

Texas Veterans Commission Meeting Minutes

Fourth Quarterly Meeting (FY 2018)

August 9, 2018

I. Call to order.

Chairman Eliseo Cantu called to order the 4th Quarterly Commission Meeting of the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) at 9:00 a.m. on August 9, 2018 at the Stephen F. Austin Building, Room 170, 1700 N. Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas 78701.

The following Commissioners, constituting a quorum were present:

Eliseo "Al" Cantu, Jr. Chairman
Dan Moran, Commissioner
Kevin Barber, Commissioner
Kimberlee Joos, Commissioner
Laura Koerner, Commissioner

Also present was Thomas P. Palladino, Executive Director.

Also present: See attached list.

Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag was led by Commissioner Kevin Barber and Commissioner Dan Moran led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag. Chip Osborne led the opening prayer.

Introduction of new TVC staff members:

Ileana Vasquez – FVA – Grant Coordinator
Marcela Clay – VETS ED – Program Specialist
Vernon Garcia – VETS ED – Program Specialist

II. Public Comment.

None.

III. Approve the Minutes of the 3rd Quarterly Commission Meeting held May 9, 2018 and Special Commission Meeting held June 7, 2018.

The minutes for the 3rd Quarterly Commission Meeting held on May 9, 2018 and Special Commission Meeting held June 7, 2018 were previously distributed to the Commissioners.

MOTION: Approve the minutes of the 3rd Quarterly Commission Meeting held on May 9, 2018 as presented and Special Commission Meeting held June 7, 2018.

MADE BY: Vice Chairman Dan Moran

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

IV. Annual Election of Vice Chairman and Secretary of Commission.

Nomination was made on election of Vice Chairman of the Commission.

MOTION: To elect, Dan Moran as the Vice Chairman.
MADE BY: Commissioner, Kevin Barber
SECONDED BY: Commissioner, Laura Koerner
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

Nomination was made on election of Secretary of the Commission.

MOTION: To elect Kevin Barber as the Secretary
MADE BY: Commissioner, Dan Moran
SECONDED BY: Commissioner, Kimberlee Joos
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

V. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Agency Programs and Division.

The Commissioners reviewed the Quarterly Program Reports that were previously provided. Directors were provided the opportunity to brief the Commission on any new items or highlight significant items that occurred within their program or division.

Shawn Deabay, Director of Program Operations, reported on the Women Veteran program celebrated Women Veterans Day on 12 June 2018 at the Texas Capital steps, as part of that a roundtable discussion to find solutions to problems facing Women Veterans. Healthcare has 12 staff members, 6181 cases worked. Veterans Education, there a 60, 698 individuals taking advantage of the VA Educational Benefits, Hazlewood Act there are 39,358 individuals taking advantage, 62% is Legacy. Veteran Entrepreneur on January 1, 2016 Senate Bill 1049, waived fees to veteran owned businesses. 4,320 new veteran owned businesses have been formed.

Victor Polanco, Director of Claims Representation and Counseling, highlighted VetraSpec program is up and running back in May, to date we have filed 2500 forms to VBMS. Sunset had asked us to develop some type of appointment process. We have 10 offices around the state that have multiple counselors to assist veterans. We used those facilities as pilot program to test the appointment process.

B. **Chip Osborne**, Director of Resource Management, provided a report on the agency's priorities and activities. TVC has been leaning hard on Automation, this process is now online, to include timesheet, evaluations and financial applications. IT is working with VEP, looking to get the program automated. Sunset recommended to introduce a complaint system that we are working with.

Tycin Thompson, Manager of Training and Events, provided his report on upcoming regional events in Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, El Paso and Austin, anticipating about 82 staff members and we have room for 30 VCSOs. On December 18th there will be VCSO training for anyone needing their hours for certification.

C. **Cruz Montemayor**, Deputy Executive Director, provided an update regarding departure of Government Relations Justin Coleman, accepted a position with comptroller's office. Tim Keesling will be taking a position with HHS.

Tim Keesling, Director of Veterans Mental Health Program, highlighted events since last quarter. Law Enforcement training across the state, more than 1000 officers taking the courses. Helping Veterans Treatment Courts to get established in the Counties via Veteran Treatment Court Summit. Highlighted the great things the Mental Health staff has accomplished. Tish McCullough is an incredible asset and is the right person for this program to land on and keep it operating the way it should be.

VI. Quarterly Report from Advisory Committees (Veterans Communication Advisory Committee, Veterans Employment and Training Advisory Committee, Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee and Veterans County Service Officer Advisory Committee)

Cruz Montemayor, Deputy Executive Director provided a summary of activities conducted by the Veterans Communication Advisory Committee, Veterans Employment and Training Advisory Committee, Fund for Veterans Assistance Advisory Committee and the Veterans County Service Officer Advisory Committee since their last report to the Commission.

VII. Report, presentation and/or action regarding FY 2019 Annual Internal Audit Plan.

Jay Reyes, Auditor McConnell and Jones reported on McConnell and Jones will conduct three audits, perform a risk assessment, conduct prior audit finding follow-up activities, prepare the FY 2020 Annual Internal Audit Plan and prepare the FY 2019 Internal Audit Annual Report in accordance with the Texas Internal Auditing Act. These activities are estimated to require **355 hours**. Areas of concentration: Audit Findings' Remediation Plan and Implementation Progress, Health Care Advocacy Program - Program Structure & Oversight, CAPPS - System Access Controls, System Change Controls.

MOTION: Approve the FY 2019 Annual Internal Audit Plan
MADE BY: Commissioner Kimberlee Joos
SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman Daniel Moran
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

VIII. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Appropriation Year 2018 Third Quarter Operating Statement.

Michelle Nall, Chief Financial Officer, provided a summary of the method of finance and expenditure on each program for the 3rd Quarter of FY2018 ending on May 31, 2018. There were no issues and budget is on target.

IX. Report, presentation and/or action on Fiscal Year 2019 Operating Budget.

Michelle, Nall, Chief Financial Officer provided the report on Fiscal Year 2019 Operating Budget, brief included an Expense Summary and Method of Financing Summary. A copy of the budget was provided prior to today's meeting.

MOTION: Approve the Fiscal Year 2019 Operating Budget
MADE BY: Vice Chairman Daniel Moran
SECONDED BY: Commissioner Kimberlee Joos
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

X. Report, presentation and/or action on regarding the Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021.

Michelle Nall, Chief Financial Officer, during my briefing, I will only be focusing on the main schedules of the LAR. The 3.A. Strategy Request (pg. 3.A. Page 1 of 39) and the 4.A. Exceptional Item Request Schedule (pg. 4.A. Page 1 of 12). The 3.A. Strategy Request schedules are listed by each strategy. In these schedules, TVC is reporting actual expenditures and Method of Finance (MOF) for AY2017, estimates for 2018 and 2019 and our expenditure/MOF request for 2020-21. The General Revenue (GR) fund under the MOFs for 2020-21 are fixed amounts. The GR amount is provided to TVC by the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) and cannot be changed. The other of MOFs are based on what TVC estimates to spend during the 2020-21 biennium.

The 4.A. Exceptional Item Request schedules are requests for additional strategy funding (MOF) over what is being requested in the 3.A. Strategy Request.

Priority 1. Claims - seeking additional funds to fill 25.5 vacant positions

Priority 2. Woman Veterans Program – seeking additional funding and 4.0 FTEs

Priority 3. Veterans Entrepreneur Program – seeking additional funding and 3.0 FTEs

Priority 4. Cybersecurity Capital Project – Results from a cybersecurity assessment conducted in 2017 suggested that TVC has high exposure to significant financial liability risk associated with the loss of veteran personally identifiable information and veteran personal health information.

The submission of the DRAFT LAR, the Exceptional Items as well as the priority order of each Exceptional Item will need the Commissioner’s approval before final submission to the LBB.

MOTION: Approve the Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021

MADE BY: Secretary Kevin Barber

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman Dan Moran

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

XI. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Adoption of New Administrative Rule: 40 TAC, Chapter 461, Subchapter B. Veterans Education Excellence Recognition Award (VEERA) Network.

Madeleine Connor, General Counsel provided a summary of the Adoption of New Administrative Rule: 40 TAC, Chapter 461, Subchapter B. Veterans Education Excellence Recognition Award (VEERA) Network. The proposed amended rule was published in the May 25, 2018, issue of the *Texas Register* at 43 TexReg 3335. The new rules are adopted in compliance with Senate Bill (SB) 1158, 83rd Legislature, Regular Session (2013). SB 1158 amended Chapter 434 of the Texas Government Code, to add Subchapter F regarding the establishment of a Veteran Education Excellence Recognition Award (VEERA) Network. SB 1158 requires the commission to provide recognition to Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) for excellence in providing education and services to veterans. SB 1158 took effect on September 1, 2014.

MOTION: Approve the Adoption of Administrative Rule: 40 TAC, Chapter 461, Subchapter B. Veterans Education Excellence Recognition Award Network

MADE BY: Commissioner Kimberlee Joos

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

XII. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Commission Approval of 2018 the Fund for Veterans' Assistance, Veterans Mental Health Grant to 22Kill in Lieu of Stay the Course.

Charles Catoe, Director of Funds for Veterans Assistance provided a summary. The organization Stay the Course was awarded a 2018 Veterans Mental Health grant at the May 9, 2018 regular Commission Meeting. Stay the Course merged with and is now a program under a different non-profit organization, 22KILL. In accordance with the 2018 Veterans Mental Health Request for Applications Terms and Conditions, III Assignment or Subcontracting, "*No rights, interest, or obligations in an Agreement resulting from this RFA shall be assigned, subcontracted, or delegated by Awarded Applicant without prior written permission...*" therefore, FVA cannot transfer the grant to the new organization, 22KILL. FVA worked with 22KILL to update the Stay the Course application to reflect the new organization including all required attachments. FVA recommends the Commission approve 22KILL for a 2018 Veterans Mental Health grant in the amount of \$75,000.

MOTION: Approve recommendation to approve 22KILL Veterans Mental Health Grant
MADE BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner
SECONDED BY: Commissioner Kimberlee Joos
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

XIII. Report, presentation and/or action regarding the VA Highly Rural Transportation Grants appropriation through the Fund for Veterans' Assistance.

Charles Catoe, Director of Funds for Veterans Assistance provided a summary. In 2014 TVC applied for and received the Highly Rural Transportation grant (HRTG) from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Twenty-one counties expressed interest in participating in the grant providing a wheelchair lift-modified vans to each participating county to transport veterans to and from VA medical appointments. The VA's grant funding comes with restrictions on the van usage, which has limited some transportation options for veterans needing those services. FVA funding would allow these grants to transition into standard General Assistance grants in the Transportation service category as a portion of the VCSO set-aside as these are all VCSO run grant projects. VA has confirmed that if TVC FVA funds these grants, the vans can remain with the counties. Further VA requested as a courtesy that FVA continue performance reporting for a period. FVA recommends Commission approve funding the Highly Rural Transportation grants by authorize the listed amounts for each county that will fund their operations from Sep 15, 2018 through Jun 30, 2019.

MOTION: Tabled
MADE BY: Chairman Eliseo Cantu
SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman Dan Moran
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

XIV. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Commission Approval of Fund for Veterans' Assistance 2019-2020 Request for Applications (RFAs).

Charles Catoe, Director of Funds for Veterans Assistance provided a summary. RFAs are submitted for Commission review and approval and/or guidance. Proposed changes include: Adding language that allows the Commission to renew FVA grants for 12 months for performing grantees as indicated on the 3rd Quarter Performance and Expenditure Report (see RFA page 2 and page 7). Including this option to renew to General Assistance and Veteran Treatment Court RFAs for the 2019-2020 cycle and adding it to Housing for Texas Heroes and Veterans Mental Health

RFAs in the 2020-2021 cycle (see RFA page 2). Publishing the total anticipated amount available across all FVA grant programs for the 2019-2020 as \$26,000,000 (see RFA page 2). Updating the information on applications to reflect the fielding of our online system, GovGrants, as the method to apply. (see RFA page 10). Separating the Program Requirements and Terms & Conditions as a stand-alone document that is standard and applies to all FVA grant programs.

MOTION: Commission Approval of Fund for Veterans' Assistance 2019-2020 Request for Applications (RFAs)
MADE BY: Commissioner Kimberlee Joos
SECONDED BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

XV. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Texas Veterans Commission Excellence in Media Awards.

Jim Cunningham, Chairman of the Communication Advisory Committee, provided a summary of activities conducted by the Veterans Communication Advisory Committee. The Communications Advisory Committee last met on June 19, 2018. The purpose of this meeting was to review, discuss, and score 19 Excellence in Media Awards Nominations. Each year the Texas Veterans Commission presents these awards to recognize works in media published or presented during the preceding year that have been exemplary in researching, reporting, writing and/or production to foster public understanding on veterans' issues. The Communications Advisory Committee recommend the following nominations to be awarded in the Print, Radio, and News categories. **Print:** *Want To Thank A Veteran In Military City USA? Try Zipcode 78245*, **Radio:** *Boots on the Air* **News:** *Portraits bring families of fallen heroes closer to their loved ones.*

MOTION: Approve the Texas Veterans Commission Excellence in Media Awards
MADE BY: Vice Chairman Dan Moran
SECONDED BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

XVI. Report, presentation and/or action regarding acceptance of gifts.

Chip Osborne, Director of Resource Management, provided a summary of gifts presented to the Texas Veterans Commission. Paralegal Division-State Bar of Texas donated to the Women's Veteran Program \$275.00 and Del Rio Flemings donated \$200.00 to the Women's Veteran Program. A total of \$475.00.

MOTION: Approve acceptance of gift total of \$475.00 to the Women's Veteran Program.
MADE BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner
SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman Dan Moran
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

XVII. Presentation and possible action regarding a regional pilot program to connect Veterans to services in their communities through an electronic referral network.

Cruz Montemayor, Deputy Executive Director, provided a report on regional pilot program to connect Veterans to services in their communities through an electronic referral network. The office of the Governor is considering a pilot program to connect veterans to a comprehensive community-wide services network in three regions; the Rio Grande Valley, El Paso and Central Texas. The Texas Veterans Commission partnering with the Texas Workforce Commission to

implement initiative. Would not affect TVC legislature Authorization Request nor will it adversely affect Full Time Equivalent cap.

XVIII. Executive Director report.

Thomas Palladino, Executive Director, provided a report on the agency's priorities and activities over the last quarter. Mr. Palladino noted all his meetings and events he has attended to include relationships with the Veterans Administration. The Sunset Advisory Commission approved the Sunset Staff report on the Texas Veterans Commission. TVC did not disagree with any of the Sunset Staff's recommendations and are in the process of implementing them. TVC executed the first annual Women Veterans Day at the Texas State Capitol. Met with the acting VA Secretary, Peter O'Rourke at the Dallas VA Hospital and discussed the TVC Healthcare Advocacy program. Claims Department has implemented a new paperless disability claims case management system using VetraSpec.

XIX. Executive Session.

None.

XX. Discussion and take possible action on the items considered in Executive Session.

There were no items to take action on.

XXI. Discussion to set date, time, and location of next Commission Meeting

The Commission agreed for the 1st Quarterly Commission Meeting of FY19 be held on Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. at the Stephen F. Austin Building, room 170.

XXII. Adjournment.

Chairman Cantu asked each Commissioner for any closing remarks. Vice Chairman Scott addressed his retirement and appreciation of the Commissioners and TVC Staff. Each Commissioner extended their gratitude to Texas Veterans Commission staff for all their support and hard work in serving our Texas Veterans. Chairman Cantu provided closing remarks as well.

MOTION: Adjourn
MADE BY: Vice Chairman Dan Moran
SECONDED BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Cantu adjourned the meeting at 12:11 p.m.

Minutes Approved by:



Eliseo "Al" Cantu, Jr., Chairman

TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

4rd Quarterly Commission Meeting
FY 2018 – August 9, 2018
9:00 a.m. – Stephen F. Austin Bldg. Rm 170
Speakers and Visitors

James Cunningham

Communication Advisory Committee Chair

Sean Hanna

Former TVC Director of Mental Health

Luellen Lowe

Legislative Budget Board

Catarina Gonzales

Governor Abbot, Veteran Commission