



## **TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION**

### **Media Contact Information**

Rachel Shumaker  
P.O. Box 12277  
Austin, Texas 78711-2277  
512-815-9583 / Fax 512-475-2395  
[press@tvc.texas.gov](mailto:press@tvc.texas.gov)

# News Release

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## **To preserve integrity of the grant process, Advisory Committee adjourns without action**

**TEXAS** – Today, the Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans’ Assistance Advisory Committee adjourned before taking any action on its recommendation to the Texas Veterans Commission for grants which are scheduled to begin in January 2015.

During the public meeting, a committee member self-identified conflicts of interest with two applicant organizations that were being considered for funding but declined to recuse himself from voting on the funding recommendation to the Texas Veterans Commission. Since voting to recommend or not recommend funding to any organization impacts the availability of funds to other organizations, the Chair of the advisory committee adjourned the meeting in order to preserve the integrity of the grant process.

“The Texas Veterans Commission prides itself on ensuring the integrity of the Fund for Veterans’ Assistance grants program,” said Thomas Palladino, Executive Director of the Texas Veterans Commission. “It is unfortunate that the advisory committee was not able to make a recommendation for the current grant cycle, but in order to maintain transparency and fairness, all committee members must avoid ethical conflicts as provided by state law.”

Since 2009, the Texas Veterans Commission has awarded nearly \$40 million in 207 grants to 118 non-profit and local government entities that have served more than 170,000 Texas Veterans and their families. During this time, any committee member with a conflict of interest has either resigned from the Fund for Veterans’ Assistance Advisory Committee or recused herself or himself from voting on the grant recommendation to the Texas Veterans Commission.

Eligible grant applicants are units of local government, 501(c)(19) posts or organizations of past or present members of the Armed Forces, 501(c)(3) private nonprofit corporations authorized to conduct business in Texas, and Texas chapters of 501(c)(4) veterans service organizations.

During an open grant period, the Fund for Veterans’ Assistance staff receives, reviews for eligibility, and evaluates all applications. The Fund for Veterans’ Assistance Advisory

Committee consists of nine members appointed by the Texas Veterans Commission. The Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee reviews the evaluations and application materials and makes funding recommendations to the Texas Veterans Commission, who make the final funding decision.

The Texas Veterans Commission will make every effort to make the final funding decision on the Fund for Veterans' Assistance grants at the next Commission meeting on November 5, 2014, and keep the grant award process on track for the current cycle.

#### Texas Veterans Commission

The mission of the Texas Veterans Commission is to advocate for and provide superior service to Veterans and their families in the areas of disability claims assistance, employment services, education benefits and grant funding. More than 200 skilled counselors in 75 cities provide one-on-one guidance to Veterans and their families to ensure they receive all of the benefits to which they are entitled.

For more information about the Texas Veterans Commission Fund for Veterans' Assistance, please visit <http://www.tvc.texas.gov/Fund-for-Veterans-Assistance.aspx>.

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