

**CITY OF LONG BEACH
VETERANS AFFAIRS
COMMISSION MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2018
HEALTH DEPARTMENT MAIN BUILDING,
2525 GRAND AVENUE, ROOM 204, 5:00 PM**

Carlos Gonzalez, Chair
Mike Shaknovich, Vice Chair
Ryan Antes, Commissioner
Sylvia Contreras, Commissioner



Juanita Doplemore, Commissioner
Ricky Fernandez, Commissioner
Gustavo Orozco, Commissioner
Josh Smith, Commissioner
Kiniko Willingham, Commissioner

FINISHED AGENDA & MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 5:12 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Ryan Antes, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky

Present: Fernandez, Gustavo Orozco, Kiniko Willingham, Mike
Shaknovich and Carlos Gonzalez

Commissioners Josh Smith

Excused:

18-001VA Recommendation to approve minutes for the Veterans Affairs
Commission meeting on December 13, 2017.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Antes, seconded by
Commissioner Orozco, to approve recommendation. The
motion carried by the following vote:**

Yes: 9 - Ryan Antes, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky
Fernandez, Gustavo Orozco, Josh Smith, Kiniko Willingham,
Mike Shaknovich and Carlos Gonzalez

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

REGULAR AGENDA

- 18-002VA Recommendation to discuss presentation by Sue Pollard, American Gold Star Mothers

The national president of American Gold Star Mothers (AGSM), Sue Pollard, spoke to the Commission about the organization and its current focus. Pollard is based in Orange County and honors her son Justin's memory through her involvement with AGSM. AGSM operates American Gold Star Manor in Long Beach, which is now being refurbished. (The Manor houses 400 seniors, including American Gold Star families and Veterans). The national organization currently focuses on curbing the suicide rate among Veterans in partnership with Working Dogs for Vets. In addition, here in Long Beach, AGSM engages in various activities such as serving breakfast to Veterans who reside in the spinal unit at the Long Beach VA, supplying items to the spinal unit store such as toiletries, socks, flip flops and sweatpants and sweatshirts, and supplying Veterans' families with gift cards to use during their stays at the Fisher House on the Long Beach VA campus. The Commission discussed options for recognizing Ms. Pollard and supporting AGSM.

A motion was made by Commissioner Doplemore to approve a recommendation for individual Commissioners to contribute funds to purchase a gift for Ms. Pollard; to donate toiletries and other items to AGSM to support its work, and to place on the agenda for next time consideration of how to promote and engage the public in a donation drive. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Shaknovich and carried by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Ryan Antes, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky Fernandez, Gustavo Orozco, Josh Smith, Kiniko Willingham, Mike Shaknovich and Carlos Gonzalez

- 18-003VA Recommendation to discuss draft of Annual Report

Staff led the Commission through a review of the draft document. Staff will send the draft document via e-mail with feedback due on Wednesday, January 24. Staff will communicate with the City Manager's office regarding the timeline for presenting the report to City Council.

- 18-004VA Recommendation to discuss Veterans Affairs Strategic Plan and *ad hoc* subcommittee

The Commission reviewed the memorandum prepared for the City Manager's office regarding the preparation of a strategic plan and formed a strategic planning *ad hoc* subcommittee. Commissioners Shaknovich, Gonzalez, Doplemore and Contreras volunteered for the subcommittee.

- 18-005VA Recommendation to discuss revised social media parameters document

The Commission reviewed the draft social media guidelines document and made suggestions. The guidelines address Veterans-related content by subject areas, posting guidelines and procedures and a content style guide for the Veterans Commission's Facebook group page. The guidelines will be emailed to Commissioners to provide any additional feedback by January 24. The information, resources and social support *ad hoc* subcommittee will review the document and the Commissioners feedback as part of its meeting. Finally, the Commission will review a revised version at the next meeting.

The goal is to post interesting information, gain visibility and increase the number of followers for the page. Accordingly, staff encouraged Commissioners to find relevant content and to follow this simple process: first, Commissioners enter the information for the post, second, the page administrator (staff) reviews the post and, third, the post goes "live".

STAFF REPORT

Staff reminded the Commissioners to set meeting dates for their respective *ad hoc* subcommittees. Staff also reminded the Commissioners to send their agenda items two weeks prior to each meeting and to contact staff via email or telephone if they cannot attend a meeting so that the absence may be marked as an excused absence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The terms for the Chair and Co-Chair positions are one year, which is up in February. Accordingly, at the February meeting, the Commission will elect a chair and a vice chair. Chair Gonzalez asked the *ad hoc* subcommittees to meet prior to the next meeting and to establish regular meeting times. Reports from each of the *ad hoc* subcommittees will be agendaized for the February meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Gonzalez moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.