



Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee

October 22, 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
Jonathan Bohannon
Melissa Harcrow
Tephane Hopper
Hope Jackson

Members Absent

Justin Rotti

1. **Call to Order. 10:03AM.**
2. **Roll Call. 6/8 Quorum.**
3. **Discussion and Action to Approve Minutes of:** September 24, 2021. Approved.
4. **Citizen Comment Period:** Individuals limited to 3 minutes; no specific action may be taken.
 - a. Mike Amaral concerned about the Hospital signs on HWY 54 and Fred Wilson. Concerned that someone may think there is a Hospital where one does not exist. Needs help in getting the signs removed.
5. **El Paso VA Health Care Clinic Update – Mike Amaral, Director.**
 - a. **Drive through Flu Clinic** is available at Team C of the VA Clinic. Back to pre-COVID volume at the clinic. Encourage Veterans to use Tele-health if possible. The new clinic is moving along nicely. There is interested local contract companies to perform work on the site.
 - b. COVID Booster Shots are for Veterans that are immune compromised
 - c. Are Satellite Clinic giving flu shots on a walk-in basis? – Yes
 - d. Have the different vaccination sites been merged? The City and VA have merged and account for all shots. About 51% of Veterans have been vaccinated.
 - e. Have there been any conversation about bus service to the new WBAMC? The VA is working with Sun Metro for a shuttle service.
6. **El Paso County Veterans Assistance Program Manager – Carl Dwyer.**

- a. El Paso County Veteran of the Year ceremony will be on November 9 at 10AM.
- b. Veterans Parades: Fabens, San Elizario, Downtown El Paso and Northeast parades.
- c. Bel Air High School Veteran's Day recognition ceremony November 4th 10AM.
- 7. **El Paso County Veterans Advisory Board** – Alexis McCray. Not present.
- 8. **El Paso Coalition for the Homeless** – Camille Castillo.
 - a. EPCH has a new position to oversee the VTLC collecting all data.
 - b. SSVF is implementing a shallow subsidy. Met with SSVF in the community to put a plan together to see what the subsidy will look like. It will be able to provide rental assistance over an expanded period. More than what is eligible under the regular program guidance. Up to 2 years and 35% of their awarded money. They anticipate that the VA will open that up to 50% within the next few months. EPCH put together a list of Veterans that will be targeted for these subsidies.
 - c. How many Veterans will be served by the Subsidies? 15 to 22 households.
- 9. **El Paso Tenet Based Rental Assistance Program Quarterly update** – Nicole Ferrini.
 - a. **7 Active clients in July:** 6 Active Clients in August; 3 Active Clients in September. October has 5 Active clients. The goal of the program is to house 20 Veterans by January 2022. 13 total clients served since inception 2 have been served with case management only.
 - b. **Most of clients have reached most if not all of their goals.** Most have their identifying documents. Case managers can get documents for those that do not.
 - c. **All clients have been linked to employment agencies or stable jobs.** All of the Active clients have been registered with mental health services and other veteran resources.
 - d. **There were a number of clients that were not responsive to the program.**
 - e. Is this program cost effective? Should we push to continue to push for this program? This program needs to run its course longer so that we can see if there is recidivism. Would like to get back to the VAAC after speaking with the provider of the program.
 - f. Do you anticipate adding 7 more veterans to the program before January? Has the case management been approved? Not sure if 7 more Veterans will come into the program. There may be conversations about extending the contract. Would like to meet with the Homelessness subcommittee and find a method to either extend the program or find a way to replicate or improve the program for the future.
 - g. Please explain what 11 housed and 2 under case management. 11 are housed and receive case management. 2 are not housed but receiving case management. Not sure if they are unhoused or housed under another program. Will follow up.
- 10. **Disability Rights Texas** – Angel Crawford. Not present.
- 11. **IVMF Entrepreneurship Programs** – Jarod Perkioniemi. Not present.
- 12. **Discussion and Action:** Final appointment of committee members.
- 13. **Discussion and Action:** Realign Subcommittees.
 - a. **Employment** – Bruce, Don, Laura
 - b. **Marketing** – Tephane, Jonathan, Laura
 - c. **Homelessness** – Hope, Justin, Don, Jonathan, Melissa
- 14. **Discussion and Action:** Subcommittee Chairs update on assigned focus areas.

Bruce Biegel – Employment

Employment: Will be using the results recapping for the talking points for the brief to Council. Getting to words correct on the Job Posting to encourage veterans to apply. Will be adding MOS to the job postings. Sun Metro and City PD are in the Red White & You Hiring Fair.

Hope Jackson – Homelessness

Homelessness: Is the brief locked in for Monday? Yes, and will be briefing the strategic plan. Justin Rotti let the subcommittee know that he would not be present. Talked about possible VAAC Christmas Party. First or second week of December. Have more of a presence at different agencies to help serve the Veteran community. Endeavors is having a truck or treat on October 31st 2-4 PM.

Tephania Hopper – Marketing and Outreach

Marketing: Would like to meet with DVMA and Strategic communication. Would like to see site updates, press releases and a logo. The websites need cleaned up. Need Headshots and a bio of VAAC members on the website. Add current Bylaws to the website. Would like to see if we can get billboards, benches, waste container advertising. Please schedule a meeting. Question Bruce: can marketing include suicide awareness? Answer: it was brought up, need to find a venue to get the information out there.

15. Division of Veteran and Military Affairs Update. The City of El Paso provided \$15K for the City Veterans Day parade.

- a. Any updates on the Grants: The DEAAG grant just opened and the City will be submitting an infrastructure grant for ease of access into the new WBAMC.
- b. Has the funding line for the case management and supportive services been approved? Yes.

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

- a. Hiring Red White & You will be November 4th.
- b. Retirement appreciation weekend will be October 29th and 30th.
- c. Onward to Opportunity cohort will start November 15th.
- d. VAAC is invited to the City of El Paso Employees Veterans Day Luncheon.

17. Next VAAC Meeting: November 19, 2021, at 10:00 AM MDT Virtual Meeting online.

18. Adjourn. 11:30 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 28 DAY OF July AT 1:45PM BY *Paul Albright*
PAUL ALBRIGHT.