



CITY CLERK DEPT
2021 JAN 19 AM 9:24

Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee

November 20, 2020 – 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

Dean Sanders

Don Parrott

Justin Rotti

Hope Jackson

Laura Butler

Reginald Daniel

Unfilled Positions

District 1

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting Called to Order at 10:05 am.

2. **Roll Call:** *Quorum.*

3. **Citizen Comment Period:** Ben Miranda presented and update on the city of El Paso Veterans Permanent Supportive Housing Program awarded to Endeavors. Endeavors will receive the contract in late January or early February. Endeavors will hire 1.5 case managers and house up to 20 Veterans that do not qualify for VA benefits. Endeavors will work with landlords that already participate in the housing program to place the Veterans. Relationships have already been established through rapid re-housing programs to be able to quickly house Veterans. The average period to house a Veteran is less than 1 ½ weeks. Endeavors will send a single report the first week of the month to both the City and to the VAAC. A veteran will be placed into temporary housing during the waiting period. This is in the Delta haven or a Hotel.

Kelly Franco from Veterans One-Stop reminded everyone that services are still being offered to Veterans, Active Duty and Family members. Emergency Utility service and Behavioral Health services are offered. Rental assistance should be coming soon. All service are expedited. Military Veteran Peer Network is providing one to one services and providing training for those feeling isolated or what to be part of the team. Call 242-0555 or 779-1800.

4. Discussion and Action to approve minutes of October 16th, 2020 Approved

5. Discussion and Action: Sub Committee Chairs update on assigned focus areas.

Bruce Biegel – Employment

The word preferred is still not incorporated into the City Job Specifications. A Veteran will not apply for a job that shows they do not meet the required qualifications. Request an update on the status from HR on changing the language that city council approved on the Job Postings. 8.3% State unemployment rate in September in October it was 6.9%. Believed to stay low due. Those who went on unemployment is out of benefits. Those in El Paso that are still on benefits must search for a job or they may run out of benefits without securing employment. There is no current job search requirements. Don Parrott would like to place more pressure on the HR department to update the job postings. Chief Military Officer informed the VAAC that there is a new HR director and will update her on the recommendations that are not being adhered to. A meeting will be scheduled and include Bruce Biegel to discuss concerns.

Hope Jackson – Homelessness

Thanked those that helped work on the Veterans Permanent Supportive Housing Program NOFA. Asked Don Parrott on how to find out about state legislature and what our representatives are working on in Austin to promote Veterans. Don will provide an update in a follow up meeting. Would like to receive the list of federal and state legislation that are for Veterans. Bruce Biegel will add her to a Distribution list.

Marketing- Lance Lehr

Very happy with the expansion of the marketing strategy. Feels the strategic plan is affected and the city is consumed by COVID actions that are possibly hindering some marketing actions. Chief Military Officer asked if Mike Amaral should be added to the monthly VAAC agenda for a VA Health care update. All agreed. Bruce would like to see more effort for everyone to attend the County Veterans Advisory Board meeting.

6. Discussion and Action: Amend the recently passed VAAC Resolution to include a mandatory 90 day Vacancy Fill for Council Representatives.

Discussion: Request that the 90 day Vacancy fill be placed as a stand alone amendment to the resolution. Manny provided legal advise. What is the enforcing mechanism of if someone is in violation? Will council vote in favor of something that has the potential to cause a sanction. Bruce Biegel recommended that the VAAC drop the idea. Lance Lehr is also in favor of dropping it. Chief Military Officer recommended an official letter to be sent to any representative who is not filling a vacancy. Justin Rotti asked if anyone from the VAAC has spoken with the Rep with the empty seat. Justin has volunteered to reach out to the Representative about the vacancy.

ACTION: Motion and Second -the 90 Day Vacancy Fill will not be added to the VAAC resolution.

7. Discussion and action: Vote on updated VAAC By-Laws

Discussion: Hope Jackson asked Manny if the VAAC would remain in perpetuity. Under general purposes, it may not a possibility because if the sunset laws are created and

evolved over time. Manny will look into the idea and see if it is possible. Hope Jackson feels that since City Council does not have a Sunset, than neither should the VAAC. Manny explained that City Council is created by state law and the VAAC is created by City Council. Bruce Biegel asked if all members are extended now that a four-year term has been set. Manny stated that term limits apply to everyone now.

Action: Motion and second. VAAC By-Laws are approved.

8. Discussion: Annual election of VAAC Officers.

Discussion: Officers will be elected annually at the beginning of the Calendar year. After the elections, the outgoing Chairman will introduce the new chair at the following semi-annual brief to Council. Reggie Daniel feels like there should not be a reason to change out the leadership. Justin Rotti informally nominates Dean Sanders to be the next Chairman. Dean accepted the informal nomination. Dean Sanders ask Bruce Biegel if he would like to be the Chair. Bruce stated that he likes being the Vice-Chair.

9. Discussion and Action: 2021 VAAC Annual Monthly meeting calendar

Discussion: Bruce Biegel feels that the meetings should no longer be on Friday. Would like to present Wednesday. Hope Jackson is not available on Wednesdays. Hope Jackson presented Thursday. Bruce Biegel is not available on Thursdays. The Chief Military Officer is not available on Monday and Tuesdays due to Council meetings and Wednesday due to City Manager meetings. Dean Sanders recommended Thursday or Friday. Reggie Daniel asked if committee members can attend meetings while traveling. Manny explained that the City will continue to meet virtually until the Governor lifts the current restrictions. Once the Temporary restrictions are lifted, Committee members are not permitted to meet virtually due to the open meetings act. Chief Military Officer advised that whichever day of the week is chosen, City meetings rooms must be open, and City IT must be available to live stream the meeting.

Action: Motion and Second VAAC Annual Monthly Meeting calendar is Approved.

10. El Paso County Veterans Assistance Program Manager Update

Carl Dwyer explained that the County Assistance Office is still open and providing assistance to those in need. The Office will be open during the holidays. The Veterans Care Giver Fair was canceled and will be rescheduled. Would like help in education initiatives of the Veteran community. Monday November 30th at 10AM is a VA Community Town hall. Is interviewing 3 work study candidates to work in the assistance office. Will publish the Bi-Annual Veterans resource directory in December. The Veterans Advisory Board added Alexis McCray for Precinct 2. Thanked the City and the Veteran and Military Affairs division for the Veteran day 5K and Video tribute.

11. Division of Veteran and Military Affairs Update

December 3rd, A presentation of the Army Partnership for Youth Success will be presented by the Department of the Army to local Community and Business leaders. Over 100 Runners participated in the El Paso Virtual Veterans Day 5K. The Video was distributed to the Veteran Community. Currently in the Concept Development phase of the IGSA for EPW and Capital Improvement. DEEAG application submitted for EPW. Resources are available to anyone who is in need. Everyone is requested to share information.

12. Announcements- Hope Jackson – On November 21st, Greater El Paso Veteran Association of realtors will collaborate with the Northeast Community Food Pantry to provide assistance to 300 families. A Holiday meal and staple items will be provided. On December 21st the association will partner with the El Paso Fighting hunger food bank to distribute food to 3500 families.

Dean Sanders asked if the SFL-TAP could present to the Chamber and others to help provide talent to local employers.

Reginald Daniel – Working with the family of a deceased Veteran Sergeant Major and is asking for help to ensure the family is well taken care of.

Chief Military Officer – 3499 Veterans are living in poverty in El Paso County according to the American Community Survey 2019.

Don Parrott- Would like to focus on the Recruiting Command to help present the Army Pays Program.

13. Next VAAC Meeting: January 15, 2021 10:00 AM Virtual Meeting online.

15. Adjourn- 1145AM

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.