



**Minutes
Tempe Veterans Commission
February 24, 2015**

Minutes for the Tempe Veteran's Commission Meeting held on February 24, 2015 at 6:00 PM at the Tempe Public Library Board Room, 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe, Arizona 85282.

Commission Members Present

Keith Finkle
Michelle Bravo
Scott Essex
Troy Friedman
Dale Groen
David Lucier
Patricia Little-Upah
Laura Skotnicki
Joanna Sweatt
Thomas Winkle

Council Members Present

Corey Woods, Vice Mayor
Robin Arredondo-Savage, Councilmember

Staff Present

Naomi Farrell, Human Services Director
Parrish Spisz, City Council Aide II
Lisa elena Vallejo, Supervisor

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM

Item 2 – Introduction of Commission Members present.

Item 3 – Welcome

Vice Mayor Corey Woods and Councilmember Robin Arredondo-Savage.

Corey Woods, Vice Mayor – expressed excitement to be here and to see this dream come to fruition as it is wonderful to see what we are trying to do for Veterans in the Community and across the State of Arizona, and to have such a great group of people come together to work with them.

Robin Arredondo-Savage, Councilmember – Great to go down this journey with Corey as he has been super supportive along the way. Expressed thanks for ability to get this working group together and to be here today for the very first time. This commission is a little bit different than any other commission as it is made up of a group of individuals coming together that can really make a difference. This was critical to us to come together to build those partnerships. Robin expressed thanks to Parrish Spisz as he was instrumental in assisting this commission in coming together. Expressed the utmost confidence in every single one of the commission members and just wanted to be here tonight to say thank you and welcome to everyone as well as say thank you to Keith for his leadership in stepping up to chair this commission.

Item 4 – Review of Open Meeting Laws – Naomi Farrell

Covered open meeting laws, protocols and procedures, and also expressed her responsibility to the commission in regards to the agendas and posting of the minutes, etc. If a more in-depth training needed it can be scheduled.

Item 5 – Review of Commissions Objectives – Chari Keith Finkle

- **City of Tempe – Veterans Supportive City and Employer**

Spoke in regards to objectives and recommendations that came out of working group. Coalition of Military Families has two programs developing. The first one is the Veterans Supportive Employer for any City/County Municipality within Arizona. Benchmarks used to identify those cities actually engaging in this type of supportive endeavor towards Veterans. Want to achieve, sustain and enhance those benchmarks. On March 26, 2015 Veterans Supportive Employer Meeting – Will be veterans supportive employer and city and have reached out to Mayor Mitchell to reach out to other mayors around state to also become Veterans Supportive City Tempe to be featured as a Veterans Supportive City and Employer.

- **Navigation System**

Navigator training through Coalition completed on February 12, 2015. Want to work with City to provide that training to our employees as it provides ability as first point of contact to those Veterans returning from service. Navigator system helps you to prioritize and navigate through system for them. City now has brick and mortar location with the East Valley Veterans Education Center. ASU has a certificate program currently going through the approval process. Part of that program includes having interns and those interns could go through Navigator training and utilized as a resource.

- **Veterans Supportive Business**

Want to work with businesses within our borders to become Veterans supportive and earn accreditation. May be good to have recognition or awards for supportive business, have a whole series of awards given for training, recognition etc.

- **EVVEC Event and other possible events**

This event recognizes the partnership between East Valley Veterans and the City of Tempe. To be held this Saturday February 28, 2015 from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm, at the East Valley Veterans Education Center, located at 3320 S. Price Road, Tempe, Arizona 85282. A number of organizations will be there to provide information regarding their services to the community.

Item 6 – Sub-Committees – Chair Keith Finkle

The following four subcommittees were discussed as possibilities:

1. Education Subcommittee
2. Employment Subcommittee
3. Wellness Subcommittee
4. **Public Awareness Subcommittee** – expand digital footprint, develop social media and web pages to create public awareness of all that is being done with commission and for all Veterans within our Community. A motion was passed by Laura Skotnicki to make a Public Awareness Subcommittee, Motion was passed 12-0.

Item 7 – Fundraising – Naomi Farrell

The Veterans Commission is not authorized to personally form a 501c3, however, any external organization can donate funds specifically directed towards Commission-recommended projects. Also the City Staff can follow the Commission's advice to apply for particular grants, if those grants are in furtherance of the Commission's duties.

Item 8 – Suggested Topics for Future Meetings

- **Memorial Day Event at Escalante Center** – Story of the Escalante Family as they want someone to take over. Maybe incorporate with ASU's Reading of the Names Event and do together, can discuss at next meeting.
- **Invite to Denise Rentschler**, City PIO regarding Public Awareness and assistance with Veteran's website, calendar of events. Email lists etc.
- All members to bring calendar of events (currently going on for Veterans throughout the Valley) to next meeting.

Item 9 – Commission Members Announcements

- **Stand Up** – (Stand Down is for those who are Homeless) the Stand Up Concept is to get to them before they get to that point, catch them before they are down by providing services etc. Local effort that allows more personal attention to resolve at the lowest level great opportunity to eliminate barriers and increase opportunities for success.
- **Community Salutes Event – May 11, 2015 5:30-7:30 PM at the TCA**
Tempe Community Salutes will be about 220 people to celebrate and recognize those individuals who go to serve their country; and will also sign up people there for the Home Town Tempe Program.
- **Veterans Supportive Employer Meeting - March 26, 2015**
- **Veterans Stole Ceremony – May 9, 2015**
- **Pat’s Run – April 25, 2015**

Item 10 – Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM

Next meeting to be held on April 28, 2015 at 6:00 PM, Tempe Library Board Room, at 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe, Arizona 85282.

Minutes prepared by: Lisa elena Vallejo
Reviewed by: Naomi Farrell

Keith Finkle,
Chair, Tempe Veterans Commission