



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION
Regular Meeting MINUTES**

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

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

PRESENT: Vice-Chair Justin Layman, Commissioners Mark Ashley, Steven Jackson, Patrick Mazzarella (MS Teams), Pete Palmer, and Joe Stempel

ABSENT: Chair Land Anderson

STAFF: Kelly Corsette, Communications/Public Affairs Director

GUESTS: Stephen Casares, City Council candidate
Abe McCann, City of Tempe Veterans Services Coordinator

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Vice Chair Layman called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Members present as listed above.

2. Public Comment

Major Stephen Casares introduced himself as a veteran and a city council candidate. He reviewed his background and core values of family, integrity and community. He stated his three top initiatives are veterans' advocacy, mental health, and resource management.

3. Discussion and possible action to approve February 7, 2024, commission meeting minutes

COMMISSIONER JACKSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 7, 2024, VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER PALMER SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). VICE-CHAIR LAYMAN, COMMISSIONERS ASHLEY, JACKSON, MAZZARELLA, PALMER, AND STEMPIL VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

4. Presentation, discussion, and possible recommendations: Abe McCann, City of Tempe Veteran Services Coordinator

Abe McCann, City of Tempe Veteran Services Coordinator, gave a presentation, outlining his duties and areas of focus. He said that he works with various departments in the city to ensure that their staff are aware of programs available to veterans and their families and to provide technical guidance about the veteran community. He has developed a cultural competency training program that is used to train staff to better understand military jargon and skill sets. He said that the City of Tempe works with Veterans Five-to-Nine, which is a non-profit program that provides emergency food, housing and transportation for veterans and military people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The city has partnered with the Care 7 program to provide crisis response as part of the EMS system. Mr. McCann works with the Chamber of Commerce military affairs committee to assist companies who are actively seeking to hire veterans and he consults with different departments on veteran-related legislation that could affect veterans living in the City of Tempe. He also spoke about his community outreach efforts. He stated that Tempe's policy is not to turn away any veteran in need, even if the veteran is not a Tempe resident and it means researching to find resources available near where that veteran is located.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. McCann said that he worked with city council members, the city manager, and department heads to create a veterans' strategic plan. Because he works with departments that are already established in the city, the strategic plan operates under their existing reporting procedures and performance measures and is regularly reviewed and updated. He explained that Care 7 was an existing non-profit organization that provides social workers to go out on emergency calls when police and fire departments need assistance with a mental health issue. Care 7 is now a part of the City's crisis response team and is funded partially through the city and partially through state and federal grants. Commissioner Stempil asked how Tempe's Veterans Services coordinated with all the departments through which it works. Mr. McCann explained the strategic planning currently in place and how it is updated regularly.

In response to questions, Mr. Corsette noted that the City of Scottsdale does not have a similar position for a veteran's services coordinator. He also noted that City of Scottsdale currently has no mental health emergency response team members, such as Care 7. Commissioners expressed an interest in comparing Tempe's point-in-time count information with the City of Scottsdale's and learning more about their crisis response team. Mr. McCann said he could arrange for Care 7 to give the commission a presentation.

5. Discussion and possible recommendations for the Vietnam Veterans event March 29

Mr. Corsette announced that the Vietnam Veterans event will be held on National Vietnam Veterans Day, March 29, 2024, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Scottsdale Civic Center East Bowl. He has registered the event with the official Vietnam War 50th Anniversary registry. The event will include a guest speaker courtesy of the Veterans Heritage Project, opportunities for Vietnam veterans to receive their recognition pins, and a display of historic vehicles. He has registered the event with the official Vietnam War 50th anniversary registry. Vice-Chair Layman noted that the guest speaker is a Vietnam army nurse and that there will also be Honor Health military people available to talk about helicopter medic training

6. Discussion and updates to the Veterans Advisory Commission Work Plan

There was no discussion regarding the work plan.

7. Commissioner reports, staff updates, and suggestions for future agenda items

Vice-Chair Layman gave a report on the Veterans Heritage Project Gala, which he attended on Saturday, March 2, 2024.

Future Meeting agenda items could include:

- Legislative update

8. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER STEMPLI MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER PALMER SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). VICE-CHAIR LAYMAN, COMMISSIONERS ASHLEY, JACKSON, MAZZARELLA, PALMER, AND STEMPLI VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

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