

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

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2021  
CD 6 FIELD OFFICE AT ERNEST S. MCBRIDE  
PARK SENIOR & TEEN CENTER, 1550  
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AVE, LONG  
BEACH, CA 90813, 5:00 PM**

Ryan Antes, Chair  
Josh Smith, Vice Chair  
Jesse Blanco, Commissioner  
Sylvia Contreras, Commissioner  
Juanita Doplemore, Commissioner



Ricky Fernandez, Commissioner  
Gustavo Orozco, Commissioner  
Mike Shaknovich, Commissioner

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**FINISHED AGENDA & MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Antes called meeting to order at 5 p.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Also in attendance: John Oppenheim, Felicia Wieser, Senay Kenfe and Chork Nim with Councilmember Suely Saro's office and Gina Overholt, Commission Coordinator.

**Commissioners** Jesse Blanco, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky  
**Present:** Fernandez, Gustavo Orozco, Mike Shaknovich, Josh Smith and  
Ryan Antes

**3. FLAG SALUTE**

**4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Senay Kenfe, District 6 resident in attendance, asked the Commission if a housing element is part of the Veterans' Strategic Plan. Chork Nim invited the Commission to the MLK, Jr, Park Neighborhood Cleanup and Statue Restoration Unveiling on Saturday, 10/23, from 9 a.m. to noon.

**5. CHECK-IN**

Commission members, members of the public, and new Commissioner for District 6, Lance Santiago, approved at last night's Council meeting, introduced themselves.

6. 21-003VA

Recommendation to approve minutes for Veterans Affairs Commission meeting held on October 13, 2021.

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

**Yes:** 8 - Jesse Blanco, Sylvia Contreras, Juanita Doplemore, Ricky Fernandez, Gustavo Orozco, Mike Shaknovich, Josh Smith and Ryan Antes

7. COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Overholt recognized CD 6 for hosting the meeting at the Ernest S. McBride Senior Center. She asked the Commission to assist with procuring sites for future meetings and to reach out to their contacts and respective Council members accordingly. Ideally, the Commission will hold several consecutive monthly meetings at one location, and then another, throughout the year. Commissioners were reminded to submit their paperwork to receive compensation for attending meetings. Next Commission meeting dates are Wednesday, November 10 and Wednesday, December 8; staff suggested a holiday gathering and potluck for December and Commissioner Shaknovich offered to organize the event. Please see item 10, Report: Veterans Strategic Plan.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

9. REPORT: VETERANS' BANNERS PROGRAM

The ad hoc subcommittee reported on its findings. The cost of a banners program is more costly than anticipated. The City has two approved vendors, Savon Signs and AAA Flag & Banner. The Long Veterans Day Committee may act as a fiscal agent and solicit sponsors to cover the costs. A City department could apply for a 30-day or one-year permit to reduce permitting costs. Conversation continues on how the program will operate, select honorees and ensure an equitable distribution of banners on major thoroughfares throughout the City.

10. REPORT: VETERANS' STRATEGIC PLAN

The Commission reviewed four different cover artwork options and identified their first and second choices. The Commission chose Office of Veterans Support to refer to a proposed office to manage and coordinate the achievement of the goals, strategies and objective identified in the strategic plan. It also reviewed a draft design for the executive summary and Commissioner bios and provided feedback. The plan will not be presented at the Council meeting on November 10, but instead, in December or January (at the latest). The timetable reflects the approvals process for both the plan draft and placing the item on the Council's agenda. (The draft must be approved by the City Manager's office and then revised, finalized and published). A printing company has been identified; the owner is the mother of Long Beach Veteran who was KIA.

## **11. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On October 16, volunteers are needed for a tree planting at American Gold Star Manor. Three local Veterans, including Commission Chair Ryan Antes, shared their stories with the Long Beach Post on the 20th anniversary of 9-11. See their stories at this link:

<https://lbpost.com/news/video-20-years-from-9-11-and-a-long-war-on-terror-in-its-wake> .

Numerous activities are planned around Veterans Day such as the Silkies Hike on 11/06, City of Bellflower re-dedication of existing memorial on 11/10, Veterans Day Festival on 11/13 in CD 9 (Vets. Valor Plaza in Houghton Park, and Atlantic Avenue) featuring live music, a resource fair, food trucks and more. National Wreaths Around America Day is December 18, 2021. See how to sponsor a wreath or volunteer for any Southern California wreath placement activities at this link: <https://www.wreathsaacrossamerica.org/> .

## **12. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

The following items were proposed as future agenda items: reports on the Veterans' Banners Program and Strategic Plan presentation to Council; Veterans' Day events and activities; and, holiday celebration plans and Commission holiday card.

## **13. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Ryan Antes adjourned the meeting at 6:18 p.m.