Veterans' Affairs Committee

Wednesday, September 10, 2025 - 6:00 pm
Virtual Meeting via TEAMS

Minutes

1. Call to Order / Establish a Quorum

The Veteran's Affairs Committee meeting was called to order by Rocio "Rosie" Kary at 6:00 p.m. those present and absent were:

Present:	**Representing:**
Alan Young	American Legion Department of Arizona
Ann Hollis	Military Officers Association of America
Bruce Hayes	American Legion McCulloch-Wagner, Post 109Tucson Chapter **Arrived at 6:02 p.m.**
Marcia Wohlhueter	American Legion Auxiliary Oro Valley Unit 132
Marlon Ruiz	Military Order of the World Wars, National Senior Vice Commander-In-Chief
Rocio "Rosie" Kary	Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation
Terry Byron	Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72
Tom Tunks	Marine Corps League, Marana Night Hawk 72 -
William Burks	Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 26 – **Arrived at 6:10 p.m.**

Absent:	**Representing:**
Alicia Fuller	Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans
John Curtis	Fort Lowell – Apache Chapter (0222)
Lorraine Obregon	Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary Cactus Unit 2

Staff Members Present:	
Amari Leon	City Clerk's Office, Recording Secretary
Francisco Denogean	City Clerk's Office, Recording Secretary

2. Invocation

The invocation was given by Commissioner Hayes.

3. Introduction of Guests – Update/Discussion

a. Maria Nguyen, Southern Arizona Veterans Health Care System

Ms. Nguyen went over the SAVAHCS September 2025 Directors Report and gave a brief update on some of the events the Tucson VA was hosting that she wanted to highlight, which was the 16th Annual Gathering of American Indian Veterans, the Women's Veteran Virtual Town Hall, the POW/MIA Ceremony and the Fisher House Open House – Zack Fisher Birthday. Ms. Nguyen concluded her report by providing an update on the VA patient portal transition and the status of the renovations to the mental health building at the Tucson VA.

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

b. Matthew Langseth - City of Tucson Veterans Coordinator

No update was given.

c. Margo Susco, Tucson Police Department

No update was given.

d. Sarah Horvath, Kino Memorial Park

No update was given.

e. Arlethe Rios, Office of Arizona Senator Mark Kelly

No update was given.

f. Abel Moreno, Holding the Hope

Mr. Moreno gave a brief introduction on himself and his background; Mr. Moreno presented a slide deck to the committee with information on what Holding the Hope was and their services and how veterans could get involved.

g. Noreen O'Shea, Gift Horse

Ms. O'Shea provided a brief introduction on herself and her background and explained to the committee what the Gift Horse is about and the type of service they offer veterans at no cost, Ms. O'Shea concluded by providing her contact information to the committee.

4. Approval of Legal Action Report for May 14, 2025

The motion was moved by Commissioner Byron, duly seconded by Commissioner Wohlhueter, and passed by a roll call vote of 9 to 0 to approve the Legal Action Report from the May 14, 2025, meeting.

5. Treasurer's Report

Commissioner Byron reported for May the Veterans Affairs Committee had a beginning balance of $1921.72, the committee received 2 donations from the BBA106 for $1000.00 and from the American Legion Auxiliary 68 for $100.00 leaving the committee an ending balance of $3021.72 in May. There was no activity in June. For July the payment cleared for the band playing at the Four Chaplains bringing the VAC's end balance to $2,871.72. There was no activity in August, and nothing is expected for September.

It was moved by Commissioner Hayes, duly seconded, and passed by a roll call vote of 9 to 0, to approve the financial report as presented.

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

6. Committee Reports

a. Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery

Commissioner Hollis provided a brief update to the committee informing them there are currently 5,479 interred including both veterans and their dependents, she also informed the committee Sean Funn from the Missing in America Project has now retired and relocated to Texas.

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

b. Arizona Department of Veterans' Services

Commissioner Byron informed the committee that the ADB's has an officer at the Tucson VA Building 13, about 2-3 days a week assisting veterans with scheduling appointments.

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

c. Military Lounge and Operation Exodus

Commissioner Byron informed the committee there is currently no update on the Military Lounge. Commissioner Byron also informed the committee she is scheduled to meet with the Fort Huachuca officer on October 8, 2025, and will have more information on Operation Exodus following that meeting.

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

d. Four Chaplains Ceremony 2026

Commissioner Byron informed the committee that the Four Chaplains Ceremony is scheduled for 1 p.m. on February 1, 2025, at the Kino Veterans Memorial Park, additional information to follow.

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

7. Nighthawk 72 Events/Memorial – Update/Discussion

No update was given; this item will be removed from the agenda moving forward.

8. VAC Social Media Presence – Update/Discussion

Chair Rocio reminded the committee to keep sharing their events and to not forget to utilize their Facebook page.

9. Outreach to Mayor and Council – Update/Discussion

Chair Kary informed the Veterans' Affairs Committee the Mayor and Council meeting in October lands on the same date as the Veterans' Affairs Committees meeting, she asked the committee if they would like to reschedule the meeting or go fully virtually, Commissioner Byron made a motion to hold the October 8th meeting virtual, the motion passed 9-0.

10. VAC Fundraising Strategies – Update/Discussion

Commissioner Byron has been communicating with Arizona Wine Collective to possibly host a wine tasting event to raise money for the Veterans' Affairs Committee possibly in November or December, more information to follow.

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

Commissioner Byron informed the committee that the Veteran's Day Parade is scheduled for November 11, 2025, celebrating 250 years of Military Service, registration is now open at Tucsonvdpf.org until October 31,2025.

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

Chair Kary, Commissioners Byron, Ruiz and Tunks provided reports on current events.

13. Future Agenda Items

The upcoming Veterans' Affairs Committee meeting scheduled for October 8, 2025, will be held fully virtual due to conflicting schedules with the Mayor and Council meeting scheduled for the same day.

14. Benediction

Commissioner Hayes provided the benediction.

15. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Next Veterans' Affairs Committee Meeting:
Wednesday, October 8, 2025