

Ricky Fernandez, Chair
Ryan Antes, Vice Chair
Sylvia Contreras, Commissioner
Juanita Doplemore, Commissioner
Carlos Gonzalez, Commissioner



Gustavo Orozco, Commissioner
Mike Shakhovich, Commissioner
Josh Smith, Commissioner

FINISHED AGENDA & MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING - 5:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Fernandez called the meeting to order at 5:14 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Juanita Doplemore, Gustavo Orozco, Josh Smith, Ryan Antes
Present: and Ricky Fernandez

Commissioners Sylvia Contreras, Carlos Gonzalez and Mike Shakhovich
Excused:

19-025VA Recommendation to to approve minutes for the Veterans Affairs
Commission meeting held on June 12, 2019.

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

Yes: 5 - Juanita Doplemore, Gustavo Orozco, Josh Smith, Ryan
Antes and Ricky Fernandez

Excused: 3 - Sylvia Contreras, Carlos Gonzalez and Mike Shakhovich

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

REGULAR AGENDA

19-026VA Recommendation to discuss community input on Veterans' Strategic Plan

The Commission discussed the three strategic plan community participation meetings held so far. While at least two of the meetings, the Beer and Politics session and the Veterans Employment Training Session (VETS) were under-attended, those who showed up provided candid and insightful feedback on the draft recommendations and strategies. Moving forward, we will seek a community partner that can provide stronger support. The next community participation session is part of the Long Beach VA's Town Hall meeting on August 27. This is an important opportunity for Commission visibility. Commissioners Orozco, Smith, and Fernandez committed to attending the session. Commissioners were asked to confirm their participation by August 14.

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

19-027VA Recommendation to discuss Veterans Empowerment Training Sessions

Discussion about the Veterans Empowerment Training Session (VETS) on June 29 continued. More than a dozen Veterans who registered (online) did not show up. With the Veterans community, unfortunately, it is not unusual for people to register and then not follow-through. The fact that the event took place in the summer may have impacted participation, particularly for student Veterans. Moving forward, we need to consider holding VETS on a weekday and in a place where Veterans already congregate (an on-campus Vets. center is an example). A more robust promotional campaign at the City level and on the part of participating Veteran-serving organizations could also help. Finally, we need to seek event co-sponsors and partners with the interest and capacity to provide more robust outreach, promotion and even transportation.

The very informative panel discussion was recorded and the video posted on our Facebook group page. Special thank you to Carlos Gonzalez for recording the session. Other Commissioners in attendance included Chair Fernandez and Commissioners Orozco and Smith.

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

19-028VA Recommendation to discuss Veterans' Strategic Plan

The objective is to publish and distribute the strategic plan in December. Our most important priority now is to make the strategic plan's Recommendations and Strategies as substantive as possible. This means that the strategies need to lend themselves to a work plan, and, as such, lay out specific actions, partners, resources and costs involved with carrying out the recommendations. This will be our focus at the next Commission meeting.

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

No future agenda items were discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Fernandez adjourned the meeting at 6:37 p.m.