



VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETING
March 11, 2021 at 6 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order: 6:02 p.m. by Chairman Charlip
Location: Virtual via WebEx
City Liaison: Jamie LaDuke - Aurora Learn Supervisor

A. Standing Business (Agenda at Atch 1)

I. **Call to Order/Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Charlip called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m., offered the invocation and led the commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. **Roll Call (Attendance at Atch 2)**

- a. Present Commissioners: Ralph Charlip, Watik Aleem, Robert Chase, CW Fox, Cynthia Francis, Jeremy Lammon, Melissa Sayouthasad
- b. Absent Commissioner(s): Stanley Dallas and Gregory Echols
- c. Quorum: Yes
- d. Guest Attendees: John Kellner, Aurora Ogg, Brian Johnson, Mike Spatter and Nathaniel Graff

III. **Approval of January 14, 2021 and February 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Motion to approve the January 14, 2021 and February 11, 2021 meeting minutes at 6:05 p.m. by Robert Chase, second by CW Fox. Approved unanimously.
Amendments: None

IV. **Guest Speaker**

18th Judicial District Attorney John Kellner (bio at Atch 3)

John Kellner was introduced to the commission by Chairman Charlip. John Kellner was elected to the position of 18th Judicial District Attorney in 2020 and was sworn-in in January of 2021. John is a former Marine, he was commissioned in 2003 after college. Attended law school with the Marine Corps at Colorado University in Boulder. In 2013 John was one of the founders of the Veterans Treatment Court. This program is a specialty court that assists veterans with the necessary resources to assist with substance abuse, PTSD, etc. The program includes weekly appointments with the judge, to ensure that the individuals are showing progress. The program also includes a mentor program, providing an additional resource for these individuals to utilize when they need assistance. If participants do not meet the expectations, they could be subject to a series of sanctions. Approximately 45 veterans in the program currently. The program is partially funded by grants and community sponsors. The maximum number of participants allowed in the program is 50 individuals. INFO



V. Financial Report – Quarterly Only (January, April, July and October) Staff
TABLED

VI. Public Comment(s) – Maximum Three (3) Minutes per Person Charlip
No public comments

VII. City Liaison Report: Staff

a. Veteran Population Study

Jamie LaDuke stated that she met with the Deputy Director and Director of Human Resources, along with Deputy City Manager Nancy Freed. The recommendation was for Jamie to contact the Planning and Development Services department, to see if they had any existing data that would assist the commission. After reaching out to this department, Jamie was provided a great deal of data from a 2019 American Community Census Survey, which included veteran information in the Aurora community. Jamie was just recently provided this information and needs to scrub some of the information. Jamie will provide it to the commission within the next week. (OPEN: Staff)

b. Applications for Commission

Two new applications were received, these individuals joined this meeting as observers. (INFO)

VIII. Vice Chairman Report: Lammon

The only update that Vice Chairman Lammon shared the names of the commissioner’s for the VAC phone line for March and April - Robert Chase for March and Watik Aleem for April. There was one call in February, no calls for March. (OPEN: Lammon)

IX. Chair Report: Charlip

Commissioner Engagement

Chairman Charlip shared that Commissioner John Savage has resigned from the Veterans Affairs Commission, he has other obligations at this time.

1. Meetings

A reminder from Chairman Charlip that commission members should be engaged in commission meetings and activities. Chairman Charlip is looking for commissioners to participate in meetings regularly (INFO)

2. Communication

If you are unable to attend a meeting, please notify Chairman Charlip. Keep communication open so that the commission is informed. (INFO)

3. Participation in Projects

Chairman Charlip asked for each commissioner to participate in at least one project and/or sub-committee. There are a lot of projects for 2021, all equally important and we will need all commissioner participation to ensure success. (INFO)

4. Chairman Charlip attended Council Member Juan Marcano’s Town Hall meeting earlier this week. Council Member Marcano asked Chairman Charlip to keep in mind that the city of Aurora will be receiving additional funds from the most recent COVID relief bill, and the commission should keep council informed of



- any potential projects or ideas to assist veterans. (INFO)
- 5. April Guest Speaker

Alicia Romero, city liaison, will be the guest speaker at the April meeting. Alicia assists with managing a non-profit organization for the Aurora Police Department and Chairman Charlip has asked her to brief the Commission on her non-profit. (INFO)

X. Sub-committees/ Project Reports:

- a. 2020 Projects
 - Backpack Distribution Aleem

Cynthia Francis stated that the church she attends is looking strictly for a donation of backpacks. The church will then work towards getting additional items donated to fill the backpacks. A motion was made at 6:44 p.m. by Robert Chase, second by Melissa Sayouthasad to donate the backpacks that the commission currently has to the church for distribution. Approved unanimously. This agenda item can be closed. (CLOSED)
- b. 2021 Projects
 - 1. Coffman Project Charlip

Project is still with city staff, likely to be presented to council in April. (OPEN: Charlip)
 - 2. Marketing Pamphlet and Briefing Sayouthasad
 - a. Chairman Charlip showed the commission the new marketing flyer (Atch 4) that could be utilized for recruiting and informational process. Copies will be available for commission members to distribute as needed. It will also be placed on the Veterans Affairs Commission website. The commissioners approved the flyer and asked if it could be printed in both green and yellow version. If only one color can be printed, the commissioners voted for green. Jamie LaDuke will check with the graphics team about having it printed in both colors. (OPEN: Staff)
 - b. Chairman Charlip showed the commission a draft mission presentation (Atch 5) that could be utilized in the same branding format as the flyer, to allow commissioners a standard presentation for community outreach. The commissioners approved the presentation which was forward to Staff for updating using City colors and style. (OPEN: Staff)
 - 3. Outreach, Social Media, Website Sayouthasad

Commissioner Sayouthasad stated that she is still in the process of updating the veterans’ resources. (INFO)
 - 4. VSO Engagement Aleem

Commissioner Aleem has confirmed the organizations that were previously listed are still willing to assist as resources. He will utilize the new flyer as a networking tool and start inviting new organizations to the VAC meetings. (OPEN: Aleem)
 - 5. Water Bill Insert Lammon

The new marketing flyer will be utilized as a starting point for a water bill insert. Vice Chairperson Lammon will work with Jamie LaDuke on the next steps. (OPEN: Lammon)
 - 6. Promote Military Service (students) Fox



Commissioner Fox stated that the goal is to have this project ready by the Fall of 2021, when students return to in-person school. This includes a brief overview of all Uniformed Service branches in the area. The objective is to help students decide what to do after high school. He will work with Service recruiters in the local area as well. (OPEN: Fox)

7. JROTC Collaboration Chase

Commissioner Chase is becoming familiar with this project. Should have updates next month. Chairman Charlip is going to share his contact information with Commissioner Chase. (OPEN: Chase)

8. Standdown with HCC Aleem

See Backpacks above. (OPEN Aleem).

XI. Liaison Updates

a. Aurora Defense Council Charlip

At the last meeting attendees discussed the need for individuals in the space industry to move to Colorado. (INFO)

b. Veterans Court Aleem

Commissioner Aleem reported that the Court is operating and currently there are three participants. The first court meeting is next week. (INFO)

c. JCF Chase

Commissioner Chase stated that the VAC is now affiliated with JCF. A lot of individuals subscribe to the JCF newsletter. A recent edition included information about the VAC. He will ask for time a future JCF meeting to brief participants on the VAC. (INFO)

d. Colorado Freedom Memorial Echols

No update as Commissioner Echols was not present.

B. Old Business

I. Bylaws (Ver 4) and Ordinance (Final) Change All

a. The commissioners reviewed the final version of a change to the VAC charter - Ordinance 2-851 (Atch 6). The changes would expand eligibility for service on the VAC to former (veteran) Commissioned Corps officers from the US Public Health Service and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as well as active duty members from a Uniformed Service and drilling Guardsmen and Reservists. A motion made at 7:16 p.m. by Commissioner Chase, second by Vice Chairperson Lammon to approve the ordinance for submission to the City. Approved unanimously. (OPEN: Staff)

b. Due to time, Chairman Charlip indicated he would send the current version of the Bylaws (Atch 7) to Jamie LaDuke, who will share with the commission members. Chair Charlip is requesting feedback in order to move forward in April. The changes in the Bylaws were previously approved by the commission except for those changes associated with the expansion of eligibility to serve on the commission as outlined in the City ordinance above. (OPEN: All)



II. Commission Vacancy Process

Charlip

Chairman Charlip stated that interviews will be open to all commission members to attend. Commissioner Aleem asked about the City establishing an improved vetting process of applicants before the applications are sent to the VAC for action. Because of a problem encountered in 2020. Chairman Charlip asked Commissioner Aleem to contact Jamie LaDuke, to discuss the city’s vetting process for new applicants after which she and Chairman Charlip will discuss options for going forward including with the two applications already sent to the VAC. (OPEN: Aleem, Staff, Charlip)

III. VAC Phone Line

Sayouthasad

The commission discussed eliminating the VAC phone line since it is not being utilized. Additionally, the variety of expertise varies between the commissioners to help callers. Rather than eliminate the line, the commission would like to provide a recorded message to callers. A draft script will be developed by Commissioner Sayouthasad. (OPNE: Sayouthasad)

IV. 2020 Review

All

Chairman Charlip requested each commission member provide him one or two items/projects that the commission accomplished in 2020. Chairman Charlip would like to provide this list of highlights to city council. Please email your items/project list to Chairman Charlip by March 19. (OPEN: All)

C. New Business

I. Commissioner Terms Expiring in 2021

- a. Chairman Charlip provided an overview of the process for extending a term (Atch 8). The City Clerk will send a letter to the commissioner detailing the steps for extending a term about 90 days prior to their term expiring.
- b. Cynthia Francis’ term expires on 30 Jun 21. She stated that she has received her letter and completed the steps.

II. 2022 Projects and City Budget Alignment

Tabled

D. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Future Meetings

- 2021: 13 May, 10 June, 8 July, 12 August, 9 September, 14 October, 11 November, 9 December
- 2022: 13 January, 10 February, 10 March, 14 April

Meeting Minutes transcribed by:

Jamie L. LaDuke

Attachments:

- 1. Agenda



Mar Agenda.docx

2. Attendance



Attendance.xlsx

3. Keller Bio



Kellner bio.docx

4. Marketing Flyer



Veteran'sAffairsCo
mmissionMarketing!

5. Mission Briefing



VAC Mission Briefing
V3.pptx

6. Ordinance



Ordinance 2-851
Final.docx

7. Bylaws



By Laws - Proposed
Revision V4 Redline.d

8. Term Renewal Process



PROCESS FOR
EXTENDING VAC COM