



# Veterans' Affairs Committee

Wednesday, April 10, 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:**

Alicia Fuller  
Ann Hollis

Bruce Hayes  
Lorraine Obregon

Terry Byron  
Tom Tunks

Henry Johnson

Martin Belden  
Marlon Ruiz  
Melvin Morgan  
Rocio "Rosie" Kary

**Absent:**

Gary Smith  
Minou De La Rosa  
James "Tub-Bee" Louis  
Kassie Diaz  
Luke Johnson  
William Burks

**Staff Members Present:**

Amari Leon

**Representing:**

Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans  
Military Officers Association of America  
Tucson Chapter  
American Legion McCulloch-Wagner, Post 109  
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 6:08 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

**Representing:**

American Legion Department of Arizona  
TAA, Non-voting Advisory  
Arizona Department of Veterans Services  
Women Marine Association  
TAA, Non-voting Advisory  
Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 26

City Clerk's Office, Recording Secretary

### 2. Invocation

The invocation was provided by Committee Member Johson.

**Minutes  
Veterans' Affairs Committee  
April 10, 2024**

**3. Introduction of Guests**

- a. Jennifer Gutowski, Director, Ford, Public Affairs Specialist - (SAVAHCS)
- b. Matthew Langseth, Veterans Affairs Coordinator, City of Tucson
- c. Nikki Lee, Council Woman Ward 4

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

It was moved by Committee Member Belden, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 9 to 0 (Committee Members Burks, Diaz, Louis, Smith, and Tunks absent), to approve the Legal Action Report from the March 13, 2024 meeting.

**5. Treasurer's Report**

Committee Member Belden stated the beginning balance at the start of the month of March 1, 2024, was \$1,455.21. He reported they received no donations, 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 10 to 0 (Committee Members Burks, Diaz, Louis, 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, April 12, 2024, is a memorial service honoring veterans who have passed away, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 23, 2024, will be the quarterly congressional VSO and stakeholder meeting from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Volunteer Recognition BBQ will be on Wednesday, April 24, 2024, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Center for Development and Civic Engagement is looking for volunteers for the summer. Beginning March 5, 2025, Veterans who were exposed to toxins while serving in the military may be eligible to enroll directly into VA healthcare.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

**b. Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery**

Committee Member Hollis reported there was going to be one missing in America interment on Saturday, April 13, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., and on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024, a World War 2 missing in America interment, and this will be at 12:00 p.m. Both are located at the Veterans Cemetery.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

**Minutes  
Veterans' Affairs Committee  
April 10, 2024**

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

No update was given.

**d. Council Woman Lee, Ward 4**

Council Woman Lee mentioned she formed the first employee resource group within the City of Tucson and the veterans. A leadership group was elected to run the employee resource group and Council Woman Lee serves as the executive sponsor. The group is focused on how to continue to create opportunities around Veterans Day and Marine Corps birthdays. Anything to bring the troops together and allow them to build relationships across departments in the City of Tucson's organization. Council Woman Lee also mentioned that the Skillbridge program was launched inside the City about 2 years ago. It allows transitioning service members to work for an organization for up to 180 days before their separation or retirement from the military. The goal is to make the interns permanent employees with the City of Tucson, and they are working with Human Resources on that so that they do not need to go out and find new employment after 6 months.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

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

Committee Member Morgan mentioned that they had a nice turnout on Friday, March 29, 2024. They plan to have the plaque up with the engraving by next year on March 29, 2025.

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 that the event will take place at the Desert Diamond Casino on March 29, 2025. La Catina will set up a buffet for the event and the Committee members must think of ways to fundraise \$11,000 for the event.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

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

No update was given.

**10. VAC Social Media Presence**

No update was given.

**Minutes  
Veterans' Affairs Committee  
April 10, 2024**

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

No update was given.

**12. VAC Fundraising Strategies**

Committee Member Obregon mentioned if she could donate proceeds from Wreaths Across America and Jim Click agreed to donate \$500.00 total to the Veterans Affairs Committee. Chair Rocio stated that the donation letters have been helping.

**13. Consideration/Approval of Members**

- a. Appointment of Suzanne Bond as recommended by Esperanza Es Escalante**
- b. Appointment of Margo Susco as recommended by Tucson Police Department**

It was moved by Committee Member Byron, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0 (Committee Members Burks, Diaz, Louis, and Smith absent), to approve the appointment of Suzanne Bond and Margo Susco.

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

Chari Rocio, Committee Member, Byron, Hollis, Johnson, Obregon, and Ruiz provided reports on current events.

**15. Future Agenda Items**

Committee Member Byron mentioned that they need to discuss going dark for summer recess and putting the Veterans Day Parade/Memorials back on the agenda. Committee Member Belden asked to put a pallet of water for the Military Lounge on the agenda so that when they go dark, he has permission to make the purchase.

**16. Benediction**

Committee Member Johnson provided the Benediction.

**17. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.**

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 8, 2024