



Veterans’ Affairs Committee

Wednesday, November 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

Henry Johnson

James (Jim) Barnhart

James “Tub-Bee” Louis

Lorraine Obregon

Terry Byron

Marcia Wohlhueter

Martin Belden

Rocio “Rosie” Kary

Tom Tunks

William Burks

Absent:

Alicia Fuller

Marlon Ruiz

Suzanne Bond

Representing:

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

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 106

Arizona Department of Veterans Services

Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary

Cactus Unit 2

Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72

American Legion Auxiliary Oro Valley Unit 132

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 106

Women in Military Service for America Memorial
Foundation

Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72

Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 26

Representing:

Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans

Military Order of the World Wars, Region XIII

Esperanza En Escalante

Staff Members Present:

Amari Leon

Francisco Denogean

City Clerk’s Office, Recording Secretary

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2. Invocation

The invocation was provided by Commissioner Hayes.

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3. Introduction of Guests – Update/Discussion

- a. Matthew Langseth - City of Tucson Veterans Coordinator

No update was given.

- b. Margo Susco, Tucson Police Department

No update was given.

- c. Sarah Horvath, Kino Memorial Park

No update was given.

- d. Arlethe Rios, Office of Arizona Senator Mark Kelly

No update was given.

4. Approval of Legal Action Report for October 9, 2024

It was moved by Committee Member Belden, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 12 to 0 (Committee Members, Bond, Fuller, and Ruiz absent), to approve the Legal Action Report from the October 9, 2024 meeting.

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 Johson, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 12 to 0 (Committee Members Bond, Fuller, and Ruiz, absent), to approve the financial report as presented.

6. Committee Reports

- a. Office of Senator Mark Kelly – Arlethe Rios**

No update was given.

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

Jennifer K. Wasielewski, a member of SAVAHCS, provided a report on behalf of SAVAHCS.

Jennifer mentioned that on Friday November 15, 2024, the V.A is hosting a health fair in the Rose Garden, with a Veteran Town Hall to follow at 2:30 p.m. that is in person and virtual. The V.A is expanding the emergency department, and construction will be starting very soon. There will be a lot of signs to follow to get around the V.A. Jennifer also mentioned that the V.A. is trying to get more Veteran's enrolled so that they are covered fully if they need any care from the V.A. even if they have their own insurance, it is best to be enrolled with the V.A.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

c. Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery

Committee Member Louis mentioned that there were 70 internments last month at the Marana Cemetery. Committee Member Hollis said she attended a meeting on Tuesday, November 12, 2024 and there are actually 70 internments 70 Military and 9 dependents leaving 4, 961 total internments for the year.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

d. Arizona Department of Veterans' Services

Committee Member Louis mentioned that there are four itinerary site locations where a Veteran can make an appointment to be seen in person, there are about four in Tucson. There were about five events in the past few months and have about 1,200 maintaining a 97% approval rate.

e. Military Lounge

Committee Member Byron stated that James Robertson emailed her that Operation Exodus is going to be December 20th through December 23rd, 2024. January 2nd through January 4th, 2025 they are expecting about 1,500 Soldiers during that time frame which is less than last year.

No discussion ensued, no formal action was taken,

f. Memorial for Vietnam Veteran Memorial Park

Committee Member Byron mentioned that Pima County will be taking over the Gold Star Mother Park and she will be sending City Clerk Staff information about the insurance for the park.

No discussion ensued, and no formal action taken.

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g. Four Chaplains

Committee Member Byron stated that she forwarded the Four Chaplains Ceremony Flyer to the City Clerk's Office for distribution.

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

7. 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War – Update/Discussion

Committee Member Belden mentioned that they are still trying to get everything together for the March 29, 2025 event. There are about 200 guests that RSVP so far since the flyer was sent out for the event. Committee Member Blenden also mentioned that they still need to fundraise and/or ask for donations for this event.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

8. VAC Social Media Presence

Chair Rocio mentioned they need a secretary to keep up on the Facebook page, so no one misses any opportunities.

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

9. Outreach to Mayor and Council – Update/Discussion

Committee Member Obregon asked if the City of Tucson can make a public announcement to announce the scams going on for Veteran's. Committee Member Obregon mentioned that she would like a response from the Mayor's Office to attend a VAC meeting so that they are aware of the issues going on regarding Veteran's.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

10. VAC Fundraising Strategies

Committee Member Belden mentioned that they need to fundraise as soon as possible because Operation Exodus and the Four Chaplains are going to wipe out the account and they won't have any funds available. Committee Member Byron reached out to the White Elephant Group, and she has not heard back yet.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

11. Veteran's Day Parade/Memorials – Update/Discussion

Committee Member Byron mentioned that the Veteran's Day Parade went really good.

Discussion was held, and no formal action was taken.

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12. Nominations and Election of Officers - Update/Discussion

- Chair – Rocio Kary
- Senior Vice Chair – Henry Johnson
- Junior Vice Chair – Ann Hollis
- Treasurer – Terry Byron
- Judge Advocate – Lorriane Obregon

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

Chari Rocio, Committee Members Belden, Byron, Johnson, and Tunks provided reports on current events.

14. Future Agenda Items

Nighthawk 72 events/memorial

15. Benediction

Committee Member Johnson provided the Benediction.

16. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 11, 2024