

Texas Veterans Commission Meeting Minutes

2nd Quarterly Meeting (FY 2019)

February 6, 2019

I. Call to order.

Chairman Eliseo Cantu called to order the 2nd Quarterly Commission Meeting of the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) at 9:00 a.m. on February 6, 2019 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, Vice Chairman
Kevin Barber, Secretary
Kimberlee Shaneyfelt, 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 Laura Koerner 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:

Christopher Vidaurre, Program Specialist, Mental Health
Elisabeth Webster, Information Specialist, Funds for Veterans Asst.
Arnold Alaniz, Government Relations Specialist, Govt Relations
James Halbbrook, Information Specialist, Outreach
Chris Emert, Graduate Internship from Texas State University, Communications & Outreach

II. Public Comment.

None.

III. Approve the Minutes of the 1st Quarterly Commission Meeting held November 15, 2018.

The minutes for the 1st Quarterly Commission Meeting held on November 15, 2018 were previously distributed to the Commissioners.

MOTION: Approve the minutes of the 1st Quarterly Commission Meeting held on November 15, 2018 as presented.
MADE BY: Commissioner Kimberlee Shaneyfelt
SECONDED BY: Commissioner Barber
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

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

Directors were provided the opportunity to brief the Commission on any new items or highlight significant items that occurred within their program or division.

A. Shawn Deabay, Division Director of Program Operations, congratulated Anna Baker as the new manager for the Veteran Entrepreneur program, and the interim manager for the Women Veteran program will be Crystal Matthews. Shawn Deabay provided a summary of activities conducted by the programs since its last report to the Commission.

Anna Baker, Manager of Veterans Entrepreneur Program (VEP), gave a brief update concerning “I Am Not Invisible” event scheduled for March 27, 2019. TVC enlisted 30 women veterans from across Texas to participate in a photo campaign meant to bring awareness to the public that women serve. In collaboration with the Governor's Commission for Women, VSA Texas, and support from the VA. The photo shoot took place on January 10th. The exhibit opening, and reception is planned for March 27th at the Bob Bullock Museum followed by a display of the exhibit at the capitol complex.

Victor Polanco, Director of Claims Representation and Counseling, in full swing with our VCSO training in Denton April 3-4, Waco April 10-11, San Antonio April 17-18 and Houston April 24-25. The National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP), gave their first webinars for Veteran County Service Officers (VCSOs) and TVC claims’ employees. Harker Heights Vet Center asked if we wanted a temporary position and decided to put a counselor at that location 2 times a week appointment only. Mr. Polanco discussed pension law changes, case studies, and appeals’ transitions—as well as a push to change the standard length of appointments with veterans from 45 minutes to an hour. NVLSP also suggested that TVC claims post another sign to reflect appointments throughout the week instead of only two (2) days per week.

B. Chip Osborne, Director of Resource Management, gave a shout out to Governor Abbott, he mentioned the TVC agency by name “**we must also fund the Texas Veterans Commission to help veterans receive the VA healthcare benefits they have earned**”. It was directed directly at exceptional item #1 which is the restoration of our 15 FTEs and the funding that will help support 25.5 FTEs or dollar amount of 1.3 million dollars.

Melissa Hromcik, Training Specialist, Training and Events Management, provided an update on the Learning Management System finally went live January 15, and first e-learning course that we added claims initial training have had 2 TVC claims counselors in the southeast district and 1 VCSO from Taylor County complete the course with tests 90% or higher. Will be traveling to 5 locations to facilitate training in the course of 3 months, 20 employees per training total of 100 employees.

C. Cruz Montemayor, Deputy Executive Director, provided commissioners with packets with TVC Sunset Recommendations and Management Responses. Briefed the recommendations and responses in its entirety.

Greg Talamantez, Government Relations Manager, briefed the commissioners with the legislative updates. Chairman Cantu and Mr. Palladino briefed the finance committee on the exceptional items. Arnold Alaniz joined the Government Relations team and has been an asset to the department, helping gather enormous amounts of information, preparing for meeting at the Capitol. Brief on meetings with legislators for the VABS and DVAC hearings.

V. **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.

VI. **Report, presentation and/or action on Appropriation Year 2019 First Quarter Operating Statement.**

Michelle Nall, Chief Financial Officer, provided Agency Summary regarding Appropriation Year 2019, 1st Quarter Operating Statement and a summary of financial activities by the programs since its last report to the Commission.

MOTION: Approve the Appropriation Year 2019 1st Quarter Operating Statement
MADE BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner
SECONDED BY: Vice Chair Dan Moran
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

VII. **Report, presentation and/or action to adopt amendments to rules under 40 TAC, §§450.1(1) §§450.3(b)(c)(d)(h), §§450.5(a), and §§451.3(f), regarding Veterans County Service Officers Certificate of Training, and Veterans County Service Officers Accreditations**

Madeleine Connor, General Counsel, provided a summary of the adoption amendments to administrative rules 40 TAC, §§450.1(1) §§450.3(b)(c)(d)(h), §§450.5(a), and §§451.3(f). The General Counsel explained that the proposed amended rules were published in the November 30, 2018, issue of the Texas Register for 30 days to allow interested persons an opportunity to submit comments. The comment period ended on January 2, 2019. The commission received no comments from the public. After adoption by the commission, the rules will take effect 20 days after the date it is submitted to the Secretary of State.

MOTION: Approve the proposed adoption to rules under 40 TAC, §§450.1(1) §§450.3(b)(c)(d)(h), §§450.5(a), and §§451.3(f)
MADE BY: Secretary Kevin Barber
SECONDED BY: Commissioner Kimberlee Shaneyfelt
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

VIII. **Report, presentation and or action regarding appointment of Advisory Committee Members.**

Cruz Montemayor, Deputy Executive Director, presented the Commissioners with the current Advisory Committee members and highlighted ones that are presented to you for your approval.

Veterans County Service Officer Advisory Committee candidates presented: Al Dos Santos (new).

Veterans Communication Advisory Committee candidates presented: Trevor Whitney (new), James Blyth (reappointment)

MOTION: To Approve the Advisory Committee Membership
MADE BY: Vice Chairman Dan Moran
SECONDED BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

IX. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Acceptance of Gifts.

Chip Osborne, Director of Resource Management, gave an overview of TVC's accepted \$600 donation. To be split among 2 programs \$500.00 to the Women Veteran Program and \$100 to the Funds for Veterans Assistance.

MOTION: Approve the Acceptance of Gifts
MADE BY: Commissioner Kimberlee Shaneyfelt
SECONDED BY: Commissioner Laura Koerner
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

Note: Commission took 10-minute break. 10:25 - 10:35

X. Report, presentation and/or action regarding FY 2019 Internal Audit Plan Status.

Darlene Brown, Auditor, McConnell & Jones LLP. Updated the commissioners on the Internal Audit Plan Status involving audit findings, recommendation plan and implementation progress. Will be starting the Healthcare audit this month, will have the report in the next meeting and will plan on having the CAPPs HR resource system around May/June

XI. Report, presentation and/or action regarding FY 2018 Internal Audit Report Summary.

McConnell & Jones developed the fiscal year 2019 Annual Internal Audit Plan based on results of a risk assessment. The risk assessment included reviewing the agency's strategic plan, the Legislative Appropriations Request, and policies and procedures, and analyzing the agency's financial reports facilitated by conducting discussions with management. The auditor stated that the assessment evaluated risk exposures relating to TVC's governance, operations, and information systems regarding the reliability and integrity of financial and operational information; effectiveness and efficiency of operations; safeguarding of assets; and compliance with laws, regulations, and contracts.

XII. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Veteran's Employment Services Program Federal Reimbursement Audit Report Summary.

Darlene Brown, Auditor, McConnell & Jones LLP (MJ) the report summarizes the audit scope, our assessment based on the audit objectives and the analysis of Texas Veterans Commission's federal reimbursement business processes supporting the Veterans Employment Services Program.

MOTION: Approve the Veteran's Employment Services Program Federal Reimbursement Audit Report Summary
MADE BY: Vice Chair Dan Moran
SECONDED BY: Secretary Kevin Barber
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously

XIII. Executive Director report.

1. **Thomas Palladino, Executive Director**, provided a report on the agency's priorities and activities over the last quarter. Mr. Palladino provided information on meetings that involved the Texas Workforce Commission Annual Workforce conference in Houston TX November 27-30. Met with Dr. Paul Lawrence, the VA Under Secretary for Benefits and discussed VA claims and appeals processes and TVC-VBA partnership. Chairman Cantu and I met with Luis Saenz, the Governors Chief of Staff on January 24, 2019. Chairman Cantu and I met with Chairman Dan Flynn, Chair of the House Defense and Veterans Affairs Committee on January 24, 2019. Chairman Cantu will testify at the House Appropriations Committee, Senate Veteran Affairs and Border Security and the House Defense and Veterans Affairs Committee during the next month.

XIV. Executive Session.

Executive Session was held from 11:05 a.m. to 11:27 a.m.

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

There were no items to take action on.

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

The Commission agreed that the 3rd Quarterly Commission Meeting of FY19 would be held on Wednesday, May 8, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Stephen F. Austin Building, room 170.

XVII. Adjournment.

Chairman Cantu asked each Commissioner for any closing remarks.

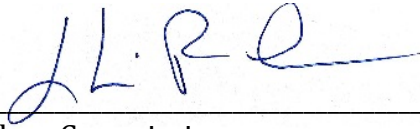
Each Commissioner extended their gratitude to Texas Veterans Commission staff for all of their support and hard work in serving Texas Veterans.

Chairman Cantu provided closing remarks as well.

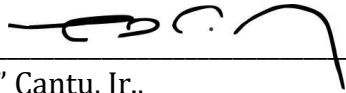
MOTION: Adjourn
MADE BY: Vice Chairman Dan Moran
SECONDED BY: Secretary Kevin Barber
ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Cantu adjourned the meeting at 11:37 a.m.

Minutes Approved by:



Kevin Barber, Commissioner
Commission Secretary



Eliseo "Al" Cantu, Jr.,
Chairman

TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

2nd Quarterly Commission Meeting
FY 2019 – February 6, 2019
9:00 a.m. – Stephen F. Austin Bldg. Rm 170
Speakers and Visitors

Darlene Brown
Auditor, McConnell & Jones LLP