

# Texas Veterans Commission Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting (FY 2010)

May 6, 2010

## I. Call to order

Chair Rankin called to order the Special Meeting of the Texas Veterans Commission at 10:00 a.m. on May 6, 2010, in the TVC Conference Room of the Stephen F. Austin Building, 1700 N. Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas 78701.

The following Commissioners were present:

Karen S. Rankin, Chair  
T.P. O'Mahoney, Vice-Chairman  
Eliseo "Al" Cantu, Secretary  
John B. McKinney, Member

Also present was James E. Nier, Executive Director.

TVC Staff attending:

Tina Carnes  
Cheryl Sites  
Cruz Montemayor  
Bill Wilson  
Irma Rodriguez  
Freddy Ruiz  
David Nobles  
Connie Lyssy  
Charles Buerschinger  
Jim Richman  
Lisa Waddell

Also present: See the attached list.

Chair Rankin welcomed and introduced visitors.

## II. Report, presentation, and/or action regarding TVC Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee recommendations for Grant II

Chair Rankin began by stating the purpose of this special meeting was to discuss the TVC Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee's recommendations for Grant II and Grant III. Chair Rankin asked David Nobles, TVC Grant Coordinator, and General

Thomas G. Smith, Chair, Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee, to lead the Commissioners through the applications recommended by the Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee for approval to receive funds from Grant II.

General Smith started off by commending the Advisory Committee and TVC staff for the amount of work they have performed to process this round of applications. He continued by stating it was the recommendation of the Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) Advisory Committee that women, children and wives of veterans should be looked at in particular.

David Nobles provided a brief overview of the applications received for Grant II. Out of the 46 organizations invited to apply, there were 41 applications received. The FVA Advisory Committee recommended funding 15 organizations totaling approximately \$2,600,000. Mr. Nobles noted that no applications for veterans courts were considered, and that this matter would be discussed later in the meeting.

Secretary Cantu thanked Mr. Nobles and his staff for all the work they did to prepare the grant application summary binders for the Commissioners.

Mr. Nobles began with a review of the summary of qualifications for each of the 15 selected grant applicants. Discussion was held regarding the completeness of the applications, and how the Commissioners should proceed with reviewing those applications that had incomplete information or lacked sufficient supporting details.

Chair Rankin called for a 20-minute recess, and adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Chair Rankin reconvened the meeting at 12:01 p.m.

It was agreed on by all that grant applications must have deliverables and sufficient budget documentation before they are presented to the FVA Advisory Committee to score.

The Commissioners agreed to review each of the applications with Mr. Nobles to determine which applications were complete and ready to be approved, and which applications were lacking sufficient details and required supplemental information to be considered for approval. The Commissioners agreed supplemental information would be collected by TVC staff and provided to the Commissioners for consideration at the next Commission Meeting on May 17.

Mr. Nobles provided a review of each of the 15 applications: 4 applications were complete for consideration; 11 required supplemental information to be considered for approval.

Mr. Nobles discussed the Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee's recommendation to defer funding of veterans courts. TVC staff has been working to coordinate funding from the Fund for Veterans' Assistance with the Office of the

Governor's Criminal Justice Division (CJD) funding program. The FVA Advisory Committee decided to fund client services for veterans court participants such as substance abuse treatment programs, professional counseling, or other support programs to avoid duplication of funding efforts. The CJD currently has 4 grant applications under review to fund veterans courts in Tarrant, Bexar, Travis and Harris counties. CJD will notify TVC upon awarding the grants, and those counties will be encouraged to apply for FVA funding. TVC staff will review those applications and present recommendations for funding to the Commissioners. After discussion, the following motion was made:

MOTION: Set aside \$200,000 for the 4 veterans court applicants after they are approved through the Office of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division grant program.

MADE BY: Chair Rankin

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman O'Mahoney

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Nobles provided an update on lottery ticket sales. The FVA Advisory Committee's recommendation was to hold a joint committee meeting with the Communications Advisory Committee to discuss declining lottery ticket sales.

**III. TVC Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee and/or staff recommendations for Grant III**

Mr. Nobles reviewed proposed changes to the Letter of Interest Guidelines, Instructions for Submitting a Letter of Interest, Application Information and Instructions, and Application for Grant III. After discussion of the proposed changes the following motions were called for:

MOTION: On the Letter of Interest (LOI) Guidelines: Accept non-duplication of TVC services statement; and add information and links to grant management standards under "Instructions for Submitting" section.

MADE BY: Commissioner McKinney

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman O'Mahoney

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: On the Instructions for Submitting a Letter of Interest (LOI): Accept non-duplication of TVC services statement; on page 4 of 9

requesting one original and 3 paper copies of LOI; agree to proposed changes on Proposed Budget section, page 7 of 9.

MADE BY: Secretary Cantu

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman O'Mahoney

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: On Grant III Application Information and Instructions: Accept non-duplication of TVC services statement on page 2 of 8, letter G; and updated number of copies on page 5 of 8.

MADE BY: Vice Chairman O'Mahoney

SECONDED BY: Commissioner McKinney

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: On the Grant Application, add 4 new items to cover page: Applicant name, grant amount, amount requested, and service to be provided; on page 10, accept changes to Budget Spreadsheets section.

MADE BY: Secretary Cantu

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman O'Mahoney

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

#### **IV. Website update**

Lisa Waddell, Marketing Manager, reported on the new TVC website launched on April 23, 2010. Lisa reported the transition went smoothly, and no major issues reported so far. 130 TVC employees have been trained. Notice of the new website has been sent to legislators and other agency contacts asking them to pass the word on about the new website. Commissioner McKinney commented that he found the new website easy to navigate, and thanked Lisa for the excellent training she provided to Chair Rankin and Commissioner McKinney on the new website.

Ms. Waddell concluded her report by stating there will soon be a Veterans Registry signup to be activated in approximately 2 weeks on the homepage for veterans to provide their contact information for TVC tracking purposes. Chair Rankin asked Ms. Waddell to

notify the Commissioners via email regarding any additional changes to the website that are substantive.

**V. Discussion of Strategic Plan for 2011-2015**

Charles Buerschinger, Deputy Executive Director, presented the Strategic Plan for 2011-2015 to the Commissioners highlighting recent updates and edits made, including the integration of the classification schedule for the Veterans Services Representatives. The Commissioners provided input regarding edits to various sections of the plan.

**VI. Executive Director Report**

James Nier provided the timeline for the 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. The plan will be ready to be approved at the May 17 Commission Meeting. There will be time after that for the Commissioners and stakeholders to make edits before the final version is due to the Legislative Budget Board on June 18, 2010.

Mr. Nier reported the TVC won the 2010 Governor's Fitness Challenge for the third year in a row. Mr. Nier expressed his appreciation for everyone's participation. Fitness Challenge leader Alice Mehringer will present the trophy to the Commissioners at the Third Quarterly Commission Meeting on May 17, 2010.

Mr. Nier asked the Commissioners to review the resolution on the Blue Water Navy issue that will be presented to Morgan Little at the next Commission Meeting on May 17.

Mr. Nier reported on upcoming events for the TVC and the Commissioners.

**VII. Recommendations for agenda items for next meeting**

Vice Chairman O'Mahoney suggested the following items: Workshops for Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR); possibly another workshop for the next grant; other issues arising from the next meeting to address.

Mr. Nier suggested the date for the Fourth Quarterly Commission Meeting date be set at the May 17 Commission Meeting.

Chair Rankin requested someone be available to speak on monitoring the deliverables for the grants. David Nobles and Freddy Ruiz, TVC Fund Accountant, agreed to be prepared to provide an overview at the Fourth Quarterly Commission Meeting.

**VIII. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Commissioners agreed to wait until the Third Quarterly Meeting on May 17, 2010 to choose a date for the next Commission Meeting.

**IX. Public Comment**

None.

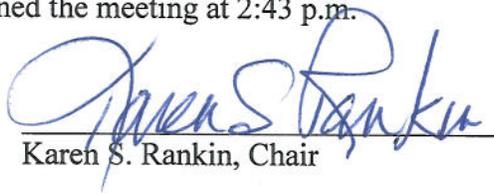
**X. Commissioners' Closing Comments**

None.

**XI. Adjournment**

Chair Rankin adjourned the meeting at 2:43 p.m.

Minutes Approved by:

  
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Karen S. Rankin, Chair



**TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION**

Special Commission Meeting

Fiscal Year 2010

May 6, 2010

10:00 a.m.

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**Jacinda Johnson**

Transition Assistance Advisor, Texas Military Forces, Camp Mabry

**Kyle Mitchell**

Governor's Advisor

Office of the Budget, Planning & Policy

**General Thomas G. Smith**

Chair, Fund for Veterans Assistance Advisory Committee

**Ken Wallingford**

Veterans Liaison, Texas Veterans Land Board