



Veterans' Affairs Committee

Wednesday, December 13, 2023 - 6:00 pm
Virtual Meeting via TEAMS

MEETING NOTE: Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have prompted declarations of a public health emergency at the local, state and federal levels, this meeting will be conducted using measures to protect public health. This meeting will be held remotely through technological means, as permitted under Arizona law. In-person attendance by members of the public will be prohibited.

Summary Minutes Approved on January 10, 2024

1. Call to Order / Establish a Quorum

Virtual online meeting called to order by Rocio "Rosie" Kary at 6:00 p.m. Those present and absent were:

Present:

Rocio "Rosie" Kary

Bruce Hayes

Gary Smith

Henry Johnson

James "Tub-Bee" Louis

Kassie Diaz

Lorraine Obregon

Terry Byron

Marlon Ruiz

Martin Belden

Melvin Morgan

Absent:

Ann Hollis

Minou De La Rosa

Staff Members Present:

Robert Hunter

Representing:

Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation

American Legion Post 109 – Arrived at 6:12 p.m.

American Legion Department of Arizona

Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72, and Post 81 Scottish American Military Society of Southern Arizona

Arizona Department of Veterans Services

Women Marine Association

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary – Arrived at 6:07 p.m.

Cactus Unit 2

Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72

Military Order of the World Wars, Region XIII

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 106

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 106

Representing:

Military Officers Association of America

Tucson Chapter

TAA, Non-voting Advisory

City Clerk's Office

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2. Invocation

The invocation was provided by Committee Member Johnson.

3. Introduction of Guests

a. Jennifer Wasielewski, Assistant Director – (SAVAHCS)

4. Approval of Legal Action Report for November 8, 2023

It was moved by Committee Member Belden, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0, (**Committee Members Hayes, Hollis, and Obregon absent**), to approve the Legal Action Report from the November 8, 2023, meeting.

5. Treasurer's Report

Committee Member Belden stated the beginning balance at the start of the month of November 2023 was \$3,540.44. He reported no income or donations and noted a \$191.52 expenditure for a pallet of water from Costco for the Tucson Airport Military Lounge, leaving a current balance of \$3,281.42.

It was moved by Committee Member Ruiz, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 9 to 0, (**Committee Members Hays, Hollis, and Obregon absent**), to approve the financial report as presented.

6. Committee Reports

a. Southern Arizona Veteran's Affairs Health Care System (SAVAHCS)

Jennifer Wasielewski, Assistant Director of SAVAHCS provided a report on behalf of SAVAHCS.

Discussion was held, and no action was taken.

b. Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery

Committee Member Louis reported the Sierra Vista Cemetery had 28 interments last month. He also noted they would be participating in the Wreaths Across America, scheduled for Saturday, December 16 at 10:00 a.m. Marana Cemetery had 31 Interments. and a family who sponsored a wreath would be there for the Wreaths Across America ceremony. Commission Byron stated that 1,782 wreaths were purchased as of the November 14th meeting.

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c. Arizona Department of Veterans' Services

Committee Member Louis stated last month they had their annual Veteran Benefits Counselors (VBC) Conference; new counselors were able to meet their fellow VBCs. He noted in-person appointments are on Tuesdays and Thursdays at their itinerary site, and for the month of November they had 4380 direct services and the submission of 332 claims.

7. Memorial for Vietnam Veteran Memorial Park – Update/Discussion

Committee Member Byron gave a brief update. She noted no one from the Parks and Recreation Department has returned her communication related to the installation of a plaque. She asked if City Clerk staff could assist further.

8. Standing questions: COT assistance with printing and Operation Exodus, Eligibility for the VAC to apply for COT and other grants – Update/Discussion

City Clerk's Office staff noted the City could not accommodate the costs of printing or the purchase of food and beverages for Operation Exodus.

9. Military Lounge – Update/Discussion

Committee Member Byron stated the representative of the Tucson Airport Authority (TAA) reached out to provide details on Operation Exodus, which was scheduled for December 18, 2023. She noted they did not require volunteers, but they needed support for the purchase of snacks and beverages. The Exodus will be on Monday, December 18, 2023. She stated there was another request for water from the Airport.

A motion was made for Operation Exodus to spend \$2,323.34 at Costco for the purchase of snack and beverage items.

It was moved by Committee Member Byron, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 11 to 0, **(Committee Member Hollis absent, Committee Member Ruiz did not vote due to a technical audio issue)** to approve the purchase of the purchase of snack items and beverages from Costco for Operation Exodus, in the amount of \$2,323.34.

A motion to purchase another case of water for the Airport Military Lounge was made.

It was moved by Committee Member Belden, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 11 to 0, **(Committee Member Hollis absent, Committee Member Ruiz did not vote due to a technical audio issue)** to approve the purchase of a pallet of water for the Military Lounge in the amount of \$192.00.

10. 50th Anniversary of Vietnam War

Committee Member Morgan provided an update. He noted the plans for the event were still being discussed between various organizations. No action was taken.

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11. Memorial of Vietnam Veteran Memoria Park

Item duplicated on agenda.

12. Wreaths Across America

Committee Member Byron stated the cemeteries and Posts were very successful this year in getting donations of wreaths. She noted all of the Wreaths Across America ceremonies would begin at the various cemeteries at 10:00 a.m., as they were synchronized to be held at the same time across the country.

13. Four Chaplains Ceremony 2024

Committee Member Byron stated she sent out the flyer for the Four Chaplains Ceremony scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on February 3, 2024. She noted, due to the time of day, it would be a regular and not candlelight service.

14. Outreach to Mayor and Council

Committee Member Obregon stated she had sent out invitations to the Council offices and received a few responses, and she would continue to follow up on the invitations.

15. VAC Future Events - Discussion

The Committee agreed their event schedule was currently full and it was not conducive to consider taking on additional events at this time.

16. Report on Current Events – For the Good of the Order

Reports on upcoming current events were provided by Committee Members Belden, Byron, Johnson, Kary, Morgan and Smith.

17. Nominations and Election of Officers

A nomination was made for and accepted by Committee Member Kary for the office of Chair.

It was moved by Committee Member Johson, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0, (**Committee Member Hollis absent, Committee Member Ruiz did not vote due to a technical audio issue**) to approve the election of Rocio “Rosie” Kary for the office of Chair.

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A nomination was made for and accepted by Committee Member Johnson for the office of Senior Vice Chair.

It was moved by Committee Member Belden, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0, (**Committee Member Hollis absent, Committee Member Ruiz did not vote due to a technical audio issue**) to approve the election of Henry Johnson for the office of Senior Vice Chair.

A nomination was made for and accepted by Committee Member Obregon for the office of Junior Vice Chair.

It was moved by Committee Member Johnson, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0, (**Committee Member Hollis absent, Committee Member Ruiz did not vote due to a technical audio issue**) to approve the election of Lorraine Obregon for the office of Junior Vice Chair.

A nomination was made for and accepted by Committee Member Belden for the office of Treasurer.

It was moved by Committee Member Johnson, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0, (**Committee Member Hollis absent, Committee Member Ruiz did not vote due to a technical audio issue**) to approve the election of Martin Belden for the office of Treasurer.

A nomination was made for and accepted by Committee Member Byron for the office of Judge Advocate.

It was moved by Committee Member Belden, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0, (**Committee Member Hollis absent, Committee Member Ruiz did not vote due to a technical audio issue**) to approve the election of Terry Byron for the office of Judge Advocate.

18. Chair's Appointments

- Secretary – Kassie Diaz
- Chaplain – Henry Johnson

19. Consideration/Approval of Members

- a. Appointment of Tom Tunks as recommended by the Nighthawk-72 Marana Detachment #1344
- b. Reappointment of Terry Byron as recommended by the Nightwhawk-72 Marana Detachment #1344
- c. Reappointment of Marlon Ruiz as recommended by the Military Order of the World Wars

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It was moved by Committee Member Johson, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0, (**Committee Member Hollis absent, Committee Member Ruiz did not vote due to a technical audio issue**) to approve the appointments of all nominees.

20. Future Agenda Items

No future agenda items were discussed.

21. Benediction

Committee Member Johnson provided the benediction.

22. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Next Meeting: January 10, 2024