



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

Scottsdale Community Design Studio
7506 E. Indian School Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

PRESENT: Chairperson Steven Jackson; Vice-Chair Land Anderson; Commissioners Mark Ashley, Justin Layman, Patrick Mazzarella, Pete Palmer, and Joel Stempil

STAFF: Kelly Corsette, Communications/Public Affairs Director

GUESTS: Dana Allmond, Arizona Dept. of Veterans' Services Director

1. Call to Order/ Roll Call

Chair Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

Members present as listed above.

2. Public Comment

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

3. Discussion and possible action to approve April 4, 2023 commission meeting minutes

COMMISSIONER STEMPIL MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 4, 2023 VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER PALMER SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR JACKSON, VICE-CHAIR ANDERSON, COMMISSIONERS ASHLEY, LAYMAN, MAZZARELLA, PALMER, AND STEMPIL VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

4. Presentation and discussion with Dana Allmond, Lt. Col, U.S. Army (Ret.), Director, Arizona Department of Veterans' Services

Dana Allmond, Arizona Department of Veterans' Services Director, gave a presentation outlining services offered through the Department of Veterans' Services. As part of her presentation, she reviewed her military and civilian public service background; providing veteran advocacy and filling service gaps in Arizona; and direct services offered by the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services. She talked in detail about services offered by the agency, which include Veterans' Benefit Counselors (VBC), Arizona State Veteran Homes, and Arizona Veterans Memorial Cemeteries. She noted that veterans and family members in search of benefit counselors can call (602)535-1215 or visit the Department of Veterans' Services website to make a virtual or in-person appointment. She also spoke in detail about statewide programs, including the Arizona Military Family Relief Fund, Veteran Tool Kit, Arizona Veterans Donation Fund, Arizona State Approving Agency, Arizona Veterans' Supportive Campuses, and the Gold Star Military Medal.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. She explained that with the permission of the individual veteran, the Department of Veterans' Services is able to access medical files from other agencies through a certified system. The agency regularly interacts with the National Cemetery and is able to assist family members of qualifying veterans in streamlining burial services. She said that there are programs directed towards the National Guard and Reserve, but questions about those programs would be better answered if directed to other people in her agency. Ms. Allmond explained that the majority of the funding the Department of Veterans' Services receives comes from the federal government reimbursement program, through federal grants, and some through state allocation funds.

When asked to categorize the state of veterans in Arizona, Ms. Allmond said that she is not satisfied with the haves and have-nots and people not realizing that they qualify for benefits. Discussion ensued regarding tracking veteran population statistics, including homeless and suicide statistics within the state and the city and ways to more efficiently refer veterans for the Scottsdale HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) program. It was suggested that the Department of Veterans' Services network with boards/commissions in other cities and other organizations listed on the City of Scottsdale's veterans' website and also put emphasis on creating public service announcements to let veterans know where they can direct questions regarding benefits. Ms. Allmond opined that it would be beneficial for her assistant deputy director in governmental affairs to present to the Commission.

5. Discussion, updates and possible recommendations regarding the Veterans Advisory Commission Work Plan

Commissioner Palmer commented that he would like to update the Arizona quality of life manual with information on assistance available through the Arizona Department of Veterans' Services. Commissioner Layman committed to assisting with the review of the quality of life manual once he completes his "Be Connected" certification training in a few weeks.

Mr. Corsette will confirm that Arizona Department of Veterans' Services information and contact information for Dana Allmond are included on the City's Veterans' website.

6. Commission members' reports, updates, and suggestions for future agenda items

Commissioner Stempil commented that recently he has seen a lot of television shows talking about financial education for veterans.

No suggestions were made for future agenda items.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 7, 2023.

7. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER ASHLEY MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VICE-CHAIR ANDERSON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR JACKSON, VICE-CHAIR ANDERSON, COMMISSIONERS ASHLEY, LAYMAN, MAZZARELLA, PALMER, AND STEMPIL VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

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