



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

Wednesday, September 7, 2022

Scottsdale Community Design Studio
7506 E Indian School Rd, Scottsdale
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

PRESENT: Chairperson Denise Pulk; Vice-Chair Steven Jackson; Commissioners Mark Ashley (MS Teams), Pete Palmer, and Joel Stempel (telephonic)

ABSENT: Commissioners Land Anderson and Andrew Edwards

STAFF: Kelly Corsette, Communications/Public Affairs Director; Mary Witkofski, Scottsdale Community Assistance Office

1. Call to Order/ Roll Call

Chair Pulk called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Members present as listed above.

2. Discussion and possible action to approve June 1, 2022 commission meeting minutes

COMMISSIONER PALMER MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 1, 2022 VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. VICE-CHAIR JACKSON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR PULK, VICE-CHAIR JACKSON, COMMISSIONERS ANDERSON, ASHLEY, AND STEMPILO VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

3. Presentation and discussion about Scottsdale's HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) grant program

Mary Witkofski, Housing Supervisor, gave a presentation on the HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program. VASH is a program that provides homeless veterans with Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance in combination with VA clinical services. The City of Scottsdale has been allocated 15 vouchers, two of which are being used currently. As part of her presentation, Ms. Witkofski outlined the eligibility and income requirements, which include requiring that the veteran be referred to the program by the VA. She noted that veterans are no longer required to have a chronic mental illness or substance abuse issue to qualify for a voucher, but they are required to comply with ongoing VA case management services.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Ms. Witkofski explained that recipients are assigned a housing specialist who provides assistance and a list of resources to help in searching for housing. She reviewed the median income guidelines, noting that recipients cannot contribute more than 30 percent of their monthly income toward rent, however, once they are admitted in the program the income limits no longer apply. She talked about the VA referral process, noting that if the City is not able to issue all of the vouchers, they risk having them recaptured.

Chair Pulk suggested that the Commission evaluate how they could incorporate the VASH program into the VAC's work plan.

4. Discussion and possible recommendations regarding "Scottsdale Salutes" – a new city recognition program for veterans

Mr. Corsette gave an update on the banner recognition program. He was able to secure 30 poles along Drinkwater Boulevard for the period from November 3rd through 20th, 2022, for the Commission to display "Scottsdale Salutes" banners, saluting veterans in the Scottsdale community. The program has been announced publicly through social media and a nomination form will be available on the city website through the end of September. During a recent meeting with veteran historians Joan Fudala and Len Marcisz, former president of the Arizona Historical Society, it was suggested that some historical figures be included in the banner program. The estimated \$4,000 cost for printing the banners will be paid for through the Citizen Services budget. The Tourism and Events department pays to have the banners hung and taken down as part of their normal rotation of banners. Mr. Corsette said that once all nominations are in, a selection process will need to be in place for reviewing nominations and selecting the 30 veterans to be featured. He suggested that once selections are made, an announcement ceremony be scheduled to share the banners with the veterans or their families.

Discussion ensued regarding banner design; making "Scottsdale Salutes" an annual event; the idea of regularly rotating banners at other locations throughout the city; giving the banners that will not be reused to the families once they are no longer going to be displayed; and finding sponsors to cover the cost of printing in the future.

Mr. Corsette will forward the news release and a link to the nomination portal with Commissioners.

5. Discussion, updates and possible recommendations regarding the 2022 Veterans Advisory Commission Work Plan

Mr. Corsette said that staff starts preparing the annual report during the November/December time frame.

6. Commission members' reports, updates and suggestions for future agenda items

Mr. Corsette asked for volunteers to participate in planning an event honoring Scottsdale Vietnam Veterans. The event would be held in March 2023, around the time of Vietnam Veterans Day, which is March 29th. He noted that the City of Scottsdale is a Vietnam War commemorative partner and in 2018, focused on Vietnam War as part of the city's Veterans Day event.

Chair Pulk announced that her term will be ending in mid-October and she is not planning to reapply for her position on the Commission.

Commissioner Palmer suggested that chair elections be made in October so that they correlate with the ending of Commissioners terms. Brief discussion was held regarding the start and end dates of commissioners and the fact that although many current commissioners started in October when the commission was formed, typically commissioner appointments are staggered throughout the year.

Future meeting agenda items could include:

- Update on "Scottsdale Salutes" project and an announcement ceremony
- Update on plans for Veterans Day
- Update on Veterans Chorus Project
- Selection of a new VAC Chair
- Discussion about possibility of amending bylaws to enable annual chair elections to be made in October

Mr. Corsette thanked Don Prior, former City Council member, past president of the Arizona Historical Society, and Navy veteran, for attending the meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 5, 2022.

7. Adjournment

VICE-CHAIR JACKSON MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER PALMER SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR PULK, VICE-CHAIR JACKSON, COMMISSIONERS ANDERSON, ASHLEY, AND STEMPIL VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

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