

Veterans Advisory Board Minutes
January 26, 2016
Las Cruces City Hall

Open Meeting: The Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m., and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

American Legion Post 10	Lawrence Orvis, Chairman
DAV Chapter 10	Dan Banks
Marine Corps League	Carol Gaines
Member at Large #1	Jacobo Varela
Member at Large #2	Lester Palmer, Vice Chairman
MOAA	Christine Sautter
United Military Women of the SouthWest	Karen Woods
Special Forces Association	Kyle Trout
VFW Post 3242	Cosme Padilla (absent)
VFW Post 6917	VACANT
VFW Post 10124	Patrick Ramirez (excused)
Vietnam Veterans	Fred Schneider
Military Order of the Purple Heart	Rod Gajewski

(A quorum of appointed members was present)

Approval of Agenda for today's meeting was motioned by Carol Gaines and 2nd by Kyle Trout. All members that are present voted unanimously.

Introduction of Guests:

Mayor's Liaison	Dolores Archuleta
New Mexico Department of Veteran Services	James Turner
NMSU Veterans Theatre	David Boje
NMSU MVP	Erika Zaragoza
Senator Udall's Office	Melanie Goodman
Mesilla Valley Hospice	Kathy Olson
VHA LC CBOC	Crystal Davis-Whited
Veteran	Billy Armijo
VVA & KWVA	Bruce Fonest

City of Las Cruces Staff:

Travis A. Brown	Board Coordinator
Brittany Viramontes	Recording Secretary

Acceptance of Minutes, Carol Gaines motioned to approve the minutes from November 24, 2015 with Jacobo Varela 2nd the motion, all members that are present voted unanimously.

Old Business

- **Veterans Park parking lot update**, Chief Brown reported that the City is working on a land swap deal with Mr. Binns. There is property near the Animal Services Center on Highway 70 that is being considered for the swap.

New Business

- **Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman**, for the position of Chairman, Lester Palmer motioned to nominate Lawrence Orvis. Rod Gajewski 2nd the motion. All members present voted unanimously. For the position of Vice Chairman, Rod Gajewski motioned to nominate Carol Gaines who respectfully declined. Lawrence Orvis motioned to nominate Jacobo Varela who also respectfully declined. Lawrence Orvis then motioned to nominate Rod Gajewski and was 2nd by inaudible. All members present voted unanimously.

Public Participation

- **Bruce Fonnest**, The Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans event will take place at Veterans Park on March 26th from 8am to 12pm. The dedication of the Huey Helicopter will be at that time as well. Parking will be available at the Mission Lutheran Church and Desert Hills Elementary. ADA school buses are unavailable for transport for this event. Chief Brown stated that he will check the use of ADA buses from the City. Citizens will have the chance to see the Huey Helicopter before it is placed on its pedestal, February 6th at the Walmart on Rinconada from 12-4pm and at a Car Show at the Telshor Cinema parking lot February 27th from 10am-2pm. The Korean War Veterans Association chapter held their annual election of officers and are good for another year.
- **David Boje**, the Veterans Theatre is working with the City to develop a film about Spice (synthetic marijuana).
- **Dolores Archuleta** reported that \$40,000 was received for the new plaques that will replace the temporary ones on the Veterans Memorial Wall.
- **James Turner** stated that the Tax Exempt period is now through April and he would like to be placed on the agenda for next month for the Appeal Process
- **Melanie Goodman** extended a congratulations to Dr. Boje on becoming a Regent at NMSU and also for the Veterans Theatre performance. She attended and said that it was very moving. Mrs. Goodman reported on Legislative updates- congress passed a \$163 billion dollar budget to fund veterans programs. Also, Senator Udall secured a provision in the omnibus appropriations bill signed by President Obama requiring the VA to report on the findings of its burn pit registry. The registry helps provide medical care and research for service members and veterans who were exposed to the burn pits in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- **Billy Armijo** stated that the Desperados Veterans Group will be hosting breakfast at Golden Corral on Hickory Loop February 6th at 7:45am. Mr. Armijo serves on the State Veterans Board and they meet once a quarter in Albuquerque with Secretary Fox.
- **Crystal Davis-Whited** reported that with the driver license issues, vets have been denied access to William Beaumont and the El Paso VA. As of 01/25/16 those two locations only will be accepting New Mexico Drivers Licenses. And update on the Las Cruces CBOC- they are still in the planning phase. Also, new locations will be coming to El Paso. Their workstations went out of service temporarily yesterday (01/25/16) however they have been remediated and are back up and in service today.

Board Member Reports

- **Jacobo Varela** announced that he is leaving NMSU to take a job at Colorado State University. His last day will be Friday, January 29th. His hopes are that his colleague Erika Zaragosa will continue to attend the meetings to update the board on NMSU Veterans.
- **Rod Gajewski** stated that the funding for the Military of the Purple Heart Monument was received. Parks & Rec are working with vendors and completion is expected for early August, just in time for National Purple Heart Day.
- **Kyle Trout**, their sister Chapter in El Paso, Chapter 9, has asked for their help to form an exploratory committee to bring their National Convention to El Paso in 2018.
- **Dan Banks** reported that DAV 10 donated around \$500 worth of clothing to the Veterans Home in T or C.
- **Karen Woods**, they will be having a fundraiser at the Downtown Ramble February 5th from 5-7pm. They will also have an information table set up at the Farmer's Market on the 27th. They received the blueprints for the Women's Monument and are now working with the city to get them accepted. No date has been set for a groundbreaking yet.
- **Lester Palmer**, drivers are still needed for Chapter 38.
- **Fred Schneider** asked for any additional help for Bruce Fonnest for the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day
- **Christine Sautter** reported that MOAA had their election of officers and will be continuing their organization for another 2 years.
- **Carol Gaines** reported that the Marine Corps League also held their election of officers. Mrs. Gaines also reported that their Honor Guard attended about 75 funerals last year.
- **Lawrence Orvis**, Bingo on Wednesdays and Saturdays, first game starts at 6:30pm. Last game is \$1,000 blackout. \$10 to play. Mr. Orvis also asked the board to bring any information possible forward for discussion during meetings.

Next Meeting: February 23, 2016

Adjournment: Karen Woods motioned to have the meeting adjourned, Lester Palmer 2nd the motion. All members present voted unanimously.


2-23-16

Name

2-23-16

Date