Minutes of the TEMPE VETERANS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, September 19, 6:00 p.m., at the Tempe, Public Library, Connections Café Classroom 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe, Arizona.

(MEMBERS) Present:
Michelle Bravo, Vice-Chair
Scott Essex
Lauren Hyre
Patricia Little-Upah
Michelle Loposky
Laura Skotnicki
David Lucier

(MEMBERS) Absent:
Keith Finkle, Chair
Mario Aguirre
Troy Friedman

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

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order
Vice-Chair Michelle Bravo called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances
None Present

Agenda Item 3 – Review and Approval of August 1, 2017 Minutes – (Motion Required)

MOTION: Commission Member David Lucier moved to APPROVE the minutes.
SECOND: Motion Seconded by Commission Member Michelle Loposky
DECISION: Minutes unanimously APPROVED
**Agenda Item 4 – Arizona Department of Veterans Services Position Vacancy Update**

Valerie Kime Trujillo, Human Services Deputy Director reported that Vice-Mayor Robin Arredondo-Savage contacted the Arizona Department of Veterans Services for a recommended replacement for former Commission Member Bryan Durham’s recent vacancy. Stephanie Michael was recommended and was advised to submit an application.

**Agenda Item 5 – Strategic Plan Updates:**

- East Valley Veterans Education Center – Career Center Update
  Tabled due to Commission Member Troy Friedman’s absence.

- Marketing Updates
  - Publicity for November Veterans Events
  - Water Bill Newsletter Timeline

Commission Member Michelle Loposky and Human Services Deputy Director Valerie Kime Trujillo forwarded a calendar of events to Public Information Officer, Nikki Ripley.

- Veteran Supportive Employer Update
  Commission Member Mario Aguirre called in at 6:12 p.m. to update the Commission on Veteran Supportive Employers. The list of Tempe businesses was sent to Valerie and Chair Keith Finkle. Mario will also send a list of employers from other cities by the end of the week – this relates to City Council Priorities as Tempe would like to be greater than surrounding cities.

- Commission Member Projects Update
  - Commission Member David Lucier – Outreach
    - David suggested the Commission compile community presentations for Commission Members to have readily available to present to various organizations to create community awareness of the Tempe Veterans Commission. Vice-Chair Michelle Bravo suggested using the Commission briefing presentation that Chair Keith Finkle used. This presentation would need to be updated and tailored to audiences the Commission presents to. The Commission would need to review prior to being used.
    - Any events that impact Veterans can be sent to David and he will post to the Unified Arizona Veterans and the Arizona Veterans & Military Leadership Alliance Facebook pages.

  - Commission Member Patricia-Upah:
    - After a discussion with Chair Keith Finkle, Patricia would like to invite the director of the Phoenix Veterans Affair Hospital to a Commission Meeting for a presentation. The Commission agreed and supports this idea.

  - Commission Member Lauren Hyre:
    - Recently met with Commission Members Laura Skotnicki and Troy Friedman about collaborating with CARE7 and utilizing space at the East Valley Veterans Education Center. A volunteer would be present at the center twice a week to distribute household items including protein items, microwaveable food, specific household items, pop top cans, etc. Lauren would work with businesses and organize donation drives. Lauren and Laura discussed utilizing United Way’s Bridge to Employment Services and coming up with an agreement between the Veteran Client and the Commission. Example: If the client collects the donated items, they would agree to attend a financial literacy workshop or attend a job fair. Lauren asked the Commission to assist with their connections in the community.
Vice-Chair Michelle Bravo noted she would like a further discussion to better understand what the Commission Member projects are to avoid “over-tasking”. Michelle and Scott decided their project is to synchronize efforts for all things Veterans related.

- Website Updates
  Vice-Mayor Robin Arredondo-Savage suggested updating the website reflective of events in Tempe. Valerie noted there is not a Public Information Officer assigned to the Human Services Department. Commission Member Scott Essex suggested the Secretary gather all important dates/events and then forward that information to City Staff.

**Agenda Item 6 – 2017 Boards and Commissions Annual Report**

Human Service Deputy Director, Valerie Kime Trujillo handed out the 2016 Veterans Commission Annual Report and asked the Commission review. These reports are due in December.

**Agenda Item 7 – Performance Measure Discussion – City Council Strategic Priorities**

Last year, Mayor & Council developed five priorities going forward for the City of Tempe. The priorities include:

1. Safe & Secure Communities
2. Strong Community Connections
3. Quality of Life
4. Financial Stability & Vitality
5. Sustainable Growth & Development

Departments were asked to provide goals relevant for the community. The Tempe Veterans Commission goal is “Engage Tempe employers to achieve a Veteran supportive designation greater than or equal to the average of valley cities as awarded by the Arizona Coalition for Military Families”

The Commission discussed clearly defining what it means to be a Veteran Friendly Employer beyond attending the navigation training and how businesses remain Veteran Supportive.

**Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items – October 3, 2017**

- Strategic Plan – Implementation Plans
- Commission Member Projects Discussion
- 2017 Boards and Commissions Annual Report
- Veteran Supportive Businesses Discussion

**Agenda Item 9 – Commission Member Announcements**

Commission Member Mario Aguirre:

- Military emersion training – September 29, 2017
  - Military Reservation – Papago Park
  - Photo identification required
  - Full day training
  - For community and businesses
  - Mario will send an invite to staff and staff will distribute to the Commission
Commission Member Patricia Little-Upah:

- Mental Health Summit – September 21, 2017
- Traumatic Brain Injuries Conference (specific to Veterans and their families) – November 4, 2017
  - Keynote Speaker: Dr. Reyes

Commission Member Scott Essex:

- HeroZona – Celebrating America’s Veterans in Arizona – November 4 – 12, 2017

Commission Member Michelle Loposky:

- Salute to Service – November 1 – 12, 2017
  - Website is being compiled to reflect all events

Commission Member Laura Skotnicki:

- 49 Veterans on the waitlist for Valor

Commission Member Lauren Hyre:

- CARE7 is seeking unrestricted fund resources for Veterans

Vice-Chair Michelle Bravo:

- Joined the Board for the Veterans Furniture Center
  - Also looking for funding

Human Services Deputy Director, Valerie Kime Trujillo:

- Community needs assessment forum – October 14, 2017 at Grace Community Church

**Agenda Item 10 - Adjournment**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:42p.m.**

Next meeting will be on October 3, 2017

Minutes Prepared by: Melissa Placencia
Reviewed by: Valerie Kime Trujillo

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Michelle Bravo, Vice-Chair
Tempe Veterans Commission