



Veterans' Affairs Committee

Wednesday October 9, 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
Henry Johnson

Lorraine Obregon

Terry Byron
Marlon Ruiz
Marcia Wohlhueter
Martin Belden
Rocio "Rosie" Kary

William Burks

Absent:

James "Tub-Bee" Louis
Suzanne Bond
Tom Tunks
James (Jim) Barnhart

Staff Members Present:

Amari Leon
Rene Figueroa

Representing:

Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans
Military Officers Association of America
Tucson Chapter
American Legion McCulloch-Wagner, Post 109
Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72, and
Post 81 Scottish American Military Society of
Southern Arizona

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary
Cactus Unit 2 – Arrived at 6:06 p.m.
Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72
Military Order of the World Wars, Region XIII
American Legion Auxiliary Oro Valley Unit 132
Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 106
Women in Military Service for America Memorial
Foundation
Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 26

Representing:

Arizona Department of Veterans Services
Esperanza En Escalante
Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72
Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 106

City Clerk's Office, Recording Secretary
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2. Invocation

The invocation was provided by Commissioner Johnson.

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3. Introduction of Guests

- a. Southern Arizona Veterans Affairs Health Care System - Jennifer Gutowski
- b. Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery
- c. Arizona Department of Veterans' Services
- d. Matthew Langseth, City of Tucson Veterans Coordinator
- e. Margo Sucso, Tucson Police Department
- f. Sarah Horvath, Kino Memorial Park
- g. Niki Marin and Joshua Stanwitz, Beneath the Service

4. Approval of Legal Action Report for September 12, 2024

It was moved by Committee Member Belden, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 10 to 0 (Committee Members, Barnhart, Bond, Louis, Tunks, and Obregon absent), to approve the Legal Action Report from the September 12, 2024 meeting.

Committee Member Obregon arrived at 6:06 p.m.

5. Treasurer's Report

Committee Member Belden stated the beginning balance at the start of October 1, 2024, was \$2,590.29 there were no donations or expenses, leaving a current balance of \$2,590.29.

It was moved by Committee Member Hayes, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 11 to 0 (Committee Members Barnhart, Bond, Louis, and Tunks absent), to approve the financial report as presented.

6. Committee Reports

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

Maria T. Nguyen, a member of SAVAHCS provided a report on behalf of SAVAHCS.

Maria mentioned that the Tucson VA Vet Fest is on Wednesday, October 30, 2024 from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Pima Community College. Thursday, October 31, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. will be the Quarterly Congressional PSO and Stakeholder meeting located at Pima Community College or Via Microsoft Teams. Maria also mentioned that it is vaccination time and at the main campus, there will be a drive-thru Flu shot and COVID shot from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. SAVAHCS is happy to announce that they received the Silver Quality Achievement Award which is a National Award given by the American Heart Association. Five Veterans at the VA Hospital were recognized for being over 100 years old.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

b. Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery

Committee Member Hollis reported that the Cemetery held a Missing in America Project interment 37 Veterans were interred and that also included Hele Glass who was one of the oldest World War 2 Veterans left in Arizona.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

c. Arizona Department of Veterans' Services

No update was given.

d. Matthew Langseth, City of Tucson Veterans Coordinator

Matthew Langseth mentioned that the City of Tucson's employee resource group is going well, and they send out monthly internal newsletters. Also, the Skillbridge program continues to thrive, and they are working on getting several other Military Veteran spouse incentives. Matthew Langseth explains that the Skillbridge program is when the last 180 days of active service the service members can request to be a part of the Skillbridge program to be released from their daily duties with the Military to learn skills with an approved provider such as Raytheon, City of Tucson ect., they are more on the Skillbridge website. The goal is to help them learn valuable skills and hopefully get them employed at the end of the program.

e. Margo Susco, Tucson Police Department

No update was given.

f. Sarah Horvath – Kino Memorial Park

Committee Member Byron mentioned that 2 bronze plaques were found from the Gold Star Park, and they are with Allan Young. The vandalism is still under investigation. The Commission wants the Mayor or one of her representatives to attend a VAC meeting.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

g. Niki Marin and Joshua Stanwitz, Beneath the Service

Joshua Stanwitz introduces himself as the Vice President of development for Beneath the Service. Joshua also mentions that he is a generational Veteran Marine and Army Infantry Combat Veteran. Before he medically got out, he had a little over 12 years of service between both branches. Beneath the Service is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to supporting Military families during the reintegration process into civilian life.

No discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

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

Committee Member Byron mentioned they still need donations for the Granite for the upcoming March event. The Vietnam Memorial Ceremony will still be on March 29, 2025 with lunch at the Desert Diamond Casino and they are trying to invite more Veteran Service Organizations.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

8. 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War – Update/Discussion

Committee Member Byron said they would like to have the Granite engraved and completed by March 29, 2024 for the 50th Celebration luncheon.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

9. Military Lounge – Update/Discussion

Committee Member Byron mentioned that James Robertson is in replace of Minuo De La Rosa and he should be start attending the meetings by next month.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

10. Four Chaplains Ceremony 2024

Committee Member Byron mentioned that she needs to request the park for the Ceremony that is going to be held on Monday, February 3, 2025. Committee Member Byron also stated they are still trying to get the Four Chaplains Plaque to be replaced before then.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

11. VAC Social Media Presence

Chair Rocio mentioned that she is keeping up on the Facebook page and advise Committee Members to share events or posts.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

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12. Outreach to Mayor and Council – Update/Discussion

The whole Committee would like the Mayor's input on the vandalism at the Veteran's Memorial Park. They would like to know if the park has insurance to replace what was taken. Committee Member Johnson mentioned that they could reach out to the Vice Mayor as well.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action was taken.

13. VAC Fundraising Strategies

Chair Rocio mentioned again about a GoFundMe account, setting up a Golf Tournament, and the Wreaths Across America as fundraising ideas. Committee Member Byron mentioned that she is going to look into the White Elephant Grant and ADVS and look into the Golf Tournament or a Poker Run. Committee Member Fuller mentioned that she will reach out to the person running the Golf Tournament and to raffle off prizes for more donations. Committee Member Wohlhueter mentioned that other Veteran organizations do Car Shows and that is one of the best fundraisers.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

14. Veteran's Day/Memorials – Update/Discussion

Committee Member Byron mentioned that the Veterans Day Parade is still scheduled for November 11, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. near the Tucson Convention Center (TCC). Any donations will be greatly appreciated as it takes \$10,000 to fund the parade.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

15. Report on Current Events: For the Good of the Order

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

17. Future Agenda Items

Replacing Secretary and Treasurer, December Elections.

18. Benediction

Committee Member Johnson provided the Benediction.

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

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 13, 2024