Open Meeting: Welcome by Chairman Orvis.

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 Bothern
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 (Absent)
VFW Post 10124 Patrick Ramirez

City of Las Cruces Staff:
Eric Enriquez, Chief Board Coordinator

Acceptance of Minutes: Minutes not available; forward to August meeting to accept the July minutes.

Old Business

Korean War Kneeling Soldier and Benches: Mr. Ed Brady: as you recall from last month’s meeting there were four granite benches in questions for sitting around the Korean War Memorial at Veterans Park. The benches were probably about 4 inches wide, 14 inches deep and about 18 inches high. I had a meeting with the City’s Parks Department shortly after last month’s meeting. I represent the Korean War Memorial Committee. We determined that in the final analysis it’s up to the Park’s architect as to where those benches are going to be placed around the Korean War Memorial. Of the four benches, one of them had a large commercial inscription on the side of the bench. And we determined that it was not appropriate for that bench to be placed around the Korean War Memorial. Therefore, we basically donated that bench to the Parks Department to be placed in Veterans Park where they deemed appropriate. We recommended a couple of design criteria for the Parks Department for placing the benches around the memorial. We recommended that no bench be placed in the front of the memorial that changes the profile of the memorial or obscures any part of it as viewed from the parking lot of the walkway approaching the memorial. We also recommended that no benches be placed in close proximity to the memorial that would inhibit a small group of persons viewing the memorial or constraint their movement around the memorial. We recommended four options to the Parks Department. They chose an option that places three benches in a semi-circular arch around the back of the memorial off the existing concrete path. That’s where the situation stands right now. I recommend that the Board approve the Parks Department placing those benches around the memorial.

Chairman Orvis explained that a motion was not needed at this time because the Board had already approved the kneeling soldier and four benches in the February 27th Board Meeting. He read the passage from the Minutes of that meeting where the proposal was voted on and approved.
Coin Addition to the Korean War Monument: Mr. Brady reported that in the meeting with the Parks Department it was agreed that it was beyond their capability to create the pockets in the base of the memorial for the placement of the coins. They recommended that I find a contractor and the contractor needs to work with the Parks Department to complete that work. I have approached two contractors. One expressed no interest. I’m still waiting on a response from the other one. But as soon as we get the word, we are ready to go. The Korean War Memorial Committee will pay the contractor.

(Name): it seems that it would be a granite contractor who does kitchen granite that has the circular saw that drills holes for faucets and could create the diameter to do it. And they have the ability to only go so deep and carefully chip away

Mr. Brady: We approached two contractors. One was Highlands Enterprises that did the work on the Vietnam Memorial, they didn’t express any interest in following up on the work. The other one was a granite memorial contractor and their preferred method of completing the work was sand blasting. Will check with granite contactors who do kitchen work.

Ms. Archuleta: I have a question on the bench with a name on it that was donated to Parks. I don’t think that a bench with a name should be in Veterans Park unless they are a sponsor of the bench.

Mr. Brady: Frank Granillo who is the maintenance chief of the Parks Department said he was probably going to keep it as a spare.

Ms. Archuleta: Okay. But it shouldn’t be in Veterans Park.

New Business

Special Forces Remembrance Bricks: Kyle Trout reported that the bricks which are like the ones on the walk of honor walkway, will be engraved, and placed on the top of the base of the Special Forces Memorial for past members. The Special Force Association is doing all the work of laying the bricks. Parks is aware of the situation and see no problems with it.

Kyle Trout made a motion for the Special Forces Association, Chapter 80, to place remembrance bricks on the base of their monument in Veterans Park. Fred Schneider seconded the motion. All members in favor; motion carries.

Election for Chairperson: Chairman Orvis explained that Fred Schneider and himself have put in their eight years on the Board and must be leave the board after today’s meeting so there needs to be a motion for Chairperson. The appointment will begin in August and go through, not including December, all the way to January when the yearly elections for Chairperson take place. Chairman Orvis asked for nominations for Chairperson. Karen Woods was voted Chairperson of the VAB.

Public Participation

Naming of Las Cruces VA Clinic: Retired Col. Michael Amaral, VA Clinic Director, reported that they got a letter from the entire New Mexico contingent up on Capitol Hill all supporting it. They have started the initial steps of submitting that as a public law so it’s going to take a work of Congress as they say. The folks up at the VA level are saying they don’t see any reason that it won’t pass. But, don’t have any idea what timeline that will take.
Mr. Amaral: No shows for appointments has gotten slightly better. Still not at where I would like it to be; it's not where the industry standard is but again the industry has the ability to charge people when they don't show up. Numbers are: 17% for mental health and was still sitting around 11% for primary care.

Chairman Orvis asked for status about the left turn situation going into the clinic. Mr. Amaral stated that there was a problem with the contractor because somebody was no longer in the position who was working that, so it was getting picked up by somebody else. I can get you an update today. The name being considered for the clinic is: The Bataan Memorial Community Based Salvation Clinic.

Suicide Prevention: Christine Camacho from Albuquerque VA stated that they are in full process of having the S.A.V.E. Motorcycle Ride come down to the Las Cruces area. This year they are having two routes going on the same weekend. One going from Albuquerque to Angel Fire. In Las Cruces, on Sunday, September 8th, the route is starting at the American Legion Post 10 on Madrid heading up to the VFW at Bataan Memorial to Bataan Memorial CBOC, to VFW Post 10124 and then going and ending at the Veterans Memorial Park. Part of this to increase awareness and educate on the S.A.V.E message at each stop: Signs & Symptoms, Ask, Validate, Encourage Treatment and Expedite Care. The event will start at 8:30 with kickstands up at 9:00. Still working on presenters and flag presentation. Information posted on the New Mexico VA Facebook page. They anticipate 30 to 60 people riding in Las Cruces and a total of 100 or more for both rides.

Veterans Golf Tournament: Felix Cordero not present.

Veteran's Day Parade Update: Bill Hawkins stated that at the last meeting we decided to have the parade on Saturday, November 9, will begin at 11:00. Staging will start at 9:00 at intersection of Lohman and Main. The parade will proceed all the way up Main Street and the reunion stand will be at the round-a-bout. Theme this year is Honoring the Greatest Generation.

Mr. Byers: First thing I wanted to do is let everybody know I am here this morning to inform and update but before all of that I am here to apologize because I believe it's the right thing to do and I believe it's what everybody deserves because something happened that should not have happened and it happened as a result of what happened within our office. I'm the chief deputy district attorney, the number two man. I'm owning it, it's my responsibility, no excuses. The 2nd part is to give you the Update: the adult. Mr. Marvin Reyes in this case was submitted for pre-prosecution diversion. What that is if a person is facing a felony offense then they can basically keep it off their record by saying: yeah I did it but I'm going to go into probationary status, I'm going to do community service, I'm going to basically proof myself to be a decent person and after a period of time the case will be dismissed. There won't be a blot on their record, and they can go on a live a productive life so that they are not burdened with the hazard of a felony conviction. Well Mr. Reyes decided he wanted to decline our offer. It's his call. Nobody can force him to do that. So, what we're going to do, we're going to take it to the grand jury. We're going to indict him for criminal and property damage over $1,000, a fourth-degree felony. At that time, he will be afforded the opportunity to be represented by counsel. The case will move through the court system as it ordinarily does. This is where we still have a little discretion. I will be honest with you and tell you that the reality of a first-time offender getting a sentence of incarceration off a fourth-degree felony offense that is very minimal. That generally does not happen here in this jurisdiction. Am I right Dan? Yes sir. So, what we can look at is the same thing that we had before. I've spoken with Mr. Gay and he indicated that pretty much the consensus of the folks in this room was you wanted to have these young men to participate in the things that resonate with being a good person, a good citizen, understanding what being a member of the community is all about. Most importantly, understanding the dedication that is represented by those monuments. And the total insult and desperation that happened by their actions foolish as they were unknown but that was the understanding that I got. I think that would still be an appropriate method to move forward because one of the things that is true about criminal prosecution is that you can either try to help people help themselves, get their head right, get in the game on being on the positive side of life or you'll
have to keep dealing with them until they cycle out of the system or age out in prison or whatever. That’s just cold, hard facts. So, we’re going to bring the case before the grand jury on August 8th, we’ll get the indictment, we’ll move forward. We will be in contact with Mr. Gay. I’ve been in contact with the City concerning restitution. Also, there’s a question about Bryce Richards the juvenile offender here.

(Name): could we stop regarding the juvenile and address the issues with the adult. Since he refused the pre-prosecution diversion issue that probably means he’s probably going to ask for a public defender. What is your opinion relative to the grand jury whether they will move to indict him? It is two separate issues: a juvenile and an adult. What is the possibility that this, it sounds like there’s almost an arrogance like all of a sudden, he’s saying well I want to go the route of not having enough punishment or whatever. The reality of it is I don’t think any of us ever wanted to incarcerate him. We’d like him to come to our veteran’s park and to do some work with us or understand what’s going on with what they did. The problematic here is it sounds like there’s an arrogance on his part where he’s going to fight it or he want to fight it.

Mr. Byers: We run into that every day. We deal with it. You’re right it does indicate a certain arrogance but once the grand jury returns a true bill and the person is indicted for a 4th degree felony that’s the time that if they want to go out and hire their own lawyer they may. If they don’t have the means then a public defender must be appointed under the law to represent them. We’ll fight it out.

(Name): well you re-offer to him if it goes in that direction?

Mr. Byers: If it goes in that direction we can. The reasons I say we can is because I need to give myself the maximum amount of flexibility because if this young man is not going to understand the situation that he is in right now it may not be, the best thing to suggest is to make a plea offer and drag it out, drag it out. Sometimes you just have to cut it and move on.

What I’m apologizing for is because ordinarily in the course of how we handle our business we keep in contact with the people who have been harmed by the criminal conduct. Our point of contact was Mr. Gay and the communications broke down. Not on his end, on our end. The phone calls that were made were not returned. There were other communications in trying to reach out to us to get information from us and so on, no reply. There have been mechanisms put in place to ensure that (1) if we have a situation that deals with the monuments it doesn’t fall through the cracks and the other is, we’re reiterating to all of our staff somebody calls deal with it within 24 hours and respond. Keep the lines of communication open. You should not have to ask us repeatedly for what’s going on. That’s the way that we intend to be doing business going forward because honestly, we’re here to serve you.

The second individual is Bryce Richards, he is the juvenile. Now the juvenile world is very different than what we ordinarily know and understand in criminal justice. The purpose of the juvenile justice system is not necessarily punishment. It’s quite frankly a hybrid between criminal law and also what was the old courts of equity in England, basically mercy. The purpose of the juvenile justice system is to get the kids in a situation to where they can succeed as an adult. Understanding that their reasoning, their mind set, all those things that we’ve been through sometimes that can get someone into criminal trouble. Well what happened in this aspect is that the juvenile was offered what’s called a time waiver. What that is is a waiver of time limits and during that waiver of time limits the person is obligated to do certain things: community service, pay restitution, things of that nature. And there’s a process for that. It is the least punitive type of juvenile adjudication that there is. The other kinds of juvenile adjudications are what they call (inaudible) or face incarceration for a year or two or up to age 21 depending on the severity of the offense. And the reason I tell you that is because that’s just the lay of the land of juvenile prosecution. Now, our prosecutor made this offer and then the time has lapsed on that and it lapsed without recovery of any type of restitutionary amount from the juvenile or even any consideration of that, I’m not going to promise you that we are going to be able to reopen that case as it were.
We are quietly trying to look at that because again, one of the aspects that I understand that you want us to proceed is the involvement of this young man in some of the activities that would help forge his concept of appropriate citizenship and a member of the community. And I understand that he has come out and participated at at least one point. So, we’re exploring the possibility of that but in all honestly the way the juvenile system works within the state of New Mexico and specifically within Dona Ana County that case is probably over. If we are successful in our effort to use a rather backdoor method to try to bring the kid back in. If we are successful in doing that, okay good. But it’s better for me to tell you today that it is in all likelihood the feasibility of moving forward anymore on that case is over.

(Name): is there truth to the comment regarding restitution issues. I’m just trying to clarify a rumor that I heard, that the juvenile’s parents offered restitution in some manner or fashion and that someone in your office made the comment that since the adult was not financially able to make restitution that it was unfair to have one do it and the other not do it, that the restitution offer from the juvenile’s parent that was cancelled then. Is that true?

Mr. Byers: I cannot verify that that is true. I would need the annotations in our electronic files. There is nothing to indicate that what the lady said was a rumor.

(Name): I think the whole issue here regarding your apology, you know we have to accept that, you know it’s hard being cruel, but I think the biggest problem here is the contractor. It’s been over a year. The wheels of justice turn slowly but my lord, the impact that anyone, the adult or the juvenile, will have upon them now it’s a long time gone and a lot of water under the bridge. It’s really disappointing to see that the ball was dropped for that long. It’s on your watch but you had underlings who were handling it. Obviously, I hope you would have conversations with them regarding expeditious dealings. I think our veteran community is a large community here in town and the fact is it’s affected a lot of us relative to the damaging of our monument in our park. We take that very seriously.

Mr. Byers: Understood. Just so you know, I’m a veteran, (inaudible) did my time, I get it. Yes, there will be discussions.

(Name): (inaudible) of guilt meaning is one party guiltier than the other (inaudible) what had happened in one being the leader and the other basically being the follower?

Mr. Byers: This leads back into the answer to your question and I’ll wrap them all together. With regard to the restitution there’s something in juvenile justice that is called being jointly and severally liable which you don’t have in the criminal prosecution side because basically what you can do is you can make both jointly and severally liable for any restitution amount. And that’s what we would be looking for. However, with regard to the degree of responsibility there’s some legal theories that get involved: aiding and abetting, conspiracy and things of that nature. And really the short answer to your question is if we can prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the person did it either as a principal or as a co-conspirator or as an aider or abettor, they get stuck with the (inaudible)

(Name): They have opened the door to the City of Las Cruces to prosecute?

Mr. Byers: Actually, what we’re talking about is separate sovereigns there because the City is its own sovereign and the state is its own sovereign. And in theory, and I don’t want to tie the City’s hands in anyway, but the charges were brought in the magistrate court which is state court jurisdiction which is actually senior to the municipal court jurisdiction, the penalties are higher and I would have to leave it up to the discretion of the City as to whether or not they would want to do that. Generally speaking, what happens is if you have, like for example, if there is a case that we are prosecuting and the federal government has an interest they are senior to
us. If they come in, we'll drop our prosecution and then they can proceed and the same thing would probably be true if the City were to initiate an action on their behalf. Because one of the things that we're looking at, and after speaking with Mr. Gay about the relationship between your organization and the City as manager of the parks in our community is where does the restitution go to? And so, we would be coordinating with the City and with the Veterans organization in order to make sure that any restitution recovered is going to the right entity to manage that. The other side of that, and in all honesty, restitution plans I understand is in the amount of anywhere in the neighborhood of $14,000 restitution plans can be mandated. The question is recovery. Even whenever we have people who have been shot, stabbed, whatever, if there's a restitutionary amount for hospital stays and things of that nature, sometimes the offender has the means to pay the restitution. If they don't the crime victim can take that judgment into a civil court and try to enforce that restitution recovery through the civil process.

Chairman Orvis: Greg Smith, District 2, City Council, can you add anything further?

Greg Smith: I haven't heard anything on the City's part as far as what we might be pursuing. I just assumed that it was being handled elsewhere. I can certainly ask.

Chairman Orvis: Sonya Delgado (Parks & Rec) do you have anything that you can add to this conversation before we go?

Ms. Delgado: Mr. Chairman, Members of the Board. This is the most information I've gotten. So, if there's communication with the City, I'm not getting that information with whatever is happening with these two individuals. Personally, I have to say I'm disappointed that it appears that they are not going to have to do anything. I'm not saying they should be incarcerated. I feel the same as the Board. But I do think that they should be doing some type of service to the Veterans Advisory Board with regards to that park because that park is very near and dear to members of this community and even to individuals in the southern part of the state. I'm just completely floored by that. I don't know what you were going to say but I wasn't expecting that. I wasn't expecting to hear that they possibly wouldn't have anything; they wouldn't have to have any probation or restitution or anything. Restitution I can understand.

Mr. Byers: I'm sorry I don't mean to cut you off but I don't think I said that. Let me be very very clear. We're taking this individual to the grand jury. (inaudible) that he has an opportunity to speak before the grand jury if he like to. After that grand jury is over usually what happens is, we get a warrant. We go to their house, we arrest them, we put them in jail and then we start the prosecution process. So please don't misunderstand the thing that there is nothing that is going to happen. There is, believe me, something that is going to happen to him. All I'm saying is it fell off our radar, that should not have happened. It is now on our radar and it will happen.

(Name): I had a meeting with Sonya and I really appreciated that meeting that we had Sonya. I think one of the frustrations that she has is that she doesn't have. Our City doesn't have a regulation or a law in place that allows her to go after people that damage our park. She has the ability to give permits for parks usage but there's no (inaudible) if somebody damages. I think her disappointment was the possibility that these guys could get off. And that was the reading that I got too. I understand you're going to the grand jury and all that. Now it becomes a matter of the juvenile is going to get off and fairness is fairness in some cases but if the other guy, the adult is saying hey I'm going to fight this. Then you as the district attorney, I think we as a group would hope that you go after him with all four feet because then it's time if you've been given a reasonable offer, your offer was reasonable. If you've been given a reasonable opportunity to get involved with the veteran community and learn the error of your way and you're saying hey I'm going to fight it then it's time to go back to the hard line. And I don't mean incarceration. I mean the restitutinal process. But Sonya's difficulty is that.
And it's not anybody's fault at this moment. It's simply that she doesn't have the teeth, she needs your teeth to go after what the damage of the park is.

Mr. Byers: and that's what I'm here to express that we are going to be doing. I used to work for city government a long time ago and I understand that we have to go through an ordinance creation process in order to get the jurisdiction to pursue those types of things. That's city government and I don't have any control over that. But I do want to let you know that if you have a situation in which you believe that there is criminal activity, criminal prosecution needs to be brought. Damage to monuments, damage to city property please contact the police department. They will issue a criminal investigation. They will bring it to us, we will prosecute it. That's what we're here for. That's what happened in this situation. The helicopter that's at the monument is the same kind that flew off of Jersey whenever I was overseas and every time there was a fire mission they had to land on the (inaudible) ship because they didn't (inaudible). I didn't want to get into that but yes there's a resonance here. I'm reluctant to get into that because then somebody could claim that I'm maliciously prosecuting these individuals.

Chairman Orvis: Sir at this point I think that at this point we understand very clearly. I am speaking for the Board and myself, we would like to have you come back at another time. Speaking for all us veterans we're very disappointed and it hurts. It hurts an awful lot. The laws the law and we respect that. Please accept our offer to come back at another time and bring us completely up to date and answer as many questions as we have for you.

Mr. Byers: I certainly will. And thank you for giving me the opportunity to clarify some things and to bring you up to date on where things are. Again, I'm sorry that this situation developed. There's no way for me to sugar coat it but there is a way for us to fix it and we are going to be working with the City to make sure that that gets done.

Chairman Orvis: Well we sure want to thank you for coming forward with the latest information so that we're all up to date and on the same page. Thank you very much.

Veteran's Announcements:
Dolores Archuleta: We have been very busy working on the theme for this parade. I'm not a veteran but I've been attending this meeting for at least 15 years and as far as I know this is the first female veteran who is Chair on this Board. So, congratulations!

American Legion Auxiliary - Patricia Torres
We are going to be helping United Military Women of the Southwest for a pancake breakfast to raise funds for the honor flight, August 25th, 7:00 to 11:00, at Post 10. The honor flight will be there helping us serve breakfast. $5 donation.

National Convention will be held in Minneapolis, Maryland, August 24-30.

Veterans Transportation Update: The Board was informed that Debra Hathaway requested an update from the committee that's doing the investigation and has not received an update yet from Santa Fe.

Esteban Gonzales, 3rd Judicial District Court. The Veteran Treatment Court has existed here in Las Cruces for over a year. The program has been very successful and is having some graduations and having some individuals go on and become productive members of society. Many of you that are on this Board also serve in dual capacity as leaders in veteran programs, local veteran organizations: DAV, VAF, etc. I'm looking to get some assistance from the members and to let you know that on August 8 and 9 we are very fortunate to get a mobile training team to do the training for us in El Paso. The handbooks passed out include information on
what a mentor does to mentor veterans and the information they receive in the training. Mr. Mantelongo out of
the El Paso County Veterans Group has secured breakfast and lunch for the class participants. We are looking
for additional individuals who would like to join. Included with the packet is an application form, mission
statement and job duties description. They handouts also show how they do their training and how they have
the initial counsel with the individual that they are going to mentor. Please spread the word. We ask for a 1-
year commitment (at a minimum) from those that join our team.

Mr. Gonzales and Ms. Thomas are mental health, first aid instructors. They taught an 8-hr course to veterans,
service members, active duty reservist and family members. They are doing a second class around the middle
of August. He asked for the Board members’ help in emailing the information to their respective
organizations.

We all know what the staggering statistics are for suicide by veterans. The National Behavioral Counsel is
offering free classes. The county helps with the administrative part. The classes are on a first-come first-served
basis. I want to give you the opportunity as centers of influence and also as members of organizations that I
haven’t been able to make contact with yet to let their members know of this service. He is here to help. Class
size is minimum of 5, maximum of 25. They can do one 8-hours increment with lunch break, or two classes 4-
hours increments on two consecutive days. We can work around your schedule. Those that attend get a book
that deals with mental health. This is basically an educational process to take down the stigma and address all
the issues and prejudices that we deal associated with a mental health illness. The bottom line with mental
health illness is, if we educate them and if we help them it’s not life-long. We want to educate the general
population, which we’ve done, and continue educating the soldiers, service members, veterans and family
members because that’s where we need to get this done because that is why we are losing 20 people a month
to this illness.

(Name): is there any interface on your part with CBOC?

Mr. Gonzales: I’ve talked to them and they know we exist. I’ve also visited with Mr. Amaral thru telephone
conference and one of his individuals called me back. We know Gina.

(Name): concerned that resources like yourself have a strong interface with VA as much as possible since the
VA is the primary place to get this help. You are a viable supplement to the VA.

Mr. Gonzales: VA has one individual in southern New Mexico that does a lot of outreach to the veterans. She
is in coordination with us. We are doing a lot of coordination. I am asking you as centers of influence to help
me to help those who need the help.

Chairman Orvis: Thank you so much for coming.

LCCBOC VHA, Crystal Davis-Whited stated that the Clinic is losing a provider, Dr. Ahuja. She is our
telehealth provider and was hired to fill in the gap while they recruited another provider. We recruited another
provider Dr. Molina; he will be starting the beginning of September. We are excited to have him come on
board.

Marja Amador Asst. Program Manager for Home Base Primary Care: currently on an extended wait list but
have hired a new provider for El Paso.

Carlos Campos, Medical Foster Home Coordinator, Las Cruces area: They recruit caregivers in the community
who open up their home to veterans who are no longer able to be on their own. I am happy to say we have three
homes up and running and two more pending that we hope to have up and running by next month. Getting good referrals from hospitals and from hospice. The program is up and running and we are growing.

Greg Smith, City Councillor: Thank you for your service on this board. All of you are contributing to recognition of the sacrifices and the things that our veterans have done. And to the two gentlemen that are leaving the board, thank you and I hope you will continue to serve in important ways. That means a lot to me and I know it means a lot to our community. So, thank you very much.

Melanie Goodman, Field Representative to Senator Tom Udall: I want to congratulate Karen. It is going to be great to work with you. And, I want to thank you both for your leadership over the years. I hope you will continue to be involved somehow. Provided updates/good news from Senator Udall’s Office and from Congress. Congress agreed on a budget deal which means that they can move forward with the appropriations bill. Next week it will pass the Senate and will mean an increase in funding for veterans. Senator Udall fought for funding for veterans in rural areas for mental health and for improving the quality of care at the VA. The Senate is going complete work on the appropriations bill in December.

New Mexico received a $1 million competitive grant from HUD. It is a joint project of the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority and the New Mexico Affordable Housing and Urban Development Program for the veterans housing rehab and modification pilot program, which will bring funding to modify and make upgrades to 80 homes around the state of New Mexico. No details yet on how that is going to roll out but will keep you posted.

Lastly, the senate passed a package of bills through the Senate Indian Affairs Committee. One of those bills which passed Senate is to codify a joint program called Joint Tribal Housing Initiative. This is specific to Indian country. It is a tribal joint program between the HUD and the VA that provides vouchers for housing our homeless veterans. We are now able to say justice is moving forward for our native American vets as well.

Dan: requested to present a video to the Board at the next meeting about the veterans’ treatment court. One of the key components to the success of the veteran’s treatment court is our mentor component. We have one of our veteran mentor court coordinators Jesse Ramos who has been with the courts for over 10 years. We have these two individuals here who one has 32 years of military service and the other 35. We have been truly blessed as a veteran treatment program to have these individuals come forward as veteran mentors and I think you can see what kind of promise the program has to have this kind of individuals involved in our program. Thank you for allowing me a quick minute. We are still pending word on our grant that the court submitted. The video is 20-25 minutes. Time will be blocked off at the end of the next meeting to show to this Board.

Chief Enriquez: Proposed that we have our next meeting Aug 27 at the East Mesa Public Safety Complex on Sonoma Ranch until we find another place in City Hall to meet. We’re getting kind of tight in this room.

Chairman Orvis: How many new people do you have in the veteran’s treatment court since the graduation that you had?

Dan: We currently serve 15. We graduated 4 and presently we have 6 with 2 pending.

Chairman Orvis: Thank you and we also honor the other two veterans for their years of service. Thank you

Sonya Delgado: Gave a quick update concerning the veterans park master plan. The plan will be going to the City Council after it has its final pass through this Board. We will be seeking additional funding for the veteran’s park because the Parks & Rec Department does not have funding for projects of that nature. Parks & Rec do the maintenance and operations so when it comes to large projects like that, we always have to seek
funding for that. I know that there’s a lot of ideas with regards to the master plan and I love the concept. I think Cathy Matthews in working with the Board did a really good job with that.

Chairman Orvis: did you pass out the master plan to the City Council ahead of time?

Ms. Delgado: City Council gets all the packets about a month before the meeting sometime in September.

Chairman Orvis: I want to say that Parks & Rec has recognized the Veteran Memorial Park as a leader in our country. That park is beautiful. If we can even make it better so be it. We want to protect our memorial park. Thank you for all your effort.

JR Turner: both me and Hubert will be transitioning on to the Board next month to take your guy’s place. We are looking forward to that.

Chairman Orvis: JR will move in to the Member at Large and Hubert Gay will take Fred’s place representing the Vietnam Veterans of Chapter 431. Good job.

(Name): I just want to thank the board at this time to allow my mentors on behalf of the 3rd Judicial District Court Veteran Treatment Court. I’m a mentor coordinator and Vietnam vet. I’ve been in this role for about 10 years now as a mentor. I graduated out of the Adult drug court myself. Stayed on as a mentor for one year and here I am 10 years later. I am on the board of director for New Mexico Drug Court Professionals. I’ve done a lot. I specialize in substance abuse. I love it. It’s something that has been great for us. I do a lot of talking with my mentors. I’ve taught them as much as I can but we’re all succeeding at the same thing for the veteran population.

Chairman Orvis: we want to thank you sir for coming and everything that you do to make things happen better for our veterans.

Reminders
- Garrison Flag will be flown on July 27 for the Korean War Veterans Armistice Day and also on August 7th for Purple Heart Day.
- Park Cleanup: Marine Corps League for the month of August.
- Stand down: planning meeting to be held on July 24 at 2:00 pm in preparation for the stand down. Stand down will take place on Friday, September 27 and start at 8:00 a.m.
- Stand down next meeting: August 21 at 2:00 pm at the VFW Post 10124

Board Member Reports:
Patrick Ramirez, VFW Post 10124
- July 27: Memorial for Captain Walter Baker at 12 noon
- July 28: Dinner plates from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Karaoke at 7:00 p.m.
- July 28: Senior breakfast starting at 9 a.m.
- July 27: Pool tournament at VFW Post 10124 at 5:00 p.m.

Sam Bothern, DAV
- August 25: Fund raiser at Salud de Mesilla Restaurant, 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. A portion of the profits will go to the DAV Chapter 10
Karen Woods, United Military Women of the Southwest
Attended the Military Veterans Affairs Committee held in Ruidoso on July 22. They touched based on basically some of the issues that we are touching base on now; one of the main things being transportation. It appears that every organization that spoke said that was one of their big issues.

They identified a replacement for our veteran’s service officer. Karen Abeyta should be here by the end of the month. Another good thing for the Women’s Veterans Program, they found a Coordinator will start in September. They talked about the Fort Stanton State Cemetery and Merchant Marine Historical Cemetery. Asking for senators and representatives to look into getting funding so that damage that the years have had on the historical cemetery can be repaired.

Hector Sanchez, Member at Large: the merchant marines are considered veterans now. We lost one out of every 4 during the 2nd World War.

Mike Cano, Member at Large
The Honor Flight has 22 veterans scheduled to go to Washington right now. They are looking for at least 8 more. They hope to send 30 this year to Washington DC to see the monument. If any of you know any WWII Korean or Vietnam Veterans that have not applied or submitted an application please let me know.

Dwight Weir was one of the first ones that went to Washington DC; he is a WWII veteran, he survived three kamikaze attacks on his war ship. He’s a hero in our eyes. Mr. Weir received a round of applause.

September 28: Annual car show at Borman Auto Plex, 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. $25 car entry fee. All proceeds will go to fund the Honor Flight. Will be selling barbecue plates. Jesse Addison making barbeque ribs, brisket and sausage. Plate includes beans, chips and soda. $5.00 per plate. Please show up and support our honor flight people

Fred Schneider, Vietnam Veterans 431 (meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month)
- Bruce Fonnest attended Vietnam Veterans Conference in Spokane Washington, July 16-21
- Food drive is held on the first Sunday of each month. The next food drive will be held at the Walmart on Valley Drive

I have served on the Board for eight years. I want to thank everyone on the Board. It has been an honor for me to serve on this board. I want to thank DAV 431 for the privilege of representing them. I may be off the board but I am not gone!

Rod Gajewski, Purple Heart
The El Paso Community Veterans Empowerment Board which the colonel asked me to be on and the colonel is part of also, is putting together a plan at the direction on how that board will assist the El Paso, the whole Rio Grande Valley. Once that is done, we’ll be able to piggy back off the information that they put together because it does apply to Las Cruces. I’ll keep you informed as that goes forward.

I wanted to thank Sonya for the meeting that she and I had. One of the reasons that the DA was here was that Hubert Gay, JR Turner, Jay Lloyd and I had a meeting with the Mayor and one of the things that came out of the meeting was that Hubert mentioned that he’d been trying like the devil to get a hold of somebody at the DA’s office. The Mayor made one phone call and that’s why the DA was here because they were told to get off their butts and do something. It’s a shame that our time limit has expired but the fact is that I think this is a really good lesson in lack of communication between departments and people. I think communication is important. Sonya’s job is difficult because she’s doesn’t, she’s currently working on writing a statute to be able to put some teeth in when somebody goes to one of our parks and especially, we’re concerned with veteran’s
park. When they go to one of our parks and they get a permit if they do damage to the park, she doesn’t have a real legislative opportunity or law that enables her to go after those people for the damage. And we know there’s been damage twice now, three times. The helicopter and two running groups have run through our park and damaged our park. Hopefully she can put together a statute that gives her teeth to go after those people. This last group were contacted after they damaged the park and basically, they said we’ll get back to you. Franco Granillo said you know what we’re not going to do anything. So, the City had to spend City dollars extra from Park & Rec people to go out and mitigate the damage that was created. In late September there will be a City Council Work Session, that me and (inaudible) will be attending to present some of the issues regarding the Veterans Park. The Mayor made a comment at our meeting that we had. I know that we talked about the master plan and you’ve done a lot of work on it, you and the young lady that often comes to the meetings. We made a comment as a Board that we recommended that the playground be taken out. And when you look at the master plan that was presented it shows the playground gone. The Mayor made a comment that made me kind of stand back and think a little bit. He said you know, if you take out that do, we eliminate children coming to the park or being one process that potentially eliminates more children coming to the park and learning about what veterans do and about veterans. It kind of struck me that maybe the playground shouldn’t be taken out. In other words, we’re saying that it’s not children friendly. It’s something that gives food for thought. I never put it in that perspective and all of a sudden when the Mayor made the comment that kids coming here have the opportunity to learn what the park is all about, what being a veteran is all about. Maybe the playground shouldn’t go out. I think communication is a key to this whole thing. I think that if the DA had communicated and someone at the DA’s Office hadn’t dropped the ball, we would not have the problem that we are facing regarding these two individuals. But I think that if we can all have a little better communication it will be important. Just like it’s our job as Board members to go back to our organizations and disseminate the information that comes here.

Ed Torres, American Legion Post

- August 12: next general membership meeting at 17:30. We’ll have something to eat; meeting kicks off at 18:30
- August 16: Ice cream Social at 1730
- September 8, SAVE Ride. Post will open at 06
- October 25: Legal Clinic interns will be giving legal advice and provide help in preparing wills. The interns need to earn continued education credits in the morning but the clinic will be open in the afternoon, after lunch, to assist veterans. Clinic is free to veterans

There was discussion about adding the word Memorial to the Veterans Park name to establish it as a “Memorial” park. Sonya advised that this can definitely be part of the discussion the Board can have with the City Council when they present the master plan at the Work Session on September 23. Ultimately, it’s up to the City Council to make disposition of the park.

Next Meeting: August 27, 2019

Chairman Orvis: You have all been very helpful. You have a lot of great information that you bring in to this Board, which I’m told used to go to the UVC. And all the effort and information that you bring I want to say thank you for that. You have all been very kind and I’m really going to miss being the chairman of this Board. I know Karen can handle it and go forward. Everyone, support her so she can continue to do a great job.

Adjournment: Sam Bothorn motioned to adjourn the meeting, (Name) seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.