



# Veterans' Affairs Committee

Tuesday, March 13, 2024 - 6:00 pm  
Virtual Meeting via TEAMS

## Minutes

### 1. Call to Order / Establish a Quorum

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

#### **Present:**

Ann Hollis

Bruce Hayes

James "Tub-Bee" Louis

Lorraine Obregon

Terry Byron

Tom Tunks

Henry Johnson

Martin Belden

Marlon Ruiz

Melvin Morgan

Rocio "Rosie" Kary

William Burks

#### **Absent:**

Gary Smith

Minou De La Rosa

Kassie Diaz

Luke Johnson

#### **Staff Members Present:**

Amari Leon

#### **Representing:**

Military Officers Association of America  
Tucson Chapter

American Legion McCulloch-Wagner, Post 109

Arizona Department of Veterans Services

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary

Cactus Unit 2 – Arrived at 6:05 p.m.

Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72

Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72 –  
Arrived at 6:07 p.m.

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

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 106

Military Order of the World Wars, Region XIII

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 106

Women in Military Service for America Memorial  
Foundation

Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 26

#### **Representing:**

American Legion Department of Arizona

TAA, Non-voting Advisory

Women Marine Association

TAA, Non-voting Advisory

City Clerk's Office, Recording Secretary

### 2. Invocation

The invocation was provided by Committee Member Johnson.

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**3. Introduction of Guests**

- a. Jennifer Gutowski, Director, Ford, Public Affairs Specialist - (SAVAHCS)
- b. Matthew Langseth, Veterans Affairs Coordinator, City of Tucson

**4. Approval of Legal Action Report for February 13, 2024**

It was moved by Committee Member Byron, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0 (Committee Members Diaz, Tunks, Smith, and Obregon absent), to approve the Legal Action Report from the February 13, 2024 meeting.

**5. Treasurer's Report**

Committee Member Belden stated the beginning balance at the start of the month of February 1, 2024, was \$1,639.06. He reported they received a \$120 donation and had expenses of \$300.85 for the porta potty and old brass brand, leaving a current balance of \$1,455.21.

It was moved by Committee Member Johnson, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 12 to 0 (Committee Members Diaz, and Smith absent), to approve the financial report as presented.

**6. Committee Reports**

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

Jennifer Gutowski, Director of SAVAHCS provided a report on behalf of SAVAHCS.

Jennifer Gutowski mentioned a few important dates Friday, March 15, 2024, the Fisher House is having an open house from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There will be a Virtual Veteran Engagement Resource Fair, on Monday, March 18, 2024, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. regarding toxic exposure eligibility. Wednesday, March 27, 2024, is the Mental Health Open House virtual or in person. Friday, March 29, 2024, Jennifer Gutowski will be hosting a Vietnam Remembrance Day and Packed Act Resource Fair in the Rose Garden from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

**b. Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery**

Committee Member Louis reported there were around 60 interments in Marana. Committee Member Hollis stated the new Director Tonya Morrison reported there were 4,418 interments since the new Columbarium opened and were still working on the backlog.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

**c. Arizona Department of Veterans' Services**

Committee Member Louis stated there were 876 claims submitted in February between disability compensation and the dependency submitted. In January online appointment scheduling became available for Veterans and Committee Member Louis is looking for three Veteran benefit counselors. Kino Workforce Center were on Thursdays and now changed to Tuesdays and Thursdays in person only.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

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

Committee Member Morgan mentioned they met with Park Tucson to mount a plaque and would need a donation to do so. They planned to put the plaque up on Friday, March 29, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. which is about 300 pounds 24x12.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

**8. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Vietnam War – Update/Discussion**

Committee Member Morgan stated he and Committee Member Byron were still working on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Vietnam War. They will have the Save the Date flyer soon, and an estimate of about 11,000 people attending. They are trying to get as many organizations as possible involved to avoid charging an entrance fee and a deposit for the venue would be needed.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

**9. Military Lounge – Update/Discussion**

Committee Member Obregon stated Mr.Click would donate \$500.00 to Operation Exodus.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

**10. VAC Social Media Presence**

Chair Rocio stated the Facebook page for any event would be a good platform to use.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

**11. Outreach to Mayor and Council – Update/Discussion**

No update was given.

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**12. VAC Fundraising Strategies**

Committee Member Byron stated they were preparing a mail merge to help sponsor Veterans. Committee Member Byron also stated that about 250 letters were ready to be mailed out and if any Committee Members have more to send, get them to Committee Member Byron within the next week, a motion was made to keep this item on future agendas.

It was moved by Committee Member Byron, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 12 to 0, (Committee Members Diaz, and Smith absent), to keep VAC Fundraising Strategies on the agenda.

**13. Consideration/Approval of Members**

**a. Appointment of Alicia Fuller as recommended by the Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans**

It was moved by Committee Member Byron, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 12 to 0, (Committee Members Diaz, and Smith absent), to approve the appointment of Alicia Fuller.

(This item was taken out of order and heard after item 14.)

**14. Report on Current Events: For the Good of the Order**

Chari Rocio, Committee Member, Byron, Hayes, Hollis, Johnson, and Tunks provided reports on current events.

**15. Future Agenda Items**

Chair Rocio made a motion to put Mathew Langseth on Committee Reports.

It was moved by Chair Rocio, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 12 to 0, (Committee Members Diaz, and Smith absent), to approve Mathew Langseth to be a part of the Committee Reports.

**16. Benediction**

Committee Member Johnson provided the Benediction.

**17. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.**

Next Meeting: April 10, 2024