



Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee

August 20, 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
Laura Butler
Don Parrott
Jonathan Bohannon
Melissa Harcrow
Members Absent
Tephania Hopper
Hope Jackson
Justin Rotti

1. **Call to Order** at 10:04AM
2. **Roll Call.** 5 of 9. Quorum.
3. **Discussion and Action to Approve Minutes of June 25, 2021 and July 16, 2021.**
Approved
4. **Citizen Comment Period:** Individuals limited to 3 minutes; no specific action may be taken.
5. **El Paso VA Health Care Clinic Update:** Mike Amaral, Director. Ms Blanca Aragon, Nurse executive at EL Paso VA briefed for Mr Amaral – Telephonic Veteran Town Hall yesterday to update Veterans: - masks still required, vets coming in with COVID symptoms and not calling please use online pre-screen to decide if secondary screening is necessary. Veterans with symptoms are encouraged to come in via side door for triage. Swabbing for COVID tests is in the parking lot. The Clinic is still providing COVID vaccine for appt and walk in. It is the Moderna at primary clinic and J&J in the community clinics. Vaccinations are provided from Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 0900-1500. Through September 21st. Additional dose is not available for immunocompromised. Awaiting for CDC guidance and formulating a distribution plan. Clinic will have Flu vaccine mid-Sept. It will be a drive through vaccination. Ramping up whole health initiative to address health goals. Lanced announced that the NDAA added 150M added a construction for a health clinic at new William Beaumont. They are

currently conducting clinical trials for J&J for second dose. Some Veterans are getting Moderna and J&J. Do Not mix vaccines!! Booster shots will be parking lot vaccine like with the flu clinic and based on supply as far as caregivers and spouses that are allowed to get the vaccines.

6. **El Paso County Veterans Assistance Program Manager** – Carl Dwyer. Carl: phone number has changed 915-875-8570. The County Veterans Assistance Office is an approved work study site and looking for opportunities. Just briefed at EPCC. Last two work studies now work for the County. Many local veteran service orgs have been challenged to get everyone together. There will be an initial meet and greet. One of the major needs is claims assistance and to be connected to organizations. - Bruce: please send the meeting information to VAAC. The meeting will be 18 Sept Saturday at 9AM @ American Legion Post located 3730 Shell Street. - Veteran of the Year nominations are open. This is the 3rd year. please help disseminate until 24th Sept.
7. **Receive an Update on the Veterans Permanent Supportive Housing Program.** Ben Miranda. Program update will occur during Community update
8. **Community Update:** Veteran Social Programs –Nicole Ferrini.
 - a. Master List is difficult for the city to get from the El Paso coalition from the Homeless who is the program manager. Data is a week old and provided by Endeavors. Data shared: 75 total vets on the master list. 25 are actively sheltered. 17 are enrolled with Endeavors. 33 are unknown. 20 have no activity and have fallen off the radar. 9 are unconfirmed as vets. 4 that are completely unknown. City will continue to reach out to the EPCH to see data on the list.
 - b. FY21: 10 vets served since inception of the program. Services for homeless will coordinate with the VA and SSVF first and then TBRA. Currently changing the program with Endeavors. If the Case Management deems TBRA more appropriate for sustainability of the Veteran they will go into the TBRA program.
 - c. 187 Veterans and Active Duty Families served with HUD and DHCD to help remove barriers that cause chronic homelessness
 - d. Veteran Housing vouchers from the Housing Authority. Veterans are screened and provided vouchers for housing choice. 204 HUD-VASH vouchers for vets
 - e. Lance Lehr has requested slides to be shared with the committee. Don Parrott: anyone with SSVF gone to permanent supportive housing? Yes but not sure about numbers. Are we going to meet the maximum beds? Some flex with funding sources that DCHD is utilizing. DCHD may be able to extend timeline. Critical to clean up the Master List. The Data is important to understand requirements.
9. **Discussion and Action:** Appoint new committee members to Subcommittees.
 - a. Jon Bohannon: voted to Homelessness and Marketing and Outreach. Melissa Harcrow voted to Homelessness subcommittee.
10. **Discussion and Action:** Subcommittee Chairs update on assigned focus areas.
 - a. Tabled to go to item 11
11. **Discussion and Action: 5 year Strategic Plan:**
 - a. A draft version of the strategic plan was presented by the Chair. Slight changes to the introduction slides. Changes made to formatting of the Vision and Mission slides. No Major changes to the Employment and marketing slides. Discussion on Homeless slides especially goal 3.2. Should the VAAC assess all Veteran programs? Bruce believes yes. Special meetings will be scheduled Friday August 27th 4-5PM and September 7 at 1PM.
12. **Division of Veteran and Military Affairs Update.**

- a. Sept 11 - Heroes Run, sponsored by the Travis Manion Foundation at Ascarate Park at 6 pm
 - b. Aug 30 9am DVMA will brief City Council on events and initiatives in the military and veterans community.
 - c. Aug 31 - City adopts as Hidden Heroes community resolution
 - d. In person meetings are on hold, Sept 13 first in person
 - e. VAAC brief to council is moved to the 13th (9am) for the working session, in person
- 13. Announcements:** Limited to Veteran and Military Events pertinent to the El Paso Region.
- a. Red White You hiring fair on Nov 4th
 - b. O2O new cohort on Sept 13
 - c. Lance - get everyone sworn in, 10 AM Monday
- 14. Next VAAC Meeting:** September 17, 2021 at 10:00 AM MDT Virtual Meeting online.
- 15. Adjourn.** 11:49AM

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** 1:45PM **BY** Paul Albright
PAUL ALBRIGHT.