Veterans Advisory Board Minutes
June 25, 2019
City Hall, Room 2007-B

Open Meeting: The Meeting was called to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: A quorum of appointed members was present.

- Member at Large #1: Lawrence Orvis, Chairman
- Special Forces Association: Kyle Trout, Vice Chairman
- American Legion Post 10: Ed Torres
- DAV Chapter 10: Sam Bothem
- Marine Corps League: Carol Gaines
- Member at Large #2: Hector Sanchez
- Member at Large #3: Mike Cano
- Military Order of the Purple Heart: Rod Gajewski
- MOAA: Christine Sautter
- United Military Women of the SouthWest: Karen Woods
- Vietnam Veterans: Fred Schneider
- VFW Post 3242: Jesse Addison
- VFW Post 10124: Patrick Ramirez

City of Las Cruces Staff:
- Eric Enriquez, Chief
- Brittany Viramontes: Board Coordinator
- Mike Cano: Recording Secretary

Approval of Agenda for June 25 meeting was motioned by Mike Cano and seconded by Fred Schneider. All members present voted unanimously; motion carries.

Acceptance of Minutes: (Name) motioned to accept the minutes of the May 28th meeting as written. Carol Gaines seconded the motion. All members present voted unanimously; motion carries.

Old Business
Veterans Transportation: Debra Hathaway reported on how the veteran’s transportation study came about and gave an update on the current status. She stated that she was recently a house analyst in Santa Fe and did analysis on military veteran’s affairs. She sat through many committee meetings. One thing that came out of these meetings was that a House Memorial was passed asking to do a study on transportation challenges to medical appointments and hospitals by our veterans in this state. The first meeting of the Veterans Transportation Task Force was held this past month. (Slides were passed out.) They were really thorough. What is going to happen next is that around October they are going to complete this study and will be presenting it to the legislators. The results of the study will be presented to the Legislative Finance Committee. They will put a dollar number on it and then a bill will be written asking for that amount of money. And what we want to see happen is that it gets on the fast track; cause it’s only a month this time around. For the money to become available is that every single veteran in this state and those who love them and support them make sure the legislature and the Governor know that this is important. That the challenges that our veterans face are sometimes just insurmountable. ‘I’ve heard a lot of stories about some of our veterans being in a van literally 12 to 14 hours because they’ve had to pick up some other people along the way and I think our veterans deserve much more than that. I think we owe them a debt of honor. The committee should be meeting 3 or 4 more times before they complete this study. They identified transportation challenges inclusions for veterans and tasked to develop a strategic plan. Some of our rural areas face much more difficulty than the veterans who are around Albuquerque. El Paso is included in the transportation study. They had two different approaches. They
want to coordinate all our transportation services: the DAV, local transportation, transit people around the state to see what they can do together and also TeleHelp, which is working pretty well in our Indian reservations. In addition, there is now a rising percent of women veterans and they have some unique healthcare needs that male veterans don’t have. And, that over 60% of our veterans drive over 30 minutes. I think it was like 30% are over an hour and then there’s 5 or 10% over like three hours. Also, they said that access to specialty care has been very difficult. Some clinics have like a basic care but then if you need a real specialty then you may have to go to a different clinic or be taken there. I will keep you all updated. I make this my mission to make sure that you all are notified. Team consists of of many from all over the state. There are two or three veterans on that team, including Rudy Martinez from our area. He and others are pushing for this bill. I can send you listing of team members. Ms. Hathaway took questions from the audience. She stated that she is in contact with majority whip Dorian Gallegos and Mary Kay Papen. This is a comprehensive plan. They (committee) really seem to have it together. DAV from entire state (including Alamogordo). They are taking into consideration what services we have available now, what we can do to supplement them and what we can do to coordinate with the state and local transit services. If you have questions, write down your name and email address and I will send you updates and information and forward questions to people on the committee. It was suggested that a member of the task force committee come talk to this group so they can directly ask them questions. Ms. Hathaway was invited to return next month to share whatever information she has.

Susana Santillan from the NM Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing stated that she has a client in T or C. He’s a veteran with multiple disabilities and is having problems getting transportation to Albuquerque to get diagnosed because he has a scooter. Whoever picks him up has had to cancel his appointment because he has to travel with a scooter. She asked if anyone could help refer her to someone who can help him. She was told that DAV does not have the lifts on their vans and does not have room for wheelchairs. Further, drivers are not allowed to help individuals get on the van so they have to make sure to bring someone along to help them.

**New Business**

**Granite Benches for Korean War Monument:** Chairman: went back on our minutes as far back at the 17th when we approved the final locations of the Korean War Monument and also the kneeling soldier. Our minutes show that one bench was approved. Is that correct? Brittany: There was discussion about the benches but there was never an approval/approved vote for the benches. The only vote was for the soldier. I was told there was 4 benches, the size will go into the description which is similar to the granite at the Vietnam War Monument. Ed Torres stated: there’s an unresolved issue among the Korean War Memorial Committee members as to the siting of those benches. The four benches around that Korean War Memorial you need to be careful as to where you place them. So, I would implore the Board not only to approve the benches if that’s what you’re proposing to do but I think you need to know how and where those benches are to be sited. Some of the committee members are very concerned that none of the benches block in any way the front of the memorial. I’ve been in contact with the Parks Department. They want very much to have input as to how and where these benches are placed.

Chairman: Ed can you give us some insight on what the thought is for to and for? The initial set of plans back in 17 does not indicate the position of the benches.

Ed Torres: the Korean War Memorial four benches around it if not properly placed could be an over kill.

(Name): I think until the Korean War Committee comes to a consensus agreement and they talk to City Parks & Rec folks regarding the whole issue that is should be tabled, I think the benches are a great idea but the placement and if the committee who is in charge of that monument isn’t even yet in agreement I think we’re premature to place a motion that would saddle somebody with an incorrect location or somebody walking up and saying well this looks gaudy. We don’t want that.
Cathy Matthews, Landscape Architect stated that Parks & Rec definitely wants to be involved with siting the benches. Among our concerns also are the walking, open space surrounding the Garrison flag pole which is often used as a gathering place. We definitely want to be involved in making sure there is proper access, proper ADA compliance. Since it is our responsibility to maintain and design and build the park, we would like to be involved in making those final decisions.

Ed Torres: I would move that we table this issue until next month.

Chairman: I would suggest that we move this forward to next month and until the Korean War Committee has a conversation with Parks & Rec and comes up with a workable idea so that it can be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

Bruce Fonnest: I handed out pictures and dimensions of what the four benches are going to look like. They are basically a cut down version of the one at the Vietnam Memorial. A lot smaller version. 16” high, 14” deep, and 3 foot long. These are not park benches; they are memorial benches. Park benches have got a backing on them. And I agree, that would have cut down the view of everything.

There was a motion by (Name) to postpone the vote until next month. Karen Woods seconded the motion. All members present voted unanimously; motion carries.

Coin Addition to the Korean War Monument – Ed Torres.
Col. Brady: The Korean War Memorial solicits your vote of approval to embed two of the same challenge coins in the left horizontal rear surface of the face of the Korean War Memorial. One coin faces up, one coin face down. The coin honors a 1st Cavalry Division World War II Korean War Army Chaplin who was awarded the medal of honor for a selfless and heroic service to his fellow POW's. One of which was our committee member Paul Rusch. Our committee would like to adopt this Army Chaplin as a New Mexican and mark his heroic service in the base of the Korean War Memorial. Estimated cost is $100 to embed coin in the granite.

(Name): I make motion that we go ahead with Col. Brady’s coin to be firmly embedded on the monument. Fred seconded the motion. All members in favor; motion carries. Now goes to Parks & Rec.

VA Las Cruces Clinic Name: Col. Amaral, VA Clinic Director. Reported that a request was submitted to our local congressional reps, the two state senators, to this body as well as to the Alamogordo Veterans Advisory Council to get letters of support as we put together this package saying that the community supports the naming of the Las Cruces VA Clinic as Bataan Memorial.

Chairman: Has there been any movement or anything further on the left turn into the clinic?

Col. Amaral: I will follow up on this issue. The city has approved it and it is now on the contract.

(Name): I would like to enter a motion that we provide a letter of support signed by all of the individual members of the Board to be given to Col. Amaral so that he can include it with the packet that goes to Washington for the naming of the clinic to be the Bataan Memorial Clinic. Motion seconded by Fred. All in favor; motion carries.

Additional Flag Raisings:
Chairman: We’ve had concerns about having a flag raising on D-Day and also the Bataan Death March proposed flag raising.
Karen Woods: adding more dates has come up at previous meetings; the final thing was that we have problems with what we have now why add to the list.

(Name): I have a list of observances in the United States by presidential proclamation. If we look at our current Garrison flag dates every one of those dates if you look at it either is a national holiday either by presidential or congressional declaration to be a day of observance or a day of recognition. D-Day is not one of them. Is D-Day significant? Absolutely it is but so is the National Military Appreciation Day in May, how about Gettysburg, how about the Gold Star Families, how about the Battle of Belleau Wood, how about the Battle of the Bulge, how about Iwo Jima. D-Day is a very significant thing. But the problematic that we have with the park and with the flag raising is the fact that at 8 o’clock we have a pretty decent attendance. At 5 o’clock (and this isn’t about me -- I’m just going to make this statement) there’s been two times in the last month that the old people that have been there have been Bruce and Hubert and I. We add more days, we don’t have enough people that show up to raise and lower this flag. And we can’t leave it up because the flags are super expensive. So, to add more days, I think, we open up a can of worms if we talk about adding more days. Especially the fact that they are not presidential proclamations or national holidays. There are so many significant days in the history of America that we could be raising the flag every day. Some of these lists of observances are absolutely absurd…national sandwich day. But at the same time, veteran related issues, D-Day is one. When this was initially brought up by someone, I don’t want to cast dispersions on anybody, but that person, I come to enough of the flag raisings that that person is almost a ghost when it comes to coming to the flag raisings or lowering. It’s a great idea but then when you say we’d like you to be there to do it, all the hands go down. So, I am totally against adding any more dates to the flag raising partly because we’re just getting old. It’s hard to go out there and put those flags up and pull them down. Anybody that’s been there to put the flag up and lower that flag in the wind it is a job. That’s my point; I’m concurring with Karen.

Chairman: The biggest concern right now is to be there at 5 o’clock to take the flag down. If you can step up and help out it would really be appreciated by everyone.

Fred: Unless we start going to the flag lowering ceremony there’s no way that we can add more dates. It’s going to take 10-12 people to lower that flag and fold it. And, unless we step up and start going to these lowering ceremonies there’s no way that you can add anything else to it.

Chairman: to alleviate the problem we need a lot more people to come and help out.

Ms. Archuletta: this D-Day came about from a letter in the Sun-News. That person then said: I hurried up at 6 o’clock and went to Veteran’s Park for D-Day flag raising and nobody was there. And then he looked at the bulletin board and he saw that it’s not even on the schedule. And that gentleman had he been at several of those flag raisings he would have known.

Chairman: If we would have been aware ahead of time of the 75th anniversary we might have made a difference for a 1-time flag raising.

(Name): I’d like to make a motion that we deny any additional flag raising dates at this time.

Mr. Enriquez: Mr. Chair to coincide with the agenda the topic is additional flag raising but we separated the two dates in the event that the Board members were in favor of one and not the other so we have to do it separate. It’s either going to make a motion for Bataan Death March flag raising and it’s either approved or denied.
(Name): I make a motion that we deny the additional flag raising of the Bataan Death March. Fred seconded the motion. The motion is denied.

(Name): I make a motion that we deny the additional flag raising date for D-Day. Karen Woods seconded the motion. All in favor for denial.

Public Participation

2020 Centennial Census: Elaine Avina with US Census Bureau talked briefly to the Board about census 2020 - the centennial census. She thanked the members of the Board and all veterans present for their service to our country.

The census is coming, the centennial census comes every 10 years and is less than a year out. It is important for all residents living in this country, in New Mexico, in our cities and towns to know and understand 1) What is the centennial census and why it is so important to respond. All residents need to know that it’s safe, it’s easy and it’s important. It’s safe because everyone’s responses are confidential and kept confidential for 72 years. Information provided on the census form is not shared with any other government agency—not ICE, not law enforcement, nor government agencies that provide assistance. Secondly, it’s easy. The questionnaire is about 10 questions and takes no more than 10 minutes to complete depending on how many people are in the household. And, it’s important. Flyer handed out, titled: “Census 101: What You Need to Know.” The census is mandated in the constitution specifically to respond to the census so that we know how many people are living in the country so that the government can provide federal support, federal dollars that it distributes to every state, every year. We want to make sure New Mexico and our communities that we get our fair share. The only way to do that is to make sure that everyone is counted. It’s about fair representation. This annual census data is used to apportion the U.S. House of Representatives to see how many seats each state receives based on the count. Federal dollars coming into our communities are based on the annual census data so we want to make sure that every resident is counted. Over $675 billion every year is distributed to the state based on this data. We want to make that sure we’re getting our fair share for the programs and services that veterans need and receive. It’s also about redistricting our school districts, our state legislative districts, voting districts are based on these annual census data as well. So how can you help? I understand that veterans are known to be a hard to count population. So, it’s important that organizations like yours who do so much outreach to our veterans and those living in our community who are veterans that they are educated about why it’s important to respond. Veterans served our country and they deserve to be heard. Your voice counts and you should have that representation, that power in congress when it comes to getting federal portion based on census data. And, again veterans trust each other. So, you all are trusted voices to those other veterans in our communities who when you say this is what the census is and why it’s important, they will listen, and they’ll know that it’s safe to respond.

(Name): is one of the 10 questions “Are you a Veteran?”

Ms. Avina: I don’t believe so. We have name, age, date of birth, sex, race and origin, do you own or rent a home, relationship to the head of household or person filling out the census form, phone # and citizenship (although that’s still under reservation). So, it does not ask if you are a veteran.

Chairman: As veteran groups we can go back to our groups and tell them how important it is but it isn’t necessarily representation on whether we get a voice within the government.

Ms. Avina: Well it’s representation in the fact that you’re counted. But not as veterans. Every household will receive notification in the mail; they’ll receive a postcard, a letter, a questionnaire at that household. However, if you don’t have a mail receptacle or live in a rural area of our county, that is what we call an update lead enumeration so because we don’t deliver to PO boxes and a lot of folks in our rural community only have PO
boxes and that’s when we have a census worker who will actually go to that address, update it, and leave a questionnaire and update the enumeration. And they will go back to that address up to three times if they don’t get someone initially to help them fill out the questionnaire and get a respond to that household. Census data is tabulated in statistical format only. The responses that a household places on the questionnaire are not related as such. They are related in statistical format only. Counts are delivered to the president by the end of 2020 in statistical format only. So, it’s numbers; we want to know how many people live and use the resources in our community.

Ed Torres: How do you account for permanent residents of hotels and motels?

Ms. Avina: Hotels and motels are counted under what we call group quarters enumeration. So, hospitals, prisons, jails, hotels, motels, RV parks those type of areas are counted by a census worker/census taker who goes to that location and gets a count of how many people are living and staying there as of April 1, 2020.

(Name): That number changes; doesn’t that mean like if they go to a hospital people are discharged, people are admitted—that’s a rolling number.

Ms. Avina: That’s why we use April 1 as a referencing. Where people live and sleep most of the time is where they should be counted. So, if they happen to be in a hospital, in a nursing home, in a prison, in jail, in a motel and they can’t be accounted for anywhere else we’re going to use that reference date as that person being counted at that location, at that time.

(Name): How are the homeless accounted for?

Ms. Avina: Well for example, we have a partnership with the Mesilla Valley Community of Hope. Their intelligence/group provide us with information about that population. We go to service-based enumeration where we send a census taker to those locations where homeless population are being served and we get a count there. We also send census taker to likely places where homeless live and sleep most of the time whether it’s under a bridge, at a park. We try to cover all of those types of situations and we rely on partnerships that we form in the cities and counties to help us do that so that we can report to operations and say we know of all of these locations that we need to send a census taker to.

Chairman: How are you getting an accurate report from the veteran’s home in T or C for example?

Ms. Avina: Again, that would be group quarters enumeration. We would send a census taker to that location and make contact with management or someone who would partner with us to let us know how many residents live there.

Chairman: I would like to thank you very much.

**Veteran’s Day Parade:** Chairman: I don’t see Bill Hawkins in our audience.

(Name): We have a meeting at 11:00 o’clock today.

(Name): The route is going to be the same as last year. Discuss details at the next meeting.

**American Legion Auxiliary Event** - Patricia Torres

- Attending the 100-year celebration/convention in Clovis, New Mexico from June 2 - 7.
- Participating with the American Legion Post on the July 3rd Electric Light Parade.
- General meeting will be held on July 8th.
- An ice cream social will be held on July 19th at Post 10. “You are welcome to join us.”
Col. Amaral: I attended a meeting with the colonel in Alamogordo. He was the primary person. I was just there. Would you expand a little bit on the mission act relative to the prompt care thing? Which I think was really significant.

(Name): We talked about the travel issue. And I know down in Texas we have veterans who drive to the El Paso Clinic from Presidio and Marfa; a couple of hundred miles. There is care available in those communities through the Mission Act that went into effect on the 6th of June. The access standards have changed though not significantly for us. They changed to where now for primary care, mental health care we need to be able to see you within 20 days or a 30-minute drive time; 28 days and 60-minute drive time for specialty care. That changed from what used to be a distance. It used to be 30 miles. You can’t really get to too many places in 30 minutes; that’s why they changed that. It also aligns with what Tri-Care does; the same access standards. The two things that I encourage going on the veteran’s transportation issue is to take advantage of the Mission Act when it’s offered. If you’re outside those drive times or those access wait times, you should be offered Mission Act. If you’re not, tell the folks you know to ask for it. We’re still working on the scripting for our staff to make sure that they are offering that. The second thing is that we’re really expanding our video health capability. We actually have a capability that we are working on which essentially lets me Skype in with a nurse or a provider within the VA system to take care of that problem. Those are the two changes that have occurred. The other big one is the use of urgent care clinics. Now if go on to the access to care website that the VA has. It’s accessstocare.va.gov. You can search based on zip code what authorized urgent care facilities are in the Tri-West network. If you go on the urgent care web site, right now Ben Archer is popping up in Las Cruces. We are still working with Ben Archer to see what their capabilities are. We anticipate adding some other urgent care clinics.

(Name): I think it’s important for us as veterans to go back to our veteran groups and tell them that this new Mission Act provision is the fact that once TriCare goes around and starts proposing to the prompt care within our community, such as Memorial, maybe Mt. View, but Memorial I hear is one of the ones that they are working on, that the veteran has a sore throat. If you go without an appointment with the CBOC with a sore throat you’re going to wait awhile. But what you’ll be able to do as a veteran, and we need to get this out to our veteran groups, is that you will be able to go to prompt care and get VA authorized care up to three times in a year. The fourth time it’s going to cost you your co-pay. Whatever the co-pay is. But you got three times, if you’ve got a cold, or if you’ve got the early symptoms of the flu you can go to prompt care. They are popping up everywhere in the city. Tri-Care is working on signing up these people and convincing them that it’s not the old choice program where they are not going to get paid. This meeting that was in Alamogordo with the Colonel and Director Welch was there they are trying really hard to make this work. And I think once it gets infrastructurally approved it will be great for us here in this area because you can go for little stuff to a prompt care.

(Name): there’s just one little clarification on that. If you’re subject to a co-pay today, you will have a co-pay from your first visit to an urgent care. There’s no change in that. But for those who do not have a co-pay, you can go without a referral, you don’t have to call and ask permission. You can go three times in a year with no co-pay. The fourth one, yes you will incur a $30 co-pay. Go to urgent care because you have an earache and you just want to get some amoxicilllin or something. To me, it’s worth that 30 bucks. Especially on a Saturday or Sunday when those places are open and our facilities are not. You will not be billed on-site.

Chairman: I was asked to make this mention: that a veteran that feels that they need home-based health care program to go to your VA primary doctor that’s assigned to you and if he feels you need to be on that program, they will put you on that program. It’s not something that is automatic.
(Name): With the institution program, your provider has to put in a referral and then there is a selection process. There’s a little bit of a wait because there’s a lot of folks that really want on that program. You have to go through that approval process. Because there is a waiting list, they try to do it for those that need it the most.

Chairman: the VA clinic that we have here in Las Cruces is probably the finest that it can be. They really do take care of our veterans. You hear the comments from so many veterans that they like going to that. They say that they’re taken care of well. I have never heard anything negative about it.

(Name): still working on getting the urgent cares set up. Ben Archer is not quite set up to be a full urgent care; working through that right now. We’re also working on getting some of our other local urgent cares on board.

(Name): I’m working with Tri-West to get some the bigger actual urgent cares. Ben Archer has offered same-day appointments for our veterans. I’m ensuring that that’s being treated the same as an urgent care facility. That’s my biggest concern.

(Name): Demographically in our state we do have a problematic with everybody not having a computer and being able to take advantage of the video connect capabilities mentioned earlier. Colonel: It’s not going to be available to everybody. We are always available to answer your questions and help you.

Jerry Hernandez, DAV, Transportation Coordinator for DAC: We need drivers. I’m down to five drivers right now and three of them are on vacation. So, it leaves me two drivers to drive four days a week and we transport them to Las Cruces and to El Paso. I have to call veterans and say we can’t take you this day and can we reschedule. That happens a lot. The majority of the veterans are great with me when I call them within time. I’m the coordinator; I don’t drive. I really do need drivers. Drivers can be 18 years of age, male or female and they don’t have to be a veteran. This is a volunteer job. Mostly what I do request is that at least give me one day. We go first thing in the morning. We take everybody at one time to El Paso. We have to be there at 6 o’clock in the morning. You have to be an early bird. Just tell veterans to leave a message so I’m able to call them back. Brochures were provided. Mr. Hernandez’ number is in there. They can call him and leave me a message and he will get back to them as soon as they want to become a driver.

Chairman: On behalf of all veterans we thank you deeply for what you do.

Cecí Vasconcellos, Community Engagement Office, CLC. I brought some brochures today about the Roadrunner Transit service. This will give you basic information about this service. They do have longer hours now; until 10:30 on weekdays, 6:30 on Saturdays. No service on Sundays but we’re working on it. I also have a flyer that you can post at your business to let your employees or clients know that they can use Roadrunner service. If you want quantities for your organization or your business let me know and we can provide those for you to hand out to your clients.

Michelle Fenton, El Paso Electric: Jessie thank you so much for inviting us today. One of Aimee’s job functions that she does for us is to connect with veteran groups so that way we can actively recruit those folks for employment. We’re looking for folks that are coming out of the military that would like to transition to full-time employment.

Aimee Saldivar, EPE: programs she connects with. Use us as a resource. Work with a lot of different. Go to quarterly meetings at the VA at Beaumont as well as Real Life Heroes with the US Chamber of Commerce and then we also partake with the Greater Chamber of Commerce of El Paso working with some of the spouses who are very much actively looking for a position because they tend to stay for a certain period of time and then they move a lot and a lot of companies are not willing to hire them. We really try to make a connection with our
networking and we also trying to help connect and trying to make the connection with the veterans and trying to get them prepared for the job market. What we try to do in our capacity is to help transition from military to civilian work. Help them with job interviews and resume writing. And help them in getting a position that can match what their MOS was in the military. We do find that there are a lot of veterans that are willing to stay in the Las Cruces, El Paso area, but how can we accommodate them? That’s what we want to know and we want to find out by connecting with groups like this, with any non-profits that come in to El Paso that are nationally based and willing to hire them.

(Name): do you have openings in El Paso Electric and do you give any preference to veterans? Do you have any openings currently?

Ms. Saldivar: I wouldn’t use the word “preference” but we do try to make them a priority in terms of getting interviewed and looked at to make sure that whatever that it is that they are coming out of the service with those skills and qualifications to meet that particular job requisition. We try to make sure that there’s a match to that. I don’t want to put a veteran in something that’s not going to be of interest to them and set them up for failure. Our job is to match them accordingly. We have a variety of job opportunities. She left her contact information.

Chairman: Thank you ladies.

(Name), Veterans of Foreign Wars: The stand down for Las Cruces, southern area, is scheduled for 27 September. Will be located at the VFW on Valley right next door to Camp Hope. The time for this event will be determined by the committee. Commander Gene Barry is the point of contact. He took the lead for stand out for southern New Mexico. Number: 937-823-1846. The next meeting is 10th of July at 2:00 pm at the VFW. There’s a donation from the Veterans of Foreign Wars grant of $1,000 to help the program.

Arnold Diaz: Honor Flight, October 3rd, 4th and 5th. We have 13 veterans right now; we want to try to get 30. We’re still looking for vets. The big thing we’re pushing for now is sponsors. We need donations to help keep us afloat and getting the vets to Washington. Last year we took 29.

Each month the Dona Ana County Humane Society has a function at St. Claire’s Winery. It’s called Yappy Hour, where people take their dog, well-behaved dogs. The money they raise goes to the Humane Society. Each month they represent something. Their theme this month is in honor of veterans. Take your animals. They have treats for them and prizes. Date: July 17 from 6:00 to 8:00.

(Name): Has Franco communicated with you regarding this running group (granted a permit) that defaced our park? They painted white arrows. Many of them in the dam area but one of them was right next to the Marine Corp area. It was permanent paint that they used. Has anything been done regarding the permitting process? We’re not telling people that they can’t put things in our park and do things to the park. I also heard that the group that defaced our park on veteran’s day last year had applied for a permit again and I would hope that we would be denying those folks a permit.

Ms. Matthews: It’s my understanding that the permit process has been changed so that it is specified that if you are going to be marking it has to be chalk or possibly marking paint. But that’s part of the permit process now is to make it clear that permanent marking is not allowed.

(Name): but even chalk and the temporary marking paint. We already know that the temporary making paint that was utilized in November it took 6 months for that to go away. And it still hasn’t gone away where they marked on the black top. And then we have a new group, a different running group, who wasn’t given a permit who wasn’t given instructions on that and so they have damaged our park again.
Ms. Matthews: so, after that incident is when the determination was made to include the language about what kind of marking paint you can use and what you can’t. We’re definitely taking that into account and moving forward with that. Making sure that folks know what is accessible and what is not.

(Name): I don’t think any group should be allowed to have an event which runs through Veterans Memorial Park. There are monuments there that are dedicated to. We got a wall that it took years to build, that this committee put hundreds of hours in honoring 203 fallen veterans from this area. And we’re allowing people to run through it. I think it’s time that we put our foot down and honor the park as a Veteran’s Memorial Park.

Chairman: please take our concern back to your next meeting.

(Name): is there a reason why the park has to allow for those types of activities? Are there processes to change that?

Ms. Matthews: It is a City park and it is open to the public. That is our mandate to provide parks and recreational facilities for the public. A number of meetings ago I brought forth a potential policy for monuments for consideration by this board. Potential restrictions can be proposed on that policy. So, there are methods and policies that can be enacted that can put restrictions or definitions on the use and other factors that would play into how the park is permitted. That would have to be put forth within the policy and would have to go through the various stages of approval but that is certainly something that this board can consider enacting that kind of a policy or mechanism.

Chairman: let’s work together on making this happen.

(Name): It is a public park but it’s a memorial park and that’s what key. It’s a memorial park that honors the veterans of this area and it should be a place of respect. This last group has not been challenged to remunerate the City for the damage they caused. The City is going to fix it and the city employees are going to be used to fix it. In the future don’t let this people run through the park.

Ms. Matthews: We challenge this board to have input on that policy and make recommendations.

We can put Parks & Rec on the agenda as a discussion item to the bring the permitting policy to the next meeting.

Ms. Archuleta: Announcement: change of command at White Sands on July 17 at 9:00 a.m. at the Organ Mountain Hill.

NM Veterans S.A.V.E. Motorcycle Ride, Christine Camacho requested to get on the agenda for next month for the Suicide Prevention Ride that is happening from Albuquerque to Angel Fire and in Las Cruces, September 7-8, 2019. Flyers available on the table for the entire group. She is hoping to get volunteers today for the committee to help with planning/logistics for the route and for the day of the event. We are going to have people from Carlsbad, Deming and all the other outskirts ride into Las Cruces. Social, route review on Sunday. We’re still waiting on location. Saturday is going to be the route day followed by the memorial at the end.

Chairman: If you’d like to speak next month leave that brochure with us and we’ll include it under Public Participation.
JR: In the minutes you mention about the flags being tattered. I talked to the Mayor about that. We’re talking about flags that are lit 24 hours that are at the wall. Not the Garrison flat, none of the other flags that we might put up there. Everything else is good. I’m still enjoying my retirement.

**Board Member Reports**

Chairman: I have in front of me a Veterans Advisory Board Guest/Board Member Report. This is going to be issued to each one of the members to fill out and bring to the Board so that when you’re called on you have something that you can recite back to us. Email form to members.

**Cait**, Marine Corps League: As you know the Marine Corps League always does honor guard and in May we did seven funerals with military honors and on color guard we also did seven. On Memorial Day we did three color guard on that morning. One at the river at 8:30 with the VFW Auxiliary and then at 9:00 went to Hillcrest and did VFW there and in the evening did candlelight service. We are volunteers and we keep our uniforms ready but sometimes three in a day is a little hard but we’re there. Which brings up the next thing when we do military honors, we always use the rifles and they are blind shots which are really hard weapons. If want them to be repaired completely you have to send them back to the Army where the rifles came from but it takes a long time to send. We have about a set. There are seven we use but sometimes those seven are getting in really tough shape. We’ve been able to make a connection with one of the can’t think of the name of the business. But we bring him one rifle at a time and he completely fixes it up again. He doesn’t always have the equipment to do that. We’ve been taking him one rifle at a time and we have not come up with a price yet of what’s going to cost. By the time he does all of them it will be a considerable expense probably. Fourth of July is coming up and the Marine Corps does the opening color guard so we trying to make sure everyone has their uniforms in full shape and rifles and flags for all services so it will be a nice opening. One of the things that we have been working on the police usually have their motorcycles and they are going around and around before the color guard starts. But then the color guard comes and there been no light on the color guard. So, we’re working on a truck and lights to shine the color guard.

Hector: New Mexico state will be submitting a grant for support services for our students. It’s a grant that allows our students to get addition support for them to complete their degrees. They’ll get additional advising, mentoring and what not. Part of this grant requires that we get public support so I will be asking for letters of support from this organization and your individual organizations as well. I will be in contact with you. I will send you a template. This is very important.

Chairman: I’ll call on you for our next meeting agenda.

Jessy: I’d just like to thank the young ladies from El Paso Electric for coming to the meeting. I was impressed with their ability to hire veterans.

Kris: We have our picnic for the summer the third Saturday in July which will be at Good Sam. We are looking for new members as always. We will be having a new slate of officers in the fall.

Mike: At the lowering of the flag on July 4. There will be two young people that will tell you what each fold of that flag stands for/what it means. The flag will be folded in accordance with what they are reading. There’s going to be 13 folds. These young people have been practicing with the flag but they have no idea the size of the flag that they are going to use. I have a bullhorn that they will be able to use.

Ed Torres: On the American Legion side, after the flag raising ceremony at the park on 4th of July there will be a ceremony at the American Legion Post 10 at 09. It will be a combination of three different ceremonies. It will start off with Independence Day ceremony followed up by flag retirement ceremony/disposal of unserviceable flags. If you have flags that need to be disposed bring them on by prior to that or just contact me
and we’ll take care of them on the 4th of July. I’ve been in touch with Gina of the VA Affairs and the next New Mexico legal aid event will be held at the Medley Post 10. Scheduled for October 25. There will be expansion of services to include wills. They will be able to do wills right then and there. The next general membership meeting is 8th of July at 18:30. Social on Friday, 19 July at 17:30.

Karen: we have a cemetery thing for veterans on Veterans Day and on Memorial Day to place our flags. I have list here. If you want to be put on the list please come to me after the meeting so we can get the list updated and then I can give everyone a 2019 version.

(Name): We should acknowledge the fact that the new Commander of the American Legion is sitting here right next to me.

Chief Enríquez: on today’s agenda the Board voted unanimously to support the naming of the VA clinic here in Las Cruces as Bataan Memorial and Mr. Amaral was seeking signatures so I have a signup sheet to pass around so you can sign it if you voted in favor of. And I’ve also started drafting a letter so Chairman Orvis can sign.

Handout: it’s a template/a guideline so we can get more engagement and involvement from the board members and the guests. And if you turn it in it will help us with the minutes as well.

Brittany thanked for all that she’s done. We’re going to miss her.

Brittany: I’ve had a blast sitting on the board and I’ve definitely learned a lot, very educating the last 5 years. Thank you very much for your service and everything. The Board wished her well.

Reminders
Flag Raising on July 4 Independence Day
Korean War Veterans Armistice Day on July 27
Parks Cleanup: Special Forces Chapter 80 in July and Marine Corps Wing in August.

Chairman: I would like to say thank you for all the ones that continuously come month after month to our meeting. I really thank you all. If you’re not aware, next month Fred Schneider and myself face our retirement. We have eight years on the Board. It’s been great. Just to have all of you in the audience is very heart-warming to me. You all have different information that the Board members can take back to their organizations and share this information. So, I want to thank all of you for coming. Thank you.

Next Meeting: July 23, 2019

Adjournment: Rob motioned to have the meeting adjourned, (Name) seconded the motion.