

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

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2023
2525 GRAND AVENUE, ROOM 204,
LONG BEACH, CA 90815, 5:00 PM, 5:00 PM**

Jesse Blanco, Chair
Lance Santiago, Vice Chair
Ryan Antes, Commissioner
Sylvia Contreras, Commissioner



Juanita Doplemore, Commissioner
Kenneth Osborn, Commissioner
Mike Shaknovich, Commissioner
Josh Smith, Commissioner

FINISHED AGENDA & DRAFT MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Also in attendance: Gina Overholt, Dr. Jessica Schumer, Jesse Soria, Gus Orozco, James Schotter, Antawnette Blade, and Nivardo Gonzalez.

Commissioners Ryan Antes, Juanita Doplemore, Kenneth Osborn, Mike

Present: Shaknovich and Jesse Blanco

Commissioners Sylvia Contreras, Josh Smith and Lance Santiago

Excused:

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Guests present introduced themselves after roll call but did not ask to speak during public comment.

23-020VA Recommendation to approve minutes for meeting held on July 12, 2023

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

Yes: 4 - Ryan Antes, Kenneth Osborn, Mike Shaknovich and Jesse Blanco

Abstain: 1 - Juanita Doplemore

Excused: 3 - Sylvia Contreras, Josh Smith and Lance Santiago

CHAIR'S REPORT

Meetings will continue to be scheduled on the second Wednesday of each month. Commissioners reminded that their attendance at outside events is on their own behalf, not on behalf of the Commission.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

We continue to receive information and referral calls, build relationships with local organizations that serve Veterans (types of calls and specific organizations mentioned), update the Veteran-Serving Organizations spreadsheet and attend events such as the "Meet A Vet" event at the VA Long Beach (on August 31) and the Sky Resilience Training (offered in partnership with People of the Earth Krew). We are reaching out to Veteran-Serving Organizations, local community-based organizations and City departments per their participation in the Veterans Day Resources Fair. A Commissioner retreat, which must take place in Long Beach, will not take place this quarter as the facilitator's availability did not line up.

REGULAR AGENDA

23-021VA Recommendation to Receive and File Brief Presentation from James Schotter with Veterans Peer Access Network (VPAN)

Mr. Schotter shared VPAN's mission and how it connects Veterans to resources and services. He shared that he accompanies the team that conducts outreach to homeless Veterans (which comprises specialists from various organizations) on a monthly basis. He invited the Commission to tour the USS Iowa.

23-022VA Recommendation to Discuss Commissioners Retreat

This VA-Agenda Item was withdrawn.

23-023VA Recommendation to Discuss Veterans Banners Program

Commissioner Smith reported that the subcommittee met. With approval for the pilot project, identifying and securing the real estate (the location for the 10

pilot banners) is underway and has its challenges. The goal is to have the pilot banners installed by Memorial Day.

This VA-Agenda Item was received and filed.

23-024VA

Recommendation to Discuss Vets Day Celebration

- 1.) Events and fundraising subcommittee has continued to meet. Conversations with Council District offices have continued, and support for the event has been secured from certain offices as well as from the Port of Long Beach, Long Beach City College and the Long Beach Veterans Day Committee. Now, additional structural funding has been approved for Vets. Day and other City-sponsored events.
- 2.) A number of meetings are taking place now (with different bureaus in the Health Department, with Special Events and cross-departmentally) to plan and promote the event, which will be presented at the Council meeting on October 24 and promoted at the Historical Society of Long Beach Cemetery Tour on October 28.
- 3.) We (the Commission and Office of Veterans Support) specifically direct most event promotion activities (including artwork design, ad placement, social media tool kit and postcard production and distribution), and both the Resources Fair and Recognition Ceremony (we reach out and confirming all participating organizations, elected officials, and "pomp and circumstance"), and the flyovers. We are responsible for many additional details (from DJ and Recognition Ceremony scripts and signage to our own booth and the Green Room (check-in for speakers).
- 4.) Mr. Orozco with the Veterans Day Committee asked the Commission to assist with selecting the Grand Marshal, the Veteran-Serving Organization of the year and Community Volunteer of the Year.

**Commissioner Ryan moved to approve recommendation;
Commissioner Doplemore seconded. The motion carried by
the following vote.**

Yes: 5 - Ryan Antes, Juanita Doplemore, Kenneth Osborn, Mike Shaknovich and Jesse Blanco

Excused: 3 - Sylvia Contreras, Josh Smith and Lance Santiago

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Compton Stand Down, Sept 23-25 (show flyer). Call Melanie Martins to volunteer. Next VA Long

Beach Veterans Social Mixer is on Friday, Sept. 29, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Jesse Soria shared POTE Krew's upcoming activities.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Veterans Commission Retreat, Veterans Banners Program, Veterans Day Celebration

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Blanco adjourned the meeting at 6:29 p.m.