



CITY CLERK DEPT
2021 AUG 23 AM 10:26

Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee

July 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
Tephania Hopper
Bruce Biegel
Hope Jackson
Laura Butler
Don Parrott
Justin Rotti

Unfilled Positions

District 4
District 8

1. **Call to Order** at 10:02AM
2. **Roll Call.** 7 of 9. Quorum.
3. **Discussion and Action to Approve Minutes of June 25, 2021.** Minutes Not Approved. Revisions needed.
4. **Citizen Comment Period:** Individuals limited to 3 minutes; no specific action may be taken. Denis Prickett of the Honor Flight of Southwest Texas and Southern New Mexico and Linda Mais of Hidden Heroes Communities an Elizabeth Dole Foundation program. Honor Flight is a therapy flight for Veterans to Washington DC. The flight occurs twice annually and will be conducted in 2022. 100 Veterans are on the waiting list. Only 30 Veterans can fly on each trip. Sponsorship is needed, as there is a large cost associated with conducting this program. Linda Mais is a hidden hero's fellow responsible for Southwest Texas Veteran caregivers. The Dole foundation collaborates with cities and counties to support veteran caregivers. Founded in 2012 to reach out and identify caregivers, raising awareness of the struggles and sacrifices that caregivers endure and to take action to provide resources.
5. **El Paso VA Health Care Clinic Update:** Mike Amaral, Director. NO UPDATE
6. **El Paso County Veterans Assistance Program Manager – Carl Dwyer.**
 - a. Healing through honor ceremony will take place on July 22nd at Ascarate park at 6PM. The ceremony is to honor the Veteran victims of the August 3rd shooting.

- b. The phone numbers for the County Veteran Assistance office is subject to be changed and a notification will go out when the change is effective.
- 7. Receive an Update on the Veterans Permanent Supportive Housing Program. Ben Miranda**
 - a. Shared two stories of success for veterans within the program.
 - b. 7 active clients. 2 recently exited the program. These 2 veterans left the El Paso area and cannot be found.

Hope Jackson asked how many of the 7 currently housed have meet the criteria for Chronically homeless. Ben Miranda said all. Hope has concerned that the proposal that Endeavors submitted stated that the Mental Health services provided by the Stephen A Cohen Clinic is temporary in nature. Ben refused to answer any questions that pertained to the Contract. The City Attorney advised not speak to contractual issues. Paul Albright stated to have a follow up meeting to discuss the contractual meeting. Nicole Ferrini stated that a meeting is scheduled to speak to the contract with the Homeless Sub-Committee.
- 8. Community Update: Veterans Treatment Court Yvonne Whitaker.**
 - a. The VTC mission is to divert justice involved veterans and active duty service members from the traditional criminal justice system by providing them treatment and judicial monitoring to provide them the tools needed to lead a productive and law-abiding life.
 - b. The VTC team is led by Judge Patricia Baca 346th District Court and Judge William Moody 34th District Court.
 - c. The VTC works in collaboration with community support partners as well as WBAMC, VA, and county and state legal resources.
 - d. Veterans are considered for placement into the VTC if they meet specific criteria. They must not have had a dishonorable discharge, must have a pending eligible felony and a mental illness. They must not have a violent criminal history, have a concerning mental health history or have been a previous member of the program.
 - e. The program last for 18 months with 12 months of intensive treatment and 6 months of after care.
 - f. There are currently 18 veterans in the program and 16 mentors. More mentors are needed. Either Active Duty service members or Veterans are welcomed.
- 9. Discussion and Action: Subcommittee Chairs update on assigned focus areas.**
 - a. Bruce Biegel –Josh Atkinson with PM Prolearn will teach class July 29, 2021 on Veterans and Military Spouses in the workplace for City Directors. Slides will be provided and a special meeting will be scheduled to allow a quorum for the class.
 - b. Hope Jackson – homelessness. Sub-Committee will have an initial meeting for the strategic plan on Monday.
 - c. Tephania Hopper –Marketing / Outreach. Waiting for access for social media platforms. Waiting for updates from Mr. Albright. Waiting on a response about Ft. Bliss events. City will support. Updated the District 1 Representative on the Marketing strategy and he is very supportive of the plan. Waiting on word from legal on Veteran shark tank. Also waiting on word from PIO on updates to the webpage. Tephania is also concerned about diversity on the page.
- 10. Discussion and Action: 5 year Strategic Plan:**
 - a. Lance shared a framework of what, why, how, what does this get us? How does it assist? What is the outcome?

- b. Paul Albright shared the REAC strategic plan that was accepted by the City manager for a model to work with.

11. Division of Veteran and Military Affairs Update.

- a. District 4 is waiting fulfillment, someone is picked and will be confirmed next Tuesday (Jonathan Bohannon, Veteran Case Manager for Emergence), working on District 8
- b. Bridge Fellows - now national, designed for transitioning, veterans and spouses and place them into positions within the city or community
- c. Met with Forge - train, certify and equip in trades, network of employers. Will Connect them to the Ep Chamber to connect them to local trades.
- d. Raytheon also wants Bridge fellows - it is expanding & connected with Tonna (HOH) - take their personnel as well
- e. Rio Vista - taught a class, they are disconnected to resources, going to Peak with Carl
- f. DCIP – \$9M 30% match for ease of access into New Beaumont

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

- a. ACS Hiring Fair on Aug 12, Bienvenidos on Aug 10
- b. Paul Albright briefed that we should be back in person in Sept, but making a call based on vaccination rates. Meetings will have to be completely in person. No current mask mandate, encouraging. Will come out in instructions. Roberta: it will be addressed in the near future, not a good answer yet, has to do with the Open Meetings Act

13. Next VAAC Meeting: August 20th, 2021 at 10:00 AM MDT Virtual Meeting online.

14. Adjourn. 11:22AM

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 23 DAY OF August AT 1015 BY  PAUL ALBRIGHT.