lance Lehr voted as the new Chairman by unanimous vote.
4. **Discussion and Action to Approve Minutes of March 19, 2021.** Approved.
5. **Citizen Comment Period (individuals limited to 3 minutes; no specific action may be taken).** No citizen comments.
6. **El Paso VA Health Care Clinic Update.** Mike Amaral, Director. Running out of Veterans for the number of vaccines left through the VA. No J&J available due to pause. Tried to have a walk-in Women's only vaccine event on April 14, but low turnout. Had a couples vaccine event the evening of April 15. VA clinic got national accreditation and were cited for several best practices. Questions from VAAC:

Bruce - Best way to get an appointment for vaccine? Call 915-564-6100 (the regular VA appointment line). A spouse or caregiver of a veteran (over 18) can register and receive the vaccine.

Justin - Is the VA fully open? It is strongly suggested to continue telehealth appointments. 50% in person and looking at 75% soon. No waiting room space currently.

Hope - Vaccines for home bound or that have a lack transportation? Those enrolled in homebased primary care can have vaccine brought into home. Transportation services open and running.

7. El Paso County Veterans Assistance Program Manager Update. Carl Dwyer, El Paso County Service Officer. Carl was unable to attend. Paul read his updates. The Veterans Assistance Office is open and available for financial assistance. (P) 915.759.7990 Ext 1 or (C) 915.215.0414. Caregiver VA Roundtable on Thurs. May 13 at 2PM MDT (Virtual). Drive Thru Resource Fair Saturday May 1 from 10AM to 12:30 PM at Endeavors.

8. Receive an Update on the Veterans Permanent Supportive Housing Program. Benjamin Miranda of Endeavors. Six Veterans currently housed with two more in process (week of April 19). Three property owners are being very accommodating. All clients are in process of getting identification and documents (DD-214). Two clients have jobs, Two are seeking higher education, and all clients are enrolled with American GI Forum, medical, mental health, food pantry, and TVN.

Questions from VAAC:

Justin - Will the program be opening to more vets? A: Will need city approval. Veterans that have exhausted services (SSVF) utilize this. Once they exit, it can be up to a year before they can use services again, so utilizing this program as a bridge. Hope - Do they all have transportation? A: Clients are provided with monthly bus passes. What is the coordination being made between them as homeless coalition? A: Case managers conduct weekly meetings and run through the Master list to find those specifically eligible. Goal is to serve 20 (75% in stable housing). Plans in place for 2022 case management. Execution is robust and looking for more grants to fund case management.

9. Community Update: Presentation - City of El Paso Economic Development Department. Kelly Kotlik, Program Administrator. Focusing on the Veteran-owned business. Supporting - resources to established programs, One Stop Shop (licensing etc.) but need a shop specifically for Veterans. Identify what licensing and fee requirements to reduce or waive fees and receive benefits for Veteran owned. Identify challenge points.

Veteran opportunities in larger companies - outreach and engagement program. We need to understand why Veteran-owned businesses have not self-identified. Need outreach and social media engagement.

Bring in bigger companies - manufacturing, defense contracts. This creates an easier transition. Must assess with EP Chamber and find who is in EP now to explore companies that can expand into defense. Have one on one engagement: target defense or aerospace into El Paso. Digital targeted ad campaign in that industry in geographic locations (C-suite execs). City incentives for large-scale businesses to hire Veterans, bonus for companies (10% extra) if they agree to hire 15% Veteran workforce (in effect since January 2021). Questions from the VAAC:

Bruce - Have you been in contact with WSB? Would like copy of chapter 380. A: They are working with WSB. Bruce also wants to assist getting SFL-TAP involved.

Mike Amaral (VA) - How do you become a vet owned business? A; Need to explain in outreach efforts.

Laura - Are you working with the Borderplex Alliance? A; Yes, with multiple meetings a week.

Paul - City is creating a task force and a survey monkey for businesses to see what the largest challenges are. Finding a consensus. There are very few Veteran incentives across the nation for Veteran-owned business. My contact information: kotlikKP@elpasotexas.gov or 915-317-8528.

10. Discussion and Action: Subcommittee Chairs update on assigned focus areas.

Bruce Biegel – Employment: Want to get the next presentation ready for the City and hopefully it will also be something Kelly can use for his meetings. SHRM – working on hour-long hire a Veteran class. Need to touch base.

Hope Jackson – Homelessness: No updates

Lance Lehr – Marketing and Outreach: No update. Need to understand how Facebook and Twitter are raising the volume of clicks. Need data for strategic communication. Bringing in Tephania to help with social media outreach.

11. Discussion and Action: Vote to accept the VAAC Resolution and send to Council for approval. After voted in, the Resolution will go through the attorneys again before moving on to Council. Lance brought up specifically his issue with the minutes here: we are the only advisory committee in the City that has a Secretary (as confirmed by Roberta), and has an issue with recording secretary taken out of Section 1B. Roberta: All the originating resolutions are written differently in each committee (although we are different in how we operate from a majority of the committees). A City Staff Member serving as Secretary is typical. The question was posed if we need a Secretary if the position is unable to do anything other than review and comment. The Secretary cannot plan meetings or post anything about meetings. That has to go through the City. Bruce and Hope both agree we do not need one. Hope added if not Paul, maybe an intern. Justin thinks we should have someone designated if Paul cannot be at a meeting. Laura agrees no one needs the Secretary title. In 1B, City Recording Secretary was returned to the Resolution. Hope brought up in Section 2 how we determine if the Secretary is needed and what that person does specifically. Bruce agreed that assistance with documents and oversight works. Justin asks for Secretary to be left in at this point. Laura suggested making the duties and expectations more detailed in the Bylaws for clarity. Secretary was added to the Bylaws in 2015 now it needs to be in the Resolution appropriately. Lance states in Section 3E: annual should not be added since strategic plan is long term. Hope agrees that it should be reviewed annually and updated every 3 to 5 years. Per Justin's suggestion, support the City of El Paso strategic plan to "align" will fix the statement. Lance: develop 5-year strategic plan to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis. Hope: the goal of the strategic plan will align with the City. Resolution accepted by all parties after updates were made.

12. Discussion and Action: Vote to approve the VAAC Bylaws. Clarifying points from last meeting: resolution does trump the bylaws. We need to adjust the Bylaws for Paul. Want to include oversight and re-engage on Section 2.3. Secretary piece needs more detail. Table until next meeting.

13. Division of Veteran and Military Affairs Update. Paul Albright, Chief. Our Community Salutes - annual event (that was cancelled last year). New enlistees into the armed forces

celebration. Paul took the lead in 2020. This year's event will be May 21 at 6 PM MDT and Virtual. 200 service members to be recognized. Reached out to Fort Bliss for keynote speaker. USAA is still the sponsor. Bruce requested the OCS link. USO Pathfinders is now Transitions - events going on this month:

April 20 – Military Spouse Virtual Coffee

April 21 – NextOp

April 28 – Federal Resume Workshop

Veterans First Contracting Webinar – April 20 at 10AM MDT. Veteran business owners to be verified for VA and to learn how to get contracts.

14. Announcements (Limited to Veteran and Military Events pertinent to the El Paso Region). Reggie Daniel – attending CSM A Jones Sr. funeral. May 21 he will not be present for VAAC meeting. Bruce Biegel – SFL-TAP planning on holding a Hiring Expo in July.

15. Next VAAC Meeting: May 21, 2021, 10:00 AM MDT Virtual Meeting online.

16. Adjourn. Adjourned at 11:33 AM MDT.

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 _____ DAY OF _____ AT _____ BY PAUL ALBRIGHT.