

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

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 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 Shaknovich, Commissioner
Josh Smith, Commissioner
Kiniko Willingham, Commissioner

FINISHED AGENDA & MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Ryan Antes, Sylvia Contreras, Ricky Fernandez, Carlos

Present: Gonzalez, Josh Smith, Kiniko Willingham, Juanita Doplemore
and Gustavo Orozco

Commissioners Mike Shaknovich

Excused:

1. 18-062VA Recommendation to approve minutes for the Veterans Affairs
Commission special meeting held on September 19, 2018.

**A motion was made by Commission Antes and seconded by
Commissioner Fernandez to approve the recommendation. The
motion carried by the following vote:**

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

Excused: 1 - Mike Shaknovich

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Navarro Gonzalez introduced himself and the organization Project Welcome Home Troops. Project Welcome Home Troops is a subdivision of the International Association for Human Values, an organization active in 130 countries around the globe. Its focus is on teaching Veterans breathing techniques, meditation and forms of yoga to help them cope with mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety. He hopes to schedule workshops for Veterans in Long Beach next spring.

REGULAR AGENDA

CHAIR REPORT

Chair Orozco did not provide a report. The topics of such a report will be covered by today's agenda items.

2. 18-063VA Recommendation to discuss Veterans Strategic Plan

In September, the Commission reviewed a draft of a stakeholder interview protocol. The Commissioners' recommendations were incorporated into a second draft, the subject of review and discussion at the October meeting. The Commission clarified the essential function of the stakeholder interviews, which is to serve as a Veterans services gap analysis. In other words, organizations and individuals with a "stake" in the well-being of Veterans in our community must be asked for their thoughts and opinions on how Veterans are currently being served and how they may be better served moving forward.

The Commission suggested revisions to the wording of some of the questions and re-ordered the questions so that opinion-oriented inquiry comes at the end of the interview. Finally, the group added the question "what other organizations should we talk to?" to the protocol. The group also reviewed the list of stakeholders compiled at the last meeting and added some new ones. Commissioners have been paired as teams to carry out assigned stakeholder interviews.

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

3. 18-064VA Recommendation to discuss Habitat for Humanity Veterans Day build event

Chair Orozco sits on the Veterans Advisory Council for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles (HFH GLA), which will be holding a Veterans Build Day on Friday, November 9. The build will take place at US VETS in Long Beach and involve several painting projects and a garden-related building project. HFH GLA reached out to invite Commissioners the event. Orozco emphasized the need for Commissioners to confirm their participation in this very popular Build Day by registering online as soon as possible.

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

4. 18-065VA Recommendation to discuss Lone Sailor Recognition Ceremony

The Commission is co-chairing Partners of Parks' Lone Sailor Recognition Ceremony this upcoming Saturday, October 13. Chair Orozco has secured a guest speaker, Captain Braden Philips, US Navy, retired, and an Army reservist to play taps. In addition, Orozco helped to secure a donation of waters and flowers from Forest Lawn Long Beach. He encouraged all Commissioners to attend the event.

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

5. 18-066VA Recommendation to discuss Veterans Day Parade and Celebration Activities

Staff was encouraged to work with a designer on a simple form with checkboxes (per the top three issues question) that also includes a write-in space for "other" and spaces to fill in with contact information. Staff asked Commissioners to confirm their participation in the parade and to staff the booth. Approximately four Commissioners will ride in the parade. Commissioners will have the opportunity to sign up for booth shifts via email.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Long Beach State Athletics and American Red Cross Long Beach, South Bay and Rio Hondo are partnering to present "In Honor of Our Veterans" a special tribute to our Veterans at the men's basketball game on Wednesday, December 5. Veterans can procure up to four free tickets to the game and must RSVP by November 16. This item has been posted on the Commission's Facebook group page.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

No future agenda items were discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Orozco adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.