Minutes of the TEMPE VETERANS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, August 1, 6:00 p.m., at the Tempe, Public Library, 2nd Floor Board Room, 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:
Keith Finkle, Chair
Michelle Bravo, Vice-Chair (telephonically)
Mario Aguirre
Scott Essex
Troy Friedman
Lauren Hyre
Patricia Little-Upah
Michelle Loposky
Laura Skotnicki
David Lucier

(MEMBERS) Absent:
Bryan Durham

City Staff Present:
Valerie Kime Trujillo, Deputy Human Services Director
Robin Arredondo-Savage, Vice Mayor

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order
Chair Keith Finkle called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances
No Public Appearances.

Agenda Item 3 – Review and Approval of June 21, 2017 Minutes

MOTION: Commission Member David Lucier moved to APPROVE the minutes
SECOND: Motion seconded by Commission Member Patricia Little-Upah
DECISION: Minutes unanimously APPROVED
Agenda Item 4 – Chair Remarks

Chair Keith Finkle had no remarks.

Agenda Item 5 – Strategic Planning Recap attachment (1) attachment (2)

Chair Keith Finkle noted the strategic direction: “Influencing Tempe Job Market for Veterans” as the Commission’s primary objective for the remainder of the year. This is a partnership with the Arizona Coalition for Military Families, the City of Tempe, and businesses. Commission Member Mario Aguirre will provide an update at the next meeting on the pre-application and training process.

Commission Member Michelle Loposky was tasked with developing and implementing marketing materials and distributed out an outline of a social media calendar for Facebook and Twitter (attached). Commission Member Michelle Loposky and Deputy Director, Valerie Trujillo met with the City of Tempe’s Communication Manager Nikki Ripley. The City of Tempe Public Information Officers can be the Commission’s voice. Nikki Ripley noted that Facebook should be a primary method of communication for events and activities of the Commission. She emphasized using photos, videos, and personal interest stories to engage readers. She noted that she could “boost” signature events to reach more viewers. The Commission can send information for human interest stories to staff.

E-News list serves and the City water bill were discussed. The water bill needs lead time. The Commission would like to target October to get information out about all the November 11th Veterans Day activities. The Tempe Today Newsletter could be used to highlight the Veterans Commission as to what it does. Commercial Accounts could also be targeted for a month. The Commission asked how much lead time Nikki needs for the water bill newsletter. Valerie Trujillo will find out.

Chair Finkle asked Commission Members Mario Aguirre and Scott Essex to craft some verbiage. Commission Member David Lucier noted that there may be some “seasonality” to it to send out flyers whether they are small, medium, or, large. The Commission will distribute information as to what it means to be a Veteran Supportive Business. Vice Mayor Arredondo-Savage noted Rosa Inchausti, Director of Strategic Management & Diversity for the City of Tempe will be conducting a business survey that will include information about the Veterans Supportive initiative. Valerie will find out the timeline on the business survey. The Commission would like to see the results of the business survey upon completion. The Commission expressed concerns over the outdated information on the City’s Veterans information page. Information should be bulleted points/events. Commission Member Mario Aguirre distributed information on the Employer Training (attached). The Commission requested the website link to the Arizona State University (ASU) Veterans website and the East Valley Veterans Education Center (EVVEC).

The Commission asked that the Tempe Today include an update on “Valor on Eight” as completion is targeted for November. The Veterans Day Parade should also be noted. Commission Member Scott Essex will reach out to Commission Member Mario Aguirre for the pre-application and training materials. Staff will update the Veterans page as discussed.

Agenda Item 6 – East Valley Veterans Education Center – Career Center Discussion

Commissioner Troy Friedman shared that the EVVEC Career Center will be 4000 square feet. The Center will offer five strong business tracks in Arizona. These will be aligned with certifications through the Community College District. There will be an option for Veterans to Farming through Central Arizona College. Veteran owned businesses will get space at the Career Center, and the Veterans Directory will be a partner.
Chair Finkle asked how to get the City’s Council’s support. Vice Mayor Arredondo-Savage noted that Steve Yamamori, Vice President of Veteran Initiatives with Maricopa Community College Foundations met with most of the Council earlier this year. She asked what the Career Center still needs. Commission Member Troy Friedman noted infrastructure, i.e. plumbing, electricity, etc. The Career Center will be of value to Tempe. Grants and donors are still needed.

**Agenda Item 7 – Arizona Department of Veterans Services Position Vacancy Discussion**

With Commission Member Bryan Durham’s departure to basic training earlier this year, the Commission needs to fill the position with the Arizona Department of Veteran’s Services. Commission Member David Lucier offered to reach out to the Department to explore options for another staff member. Wanda Wright is the Supervisor to contact. Staff will email the Arizona Department of Veterans Services to seek a member who aligns with this position.

**Agenda Item 8 – Commission Member Projects**

Each Commission Member came up with a project/goal and plan to execute by quarter four. Commission Members present shared their projects as follows:

Commission Member David Lucier:
- Veteran Outreach (Veterans and Non-Veterans)

Commission Member Patricia Little-Upah:
- Awareness and information on current local Veteran Affairs

Commission Member Michelle Loposky:
- Veteran Outreach (Salute to Service with Arizona State University)

Commission Member Troy Friedman:
- Stand For Veterans Project – October

Chair Keith Finkle
- Commission Awareness
  - Please send ideas to the Chair for speaking opportunities

Commission Member Lauren Hyre
- Attended a conference in Washington D.C. on drug use by Vets; Has also researched Housing opportunities for Veterans/Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Vouchers (VASH); Counseling for Vets (i.e. mindfulness training); “bridge” programs for veterans; furniture for Veterans; Social services; and drug and alcohol prevention
- She now has an intern doing research on programs
- She mentioned doing a drive to solicit donations for Veterans – Commission Member Troy Friedman offered space for storage at EVVEC; Elks, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) as places to pick up donations; and businesses to solicit

Commission Member Laura Skotnicki:
- Would like to assist Commission Member Lauren with the donation drives and social services
Commission Member Scott Essex:
- Offered to help Vice Chair Michelle Bravo in coordinating various Veteran related events and job fairs – Also with Commission Member David Lucier
- Bridge gaps with Veterans organizations and engage businesses through the Tempe Chamber of Commerce to help Commission Member Mario Aguirre/Chair Keith Finkle

Commission Member Mario Aguirre:
- Jobs for veterans

Vice Chair Michelle Bravo:
- Requested to table her assignment until the September 5th meeting for more time to determine a project

**Agenda Item 9 – Future Agenda Items – September 5, 2017**
- Follow-up with Arizona Department of Veterans Services Commission Vacancy
- East Valley Veterans Education Center – Career Center Update
- Strategic Plan Updates
  - Veteran Supportive Employer Update – Commission Member Mario Aguirre
  - Marketing Updates – Newsletter & November Events
- Follow-up with All Commissioner Project Updates

**Agenda Item 10 – Commission Member Announcements**

Commission Member Laura Skotnicki offered to give a tour to the Commission of Valor on Eighth on September 8th at 10:00 a.m.

Commission Member David Lucier asked again about business cares for the Commissioners and name tags. He asked staff to use the Tempe Arts Commission as an example for name tags. Valerie shared a mockup of a business card that Commission liked. Commission Member David Lucier asked that the print be large with rounded corners.

There was a question as to whether Commissioners would each have a City email address that staff will have to verify.

**Agenda Item 11 – Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 5, 2017

Minutes Prepared by: Valerie Kime Trujillo
Reviewed by: Melissa Placencia
Veteran’s Activity Calendar
Social Media/Publicity

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL
• Pat’s Run/Tillman Foundation
  o Celebrate Pat’s legacy by running in your local community
  o Your support will help us empower more leaders like the Tillman Scholars for our country and communities
• Stand for Veterans’ Resource Fair
  o As Tempe’s official resource for veterans, the East Valley Veterans Education Center (EVVEC) is proud to host a free resource fair to help veterans and their families access a variety of services all at one place and time.
• Annual Statewide Symposium in Support of Service Members, Veterans & Their Families – AZ Coalition for Military Families

MAY
• Community Salutes (Send off for High School Students)
  o The 2nd Annual Our Community Salutes of Tempe was held on May 9, 2016. Fifty-five seniors representing several Tempe high schools who were going into Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and AZ Army National Guard were honored at the ceremony.
• 50th Anniversary of Vietnam
  o Veterans’ organizations in Arizona see marking the anniversary of the long conflict as an opportunity to show gratitude. Vietnam veterans now make up the largest portion of veterans in the state.
• Veteran Students’ Stole Honor Graduation Ceremony
  o ASU greatly appreciates and honors those who have served in defense of our country. ASU is helping veterans pursue educational goals.
• Veterans’ Telemedicine Program/Tempe Fire Dept

JUNE

JULY

AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
- Healing Fields

OCTOBER
- **Stand for Veterans' Resource Fair**
  - As Tempe's official resource for veterans, the East Valley Veterans Education Center (EVVEC) is proud to host a free resource fair to help veterans and their families access a variety of services all at one place and time.

NOVEMBER
- **Tempe Veterans’ Day Parade**
  - The veterans parade concept plans features 80 silhouette panels of steel representing veterans of each service throughout history. Made of laser cut steel, they will outline marching officers, enlisted men and women in full dress and battle fatigues.

- **Salute to Service/ASU**
  - Arizona State University will honor America's men and women in uniform, past and present, and their families during the annual Salute to Service celebration held across the university’s campuses through Veterans Day.

  - Organized by ASU's Alumni Association and the Pat Tillman Veterans Center, Salute to Service is a yearly university tradition to pay homage to the nation's veterans through special recognition and service-themed events.

DECEMBER
- **Veteran Students’ Stole Honor Graduation Ceremony**
  - ASU greatly appreciates and honors those who have served in defense of our country. ASU is helping veterans pursue educational goals.
Arizona Veteran Supportive Employer
Statewide Training Series

Public & private sector employers are invited to attend a 2-hour training focused on how to effectively hire, manage and retain service members, veterans and their family members.

View the schedule of dates and register online at:
http://AZEmployerTraining.eventbrite.com

Who can attend? Managers, supervisors, human resources personnel, recruiters and leadership

This training helps employers fulfill the requirements to become an Arizona Veteran Supportive Employer (AVSE). The training and AVSE process are offered at no cost to Arizona employers as part of the Arizona Roadmap to Veteran Employment.

Learn more at: www.ArizonaCoalition.org/employment

The Arizona Roadmap to Veteran Employment is a collaboration of public and private sector partners focused on connecting service members, veterans & their families with employment opportunities, training & resources. This effort is funded in part by the Arizona Department of Veterans’ Services and the Governor’s Office for Children, Youth & Families. Learn more at: www.ArizonaCoalition.org/employment