



VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION MEETING
September 9, 2021 at 6 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order: 6:02 p.m. by Chairperson Ralph Charlip
Location: Virtual via WebEx
City Liaison(s): Jamie LaDuke – Training and Development Manager

A. Standing Business (Agenda at Atch 1)

1. Call to Order/Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance
Chairperson Ralph Charlip called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Commissioned joined in the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Roll Call (Attendance at Atch 2)
 - a. Present Commissioners: Ralph Charlip, Watik Aleem, Gregory Echols, CW Fox, Cynthia Francis, Jeremy Lammon, Melissa Sayouthasad, and Nathaniel Graff.
 - b. Absent Commissioner(s): Robert Chase and Michael Spatter (Resigned)
 - c. Quorum: Yes
3. Approval of August 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes (Meeting Minutes at Atch 3)
A motion to approve the meeting minute was, approved unanimously.
Amendments: None
4. Guest Speaker(s) – Aurora Housing and Community Services, Jessica Prosser and Emma King
Jessica Prosser is the Director of Housing and Community Services for the city of Aurora. Jessica provided a presentation regarding the city’s Homelessness Program and Veteran Programs. Staff member Jamie LaDuke will provide the presentation to the commissioners. (9.9.2021-City of Aurora Veteran’s Affairs Commission at Atch 5)
5. Public Comment(s) – Maximum Three (3) Minutes per Person
No public comments
6. City Staff Report
 - a. Quarterly Financial Report – January, April, July and October
Staff member Jamie LaDuke provided an update about storing documents in one centralized location. The City Clerk’s Office is working with IT to provide a solution for all boards and commission to have a centralized location for storing documents, such as bylaws, meeting minutes, attendance, etc. Donna Dersham was the individual Jamie LaDuke was working with in IT, however, Donna Dersham recently resigned. Jamie LaDuke is waiting for another individual to be assigned the project. (OPEN)

Staff member Jamie LaDuke will provide a financial update at the next meeting.



7. Vice Chairperson Report (VAC Commission Roster at Atch 4)
No report.

8. Chairperson Report
 - a. Community Meeting – September 2, 2021: Chairperson Charlip reported on the meeting which was attended by very few organizations. The Peak Network is expanding and is inviting veteran service providers outside of the Colorado Springs area to join their network. (CLOSED)
 - b. December Elections: Chairperson Charlip reminded the commission that 2022 elections will occur in December and to be think about whether or not commissioners are interested in running for an office. (INFO)

9. Project Reports
 - a. Coffman project
Project has been launched, Arapahoe County will be responsible for providing updates and status reports to the city. No further action required. (CLOSED)

 - b. Outreach, Social Media, Web Site
 - i. Ongoing Presence at VAMC
Commissioner Sayouthasad stated that any commissioner that was interested in hosting a table or booth at the VAMC is welcome to do so and to contact her. She expressed that the commissions continued presence is welcome and important. (OPEN)

 - c. VSO Engagement
Chairperson Charlip asked that Commissioner Aleem review the commissions web site and to please contact one or two VSOs and invite them to a commission meeting. (OPEN)

 - d. Promote Military Service (Students)
CW Fox stated that only one counselor from one school responded to his marketing efforts. He has been in contact with the individual and will provide the commission with updates as he receives them. In addition, CW Fox stated that Regis Jesuit High School stated that they are interested and will follow up soon with CW Fox directly. (OPEN)

 - e. JROTC Collaboration
Commissioner Chase was absent and there was no update. (OPEN)

10. Liaison Updates:
 - a. Aurora Defense Council
Commissioner Echols attended the August meeting. The primary update is that there has been a change in command at Buckley, due to the re-designation of Space Force. The Aurora Defense Council will skip the September meeting, and reconvene in October. (OPEN)



- b. Colorado Freedom Memorial
Chairperson Charlip stated that he spoke with Rick Crandell. The conversation was focused on Veterans Day. Rick provided information about the annual candle lighting event. Volunteers are welcome and encouraged 11, 12 and 13 Nov 21. Rick Crandell has offered to provide a tour of the location at 3 PM with candle lighting starting at 4 PM and ending at 8 PM. Commissioner Echols stated that he assisted with a clean-up event and will be attending the Veterans Day ceremonies. If you are interested in participating in a tour, contact Chairperson Charlip. (OPEN)

- c. Armed Forces Treatment Court (Veterans Court)
Commissioner Aleem stated that engagement opportunities continue to be a challenge due to COVID. Currently the only time there is engagement with the participants is during the doughnuts and coffee events. There will be a new initiative with an incentive called Warrior Now Bucks. Participants can earn Warrior Now Bucks by attending counseling sessions, veteran’s yoga, court dates, mentor meetings, job interviews, etc. (OPEN)

- d. UVC
Commissioner Aleem stated that there will be a guest speaker from this organization at the October commission meeting. Commissioner Aleem provided an update regarding Second Chance Bikes. The owner of Second Chance Bikes is collaborating with veteran organizations to provide bikes to veterans. He also reported that offers a program like a ‘Sober Home’, providing resources to individuals with addictions. Valid Point and Second Chance Bikes are willing to work directly with veterans. (INFO)

- e. JCF
Commissioner Chase was absent and there was no update. (OPEN)

B. Old Business

- 1. Veteran Recognition Program
A motion by Chairperson Charlip was seconded and passed that awards would be open to any service member, regardless of type of discharge,. Commissioner Graff update the Commission’s award document and send it to staff member LaDuke for review and distribution to the commission. Ms LaDuke stated that she will also send the document to Volunteer Program Coordinator, Chad Angell. (CLOSED)

- 2. Veterans Day Celebration – City Employee Recognition Lunch.
The commission discussed this potential event in detail. It was decided that the commission does not have the resources available to plan such an event within 60 days. Staff member Jamie LaDuke will provide staff member Alicia Romero with an update. The commission would like to keep the option open for next year. (CLOSED)

- 3. Rotary Service Project Partnership
Vice Chairperson Lammon will provide a proposal at the next meeting. (OPEN)



C. New Business

1. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Chairperson Ralph Charlip shared a SWOT that he created for a class he is taking. The document has been placed in the minutes and will be distributed to the commission. This is a reference document only, no action necessary. The document will assist with planning efforts for the commission for future years. (SWOT at Atch 6)

2. **Identity Concerns**

Commissioner Graff provided an example of a communication he received from an individual claiming to be Commissioner Aleem. Commissioner Graff was able to contact Commissioner Aleem about the strange communication and confirmed that it was not an email from Commissioner Aleem. Staff member Jamie LaDuke confirmed for the commission that their contact information is not displayed or distributed to the public. This has been noted in the meeting minutes in case there is another instance. (CLOSED)

D. Adjournment

Meeting review

Next Meeting: October 14, 2021

Future Meetings:

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

E. Tabled

1. Veteran Population Study
2. Certificate to recognize a veteran’s passing

Meeting Minutes transcribed by:

Jamie L. LaDuke

Approved: _____

Date: _____

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Attendance
3. August 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes
4. VAC Commission Roster
5. 9.9.2021-City of Aurora Veteran’s Affairs Commission
6. SWOT



09-09-2021
Veterans Affairs Age



VAC Attendance
9.9.21.xlsx



August 12, 2021
Meeting Minutes.pc



VAC Commission
Roster.docx



9.9.2021-City of
Aurora Veteran's Affai



VAC SWOT.docx