

TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION
FUND FOR VETERANS' ASSISTANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
APPLICATION PRESENTATION MEETING
January 28, 2021

I. Meeting Called to Order

The FVA Advisory Committee Application Presentation Meeting was held virtually via GoToWebinar. Chairman Reyna called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. The following were present:

Advisory Committee Members

Kerry Reyna
Brian Allen
Dan Ball
Luiz Martinez
Robert O'Reilly
Carrie Sconza
Dale Wallace
Charles Wright

Note: Advisory Committee Member Bobby Ehrig was not in attendance

TVC Staff

Thomas Palladino, TVC Executive Director	Kevin Barber, Commission Vice Chair
Shawn Deabay, TVC Deputy Executive Director	Ervey Leos, FVA
James Bracken, FVA Director	Cindy Orendorff, FVA
Elisabeth Webster, FVA	Allegra Geller, FVA
Julie Dillard, FVA	John Goodell, TVC General Council

Chairman Kerry Reyna welcomed all in attendance. Committee Member Dale Wallace led the Pledge of Allegiance to the US Flag and Committee Member Dan Ball led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag.

II. Introduction of Advisory Committee Members

Chairman Reyna introduced new members of the Committee and invited members to introduce themselves. She introduced Commission Vice Chair Kevin Barber, who gave a brief statement and thank you to TVC and FVA staff. The Committee Members gave short introductions.

III. Introduction of General Counsel John Goodell

Chairman Reyna introduced the new TVC General Counsel, John Goodell. Mr. Goodell was invited to speak further during the time allocated for Agenda V. Review of administrative rules and requirements of the Committee.

IV. Public Comment

Chairman Reyna opened the floor to members of the public. No public comments.

V. Review of administrative rules and requirements of the Committee

Chairman Reyna introduced FVA Director James Bracken who discussed the 2020 Veterans Needs Assessment Study, the Request for Applications (RFA) program goals, and Commission priorities.

TVC General Counsel John Goodell reviewed the Open Meeting Act, Conflict of Interest Policy, Public Information Act, Texas Administrative Code, Non-Disclosure Information, and new Committee member training requirements. He concluded by inviting any questions from the committee. No questions were asked.

VI. Election of Chairman of the of the Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee.

MOTION: Nominate Kerry Reyna to continue as Chairman of the Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee.

MADE BY: Robert O'Reilly

SECONDED BY: Dale Wallace

ACTION: Motion passes: 8 Y; 0 N

VII. Election of Vice-Chair of the Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee

MOTION: Nominate Charles Wright as Vice-Chairman of the Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee

MADE BY: Kerry Reyna

SECONDED BY: Dan Ball

ACTION: Motion passes: 8 Y; 0 N

VIII. Approval of the minutes of December 11, 2020, Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee Meeting

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the October 30, 2019 FVA Advisory Committee meeting as presented.

MADE BY: Brian Allen

SECONDED BY: Charles Wright

ACTION: Motion passes: 8 Y; 0 N

IX. Four-minute presentations from eligible 2021-2022 VTC Grant applicants

Chairman Reyna introduced James Bracken to review how the presentations will proceed. Elisabeth Webster will act as moderators and cue the presenter when it is their time to speak. Julie Dillard will be the official timekeeper. At the 4-minute mark Julie will notify the speaker that they have met their mark and will be placed on mute. The speakers will be unmuted only to answer questions.

The Committee heard remote presentations from the following applicants from 8:46 to 9:01:

1. VTC Guadalupe County – presented by Abigail Whitaker, Assistant County Attorney
2. El Paso – presented by Gilbert Carrasco, Compliance Officer
3. Bell County – presented Katherine Marin, Director of Specialty Courts/Social Work

X. Four-minute presentations from eligible 2021-2022 VCSO Grant applicants

The Committee heard presentations from the following applicants from 9:02 to 9:16:

1. Willacy County – Daniel Gomez, Veterans Service Officer
2. Harris County – Dave Lewis, Director
3. El Paso County – Carl Dwyer, Veterans Service Officer

BREAK CALLED at 9:17am by Chairman Reyna

MEETING RECONVENED at 9:27am

XI. Four-minute presentations from eligible 2021-2022 Housing for Texas Heroes Grant applicants

The Committee heard presentations from the following applicants from 9:33 to 9:54:

1. Montgomery County Habitat for Humanity – Vicki Johnson, Executive Director
2. Rebuilding Together Houston – Christine Holland, CEO
3. Rebuilding Together Austin – Jesse Porter, Executive Director
4. Meals on Wheels of Tarrant County, Iris Bruton, Client Assistance Manager

XII. Four-minute presentations from eligible 2021-2022 Veterans Mental Health Grant applicants

Dan Ball recused himself from participating in this section of applications due to personal knowledge of one of the applications.

The Committee heard presentations from the following applicants from 9:55 to 11:13:

1. Jake Es Riding Round Up – Paige Courtney, Director of Operations
2. ANEWENTRY – Peter Daniels, Executive Director
3. United States Veterans Initiative (U.S. VETS) – Joshua Albright, Director of Behavioral Health
4. Emergence Health Network – Kellie Burns-Franco, Program Manager of Veterans Services
5. Veterans Freedom Retreat – Bud Hughes, President
6. Rise Recovery – Evita Morin, CEO
7. Equest, Joan Cutler, Veterans Program Manager
8. 22Kill – Tempa Sherrill, COO
9. Pecan Valley MHMR Region – Ashley Womack, Chief of Behavioral Health Sciences
10. Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston – Estrella Colon, Director of Women Veterans Program
11. The Council on Recovery – Mary Beck, Executive Vice President
12. Veterans Freedom Retreat – Bud Hughes, President

BREAK CALLED at 12:30 pm by Chairman Reyna

MEETING RECONVENED at 1:45 pm

XIII. Four-minute presentations from eligible 2021-2022 General Assistance Grant applicants

The Committee heard presentations from the following applicants from 1:50 to 4:00:

1. Family Service Center of Houston & Harris County – Tracey Burnett-Greenup, Chief Program Services Officer
2. Combined Arms – Mia Garcia, Texas Veterans Network Director
3. Lone Star Legal Aid – Justin Thompson, Managing Attorney
4. Sabine Valley Regional MHMR Center (Community Healthcare) – Ken Hanson, Veterans Peer Navigator
5. CLC, Inc. – Amy Hall, Executive Director
6. United States Veterans Initiative (U.S. VETS) – Oudrey Hervey, Executive Director, U.S. VETS Houston
7. ANEWENTRY – Peter Daniels, Executive Director
9. Family Service Association of San Antonio – Kim Arispe, Director.
10. East Texas Veterans Community Council (Camp V) – Michael Cichowicz, Executive Director and Susie Campbell, Founder
11. U.G.M. Dallas – Donald Clemons, Program Manager, Veterans Programs
12. Citizens Development Center DBA Achieve – Diane Jones, Associate Executive Director
13. East Texas Council of Government – Vince Huerta, Director of Transportation
14. Worklife Ministry, Inc. DBA Worklife Institute – Diana Dale, CEO and Director, TX Veterans Transition Program
15. Goodwill Industries of South Texas – Rachel Loera, Vice President of Mission Services
16. TX Rio Grande Legal Aid – Renee Trevino, Attorney, Team Manager of Veterans Advocacy Project
17. The Council on Alcohol & Drug Abuse – Coastal Bend – Darak Tate, Community Outreach Specialist
18. Ft Bend Seniors Meals on Wheels & Much, Much More – Leah Ghobrial, Deputy Executive Director
19. Goodwill Industries of Fort Worth, Kristen Williams, Reg Dir
20. NPower – Chris Starling, Interim Executive Director

21. South East Texas Regional Planning Commission – Bonnie Brooks, Outreach Coordinator
22. Pecan Valley MHMR Region – Joshua Morrison, Veteran Services Coordinator
23. YWCA El Paso del Norte Region – Sylvia Acosta, Chief Executive Officer
24. Skillpoint Alliance – Aaron Hill, Director of Programs
25. Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston – Estrella Colon, Director of Women Veterans Program
26. Family Eldercare – Nikki Peterson, Rapid Rehousing Case Manager
25. Rolling Plains Mgmt Corp – Mark Halsell, Deputy Director
26. Operation Blue Shield DBA One Community USA – Jeremy Lampier, Director of Reentry
27. Texas National Guard Family Support Foundation – Gabriel Zamora, Sergeant Major
28. Council on Recovery – Mary Beck, Executive Vice President
29. Texas VFW Foundation – Miles Nelson, Veterans Assistance Program Coordinator

BREAK CALLED at 3:03 pm by Chairman Reyna

MEETING RECONVENED at 3:15 pm

XIV. Discussion and review of grant application and evaluation materials and procedures for using GovGrants for Committee members

Chairman Reyna introduced James Bracken who discussed how FVA provides general information about the binders, website, and review process. Any questions about specific applications would not be addressed in a public meeting.

Elisabeth Webster provided training on the GovGrants Application Review process and stated that the Committee members will receive a user guide. The FVA Advisory Committee Member list on the TVC website had errors in home locations for some of the members. Ms. Webster ensured those locations will be corrected.

James Bracken provided an overview of shared additional information with the Advisory Committee regarding grant renewals, new grants, and funding. The Advisory Committee will have six weeks from today to review, rank, indicate recommendation or not, and list the recommended award amount. These are due no later than March 11, 2021. Following the scoring of eligible applications, the Advisory Committee will most likely need to hold a special meeting in April to determine how to review the application recommendations and the eligible renewals, in order to align with the total amount of grant funding available.

XV. Discussion to set the date, time, and location of the next FVA Advisory Committee meeting.

FVA staff tentatively scheduled March 24 or 25, 2021 for the Advisory Committee Recommendation Meeting. Chairman Reyna recommended holding a virtual meeting again for those dates. There were no objections to the virtual meeting. Discussion followed regarding whether there would need to be two days for the meeting. James Bracken stated that the two dates were originally selected to provide procurement with options in case the meeting was held at a physical location. Chairman Reyna asked the Committee members if March 25, 2021 would be acceptable. There were no objections. March 25, 2021 was set as the date for the Advisory Committee Recommendation Meeting.

XVI. Adjournment

Committee Member Closing Comments. All Committee members addressed and commended the efforts of all individuals involved.

MOTION: Adjournment of the FVA Advisory Committee Application Presentation Meeting

MADE BY: Carrie Sconza

SECONDED BY: Dan Ball

ACTION: Motion passes: 8 Y; 0 N

Meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.

Minutes Approved: _____

Kerry Reyna, Chairman