

Veterans Advisory Board Minutes
June 28, 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	Dr. David Boje (excused)
Member at Large #2	Anthony Kessel
Member at Large #3 (Student)	VACANT
MOAA	Christine Sautter
United Military Women of the SouthWest	Karen Woods
Special Forces Association	Kyle Trout
VFW Post 3242	Cosme Padilla
VFW Post 10124	Patrick Ramirez (excused)
Vietnam Veterans	Fred Schneider
Military Order of the Purple Heart	Rod Gajewski, Vice Chairman (excused)

(A quorum of appointed members was present)

Approval of Agenda for today's meeting was motioned by Cosme Padilla and 2nd by Fred Schneider. All members that are present voted unanimously.

Introduction of Guests:

New Mexico Department of Veteran Services	James Turner
Mayor's Liaison	Dolores Archuleta
MOPH #2004	Tony Barncastle
Rep. Congressman Steve Pearce	Joe Martinez
Commander American Legion Post 10	Bob Richie
Trustee VFW Post 10124	Kevin Devlaeminck
Vietnam War Memorial	Jay Lloyd
Vietnam War Memorial	Hubert Day
VA Home Based Primary Care	Roberto Soriano
VA Home Based Primary Care	Yvonne Waters
VA Home Based Primary Care	Melissa Huff
Honor Flight	Kathy Olson
Honor Flight	Arnold Diaz
Senator Udall's Office	Melanie Goodman
Vietnam War Memorial	Mike Cano
El Paso VA	Myriam Andrade
El Paso VA	Elvia Franco
El Paso VA- LC CBOC	Dorian Tapia

LC CBOC
El Paso VA Mental Health

Crystal Davis-Whited
Brian Olden

City of Las Cruces Staff:

Eric Enriquez
Brittany Viramontes

Board Coordinator
Recording Secretary

Acceptance of Minutes, Anthony Kessel motioned to approve the minutes from May 24, 2016 with Cosme Padilla 2nd the motion, all members that are present voted unanimously.

Old Business

- **VAB Ordinance Revision Update**, the new ordinance was passed by city council. United Military Women of the SouthWest replaced VFW 6917. An additional Member at Large with Student Veteran Affiliation has been added. No application that meet the student requirement have been received yet.
- **Veteran Parking Signs at Veterans Park Update**, Reserved for Veterans parking signs have been ordered. Placement of the signs should be on either side of the existing handicap spots. The fire department has covered the costs of ordering 6 signs. These do not replace handicap parking.
- **Meeting Attendance Requirements**, attendance runs from April through March. A roll call check list has been started. A few individuals have already missed the April and May meetings. There is no difference between an excused and non-excused absence but excused probably deserves more leniency. Missing 3 consecutive meetings or 25% of the meetings is grounds for removal from the board. A letter for recommended removal comes from the Chairman to the City Clerk's office and a copy is sent to the person being removed. As long as there is an effort for participation more often than not then benefit of the doubt can be given. Continuous no call/no show should be on our radar because it is believed that they do not have the best interest of the board in mind.

New Business

- **Introduction of Fire Chief Eric Enriquez**, Mr. Orvis introduced Fire Chief Eric Enriquez to the board members and guests. Chief Enriquez is taking Chief Travis Brown's spot as the board liaison.
- **Veterans Corner webpages on City of Las Cruces website**, with changes the board membership under the new ordinance and Chief Brown's retirement, some updating needs to be made to the veteran's corner webpages. First and foremost, Chief Enriquez's contact information will be added as the board liaison in the event someone should have questions. All membership will be updated as well as the new ordinance. Mr. Mark Johnston, former director of Parks and Rec had mentioned in a previous meeting that photographs of the monuments would need to be submitted to Risk Management for insurance purposes. Contact will be made with Parks and Rec to see if we can use those photos to update the website, otherwise other arrangements will be looked into. If any veteran organizations or guests have information regarding any upcoming events for/veteran involvement is asked to email me the information (date, time, location, short detail) along with any fliers or print advertising and I will get it posted to the calendar of events. (bviramontes@las-cruces.org). The web core team is working on creating a page

to post the meeting agenda and minutes so organizations and members of the public can reference discussions that take place at the VAB meetings. Currently this information is only available upon request at the City Clerk's office.

- **El Paso VA Choice Card**, Mr. Orvis stated that there has been concern with the VA Choice Card program from veterans seeking outside physician services. Mrs. Myriam Andrade explained that there has been some confusion with the billing. All bills should be submitted through Triwest, not the VA Clinic. Patients paying out of pocket will be reimbursed but the process can take a significant amount of time before that money is seen so it is advised against. If a patient receives a bill they can call the VA Clinic at 915-564-6100 extension 7604. Mrs. Sautter expressed concern about redundant processes of multiple consults being done. Mrs. Andrade explained that different providers have to provide different consults. Crystal Davis-Whited also explained to the board and guests that if a medical emergency should happen, do not stop by the CBOC. All it does is delay care. There is some misconception that veterans need to go to the clinic first to get authorization to go to the emergency room. After visiting the emergency room, veterans have 72 hours to report their hospital visit for a claim. The number to call is 915-564-6197.

Public Participation

- **Anthony Barncastle** stated that the Purple Heart will be taking over for the Candlelight Vigil Committee. In regards to the Purple Heart Monument, the delivery from Baca's in Deming is to take place June 30th. A foundation has been set at one of the three approved locations for the monument. Although it is not at the original agreed upon location, Mr. Barncastle asked the board to consider leaving the monument at the designation as to not disrupt the scheduled delivery and dedication dates. Placement of the monument will be added to next month's meeting agenda for further consideration.
- **Dolores Archuleta** repeated that the Purple Heart would be taking over the Candlelight Vigil Committee, however Colonel Roach has asked her to remain on the committee for another year during the transition. The Las Cruces High School class of 1965 has asked about a memorial for the 5 individuals killed in Vietnam from their graduating class. Mrs. Archuleta explained to them that the process for a memorial includes bringing it to the board for approval and a location site. She also stated that they would be responsible for their own funding. Mrs. Archuleta will be meeting with Parks and Rec regarding the replacement plaques for the Iraq and Afghanistan memorial. There are approximately 700 names for Iraq and Afghanistan. There are also additional names for WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam.
- **Kevin Devlaeminck** reported that VFW Post 10124 will be having a 4th of July barbeque. A flag retirement ceremony will also take place that same day. July 24th they will be having a Senior Breakfast at 9am at VFW Post 10124 on Valley.
- **Melanie Goodman** reported that Senator Tom Udall is supporting a comprehensive bill to improve access to care and services for New Mexico veterans. The Veterans First Act incorporates major provisions that Udall has championed to improve veterans' care in rural communities, fix problems with the Veterans Choice Program, and strengthen whistleblower protections.
- **Jay Lloyd** was reporting on behalf of the Vietnam War Memorial Committee. There were 450+ members of Rolling Thunder that came through Las Cruces and participated

in the wreath laying. Many items have been left at the memorial. They are working with Mr. Hunter at NMSU trying to find a way to preserve some of these items. Mr. Mike Cano stated that they are looking for a central repository for these items to be catalogued and stored.

- **Kathy Olson**, Honor Flight will be having a couple of fundraiser events for the September 30th flight for WWII and Korean War Vets. Wednesday, June 29th at the Chili's in Las Cruces and Alamogordo will be donating 20% of the bill to the Honor Flight. Uno's in Las Cruces will be offering the same deal July 1st thru July 10th. You must mention or show the fliers.
- **JR Turner**, Garrison Flag Dates are as follows: Independence Day (July 4th), Korean War Armistice Day (July 27th). They are looking for participation from Fire, Police, ROTC and children's groups at these flag raisings. In other news, about 65 bricks were laid to the Veterans Memorial Wall. There are about 125 brick spaces remaining at Veterans Park.
- **Joe Martinez** took a moment to recognize and thank all of the members on the Vietnam War Memorial Committee for all of their time, work, and dedication to the project and continuing to be supportive of its mission in his absence.
- **Brian Olden** reported that there has been an increase in staffing in the mental health department at the Las Cruces VA mental health clinic. Melanie Goodman stated that the clinic is at 100% design completion and should be within 3 months of groundbreaking.

Board Member Reports

- **Dan Banks**, the DAV had their convention in Albuquerque early in the month of June. Their chapter is still planning on the Motorcycle Rally fundraiser.
- **Christine Sautter**, Good Samaritan will be having a picnic on July 16th. Community of Hope received a generous donation from a gentleman's estate.
- **Karen Woods**, the groundbreaking for the Women's Monument is set for September 10th at 10am.
- **Brittany Viramontes** briefly mentioned that a few members are due for reappointment to the board- Carol Gaines, Karen Woods and Christine Sautter. Their terms will expire August 1st.
- **Lawrence Orvis**, Bingo Wednesdays and Saturdays; first game starts at 6:30pm. Last game is \$1,000 blackout. \$10 to play. The next fundraiser will be held at Walmart on Rinconada July 3rd from 7:30 to 11:30am.

Next Meeting: July 26, 2016

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


Name


Date