

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

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018
HEALTH DEPARTMENT MAIN BUILDING
2525 GRAND AVENUE, ROOM 204, 5:00 PM**

Gustavo Orozco, Chair
Juanita Doplemore, Vice Chair
Ryan Antes, Commissioner
Sylvia Contreras, Commissioner
Ricky Fernandez, Commissioner



Carlos Gonzalez, Commissioner
Mike Shakhovich, Commissioner
Josh Smith, Commissioner
Kiniko Willingham, Commissioner

FINISHED AGENDA & MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Gonzalez called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Ryan Antes, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky

Present: Fernandez, Josh Smith, Kiniko Willingham, Mike Shakhovich and
Carlos Gonzalez

Commissioners Gustavo Orozco and Gustavo Orozco

Excused:

1. 18-006VA Recommendation to approve minutes for the Veterans Affairs
Commission meeting on January 10, 2018.

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

Yes: 8 - Ryan Antes, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky
Fernandez, Josh Smith, Kiniko Willingham, Mike
Shakhovich and Carlos Gonzalez

Excused: 2 - Gustavo Orozco and Gustavo Orozco

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. 18-007VA Recommendation to discuss awareness and recognition *ad hoc* subcommittee report - Commissioners Orozco and Contreras

The subcommittee met with LBFD to explore strengthening or enhancing messaging around illegal 4th of July fireworks and their effects on Veterans with PTSD. It also met with Partners of Parks to inventory existing Veterans memorials and commemorations in Long Beach parks and to explore future possibilities. The subcommittee also discussed the Commission's participation in the renovation of the Belmont Veterans Memorial Pier, part of Mayor Garcia's 8 by 2028 initiative (eight capital improvement projects by the Summer Olympics of 2028).

The subcommittee recommended that the Commission seek partnerships with other organizations and agencies around Veteran PTSD firework awareness; strengthen its partnership with Partners of Parks; contact CD 9 and other stakeholders about the possibility of a commemorative brick program in Houghton Park, and actively participate in the renovation of the Pier.

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

3. 18-008VA Recommendation to discuss economic development *ad hoc* subcommittee report - Commissioners Fernandez and Doplemore

Commissioner Fernandez indicated that the trades have a pressing need for skilled workers as the Baby Boomers retire. The trades offer training, good pay and room for advancement; they just need individuals who are willing to learn. The subcommittee conceptualized a meet and greet event as a means for linking employers in the trades with potential employees, namely, Veterans transitioning out of active duty who may be disabled or simply unaware of their career options. Fernandez has already laid the ground work for partnerships between the trades (local businesses), the VA and the VA's Veterans Rehabilitation Office (VRO).

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

4. 18-009VA Recommendation to discuss under-represented groups *ad hoc* subcommittee report - Commissioners Willingham and Smith

The subcommittee moved its report to the March meeting.

This VA-Agenda Item was laid over.

5. 18-010VA Recommendation to discuss information, resources and social support *ad hoc* subcommittee report - Commissioners Shaknovich and Ryan

The subcommittee met to review the social media guidelines and discussed the need to activate the Facebook group page more regularly. Commissioner Antes collected a number of "Fun Facts" about the military, which will be posted occasionally on one of our "social media graphics ("postcards") designated for this purpose.

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

6. 18-011VA Recommendation to discuss supply donation drive for American Gold Star Mothers - Commissioner Doplemore

This VA-Agenda Item was laid over.

7. 18-012VA Recommendation to discuss final revised social media guidelines document

The Commission reviewed and discussed a revised version of the social media guidelines document and recommended some minor edits for clarity.

A motion was made by Chair Gonzalez, seconded by Commissioner Antes, to approve the social media guidelines document. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Ryan Antes, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky Fernandez, Josh Smith, Kiniko Willingham, Mike Shaknovich and Carlos Gonzalez

Excused: 2 - Gustavo Orozco and Gustavo Orozco

8. 18-013VA Recommendation to discuss revised Annual Report document

Only one change was made to the Annual Report draft since the Commission reviewed it at the January meeting. Staff inserted the amount expended to operate the Commission for 12 months: \$ 59,277.06. Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the Annual Report but later withdrew it because the Commission's approval is not required. The report will be submitted as a memo from the Health Department director to the City Manager. The Commission explored the opportunities the report affords for making recommendations to the Council as well as greater visibility for the Commission should it be allowed to present the report at a Council meeting. The Commission decided to postpone submission of the report for one month so they can add their recommendations. Commissioners are encouraged to make recommendations regardless of subject matter or which *ad hoc* subcommittee they are seated upon. These recommendations will be reviewed at the next meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Antes to approve the following recommendation: Commissioners are invited to submit their recommendations for the Annual Report by March 7 and to contact their respective Council members about presenting the report as an agenda item. Motion seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Ryan Antes, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky Fernandez, Josh Smith, Kiniko Willingham, Mike Shakhovich and Carlos Gonzalez

Excused: 2 - Gustavo Orozco and Gustavo Orozco

9. 18-014VA Recommendation to conduct the annual nomination and election of officers

The Commission elected a new Chair and Vice Chair.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gonzalez, seconded by Commissioner Antes, to approve the election of Gus Orozco as Chair and Juanita Doplemore as Vice Chair of the Commission. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Ryan Antes, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky Fernandez, Josh Smith, Kiniko Willingham, Mike Shaknovich and Carlos Gonzalez

Excused: 2 - Gustavo Orozco and Gustavo Orozco

STAFF REPORT

Staff had no additional items to report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Smith announced the second annual Long Beach Homebrewers' Red, White and Brews homebrewing competition, which will take place on Saturday, July 7, 2018. A portion of the proceeds will go to a non-profit organization that serves Veterans. Homebrewers is seeking support for this event in terms of volunteers and sponsors. Commissioner Willingham announced a Veterans event on Saturday, April 7, which will feature dominos and card game competitions, a barbeque and watching the UFC fight. It will take place at the VA Gardena Community Based Outpatient Clinic.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Gonzalez moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m.