

Texas Veterans Commission Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting (FY 2015)

June 19, 2015

I. Call to order.

Chairman Eliseo Cantu called to order the Special Meeting of the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) at 9:00 a.m. on June 19, 2015, at the Stephen F. Austin Building, 1700 N. Congress Avenue, Room 170, Austin, Texas 78701.

The following Commissioners, constituting a quorum, were present:

Eliseo "Al" Cantu, Chairman
James H. Scott, Vice Chairman
Richard A. McLeon, IV, Secretary
Jake Ellzey, Commissioner
Daniel P. Moran, Commissioner

Also present was Thomas P. Palladino, Executive Director.

Also present: See the attached list.

Vice Chairman Scott led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag and Commissioner Moran led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag. Secretary McLeon gave the opening prayer.

II. Public Comment.

Bruce Bowers, Texas Legal Services Center (TLSC) Executive Director, provided an overview of the legal services that TLSC provides. Mr. Bowers also explained the challenges TLSC experiences with the lack of stable funding.

III. Report, presentation and/ or action regarding the Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) Grant Program to include the following:

Charlie Catoe, Fund for Veterans' Assistance (FVA) Director, provided an overview of his presentation to the Commission regarding the Fund for Veterans' Assistance Grant Program and highlighted the items that will need Commission approval.

A PowerPoint presentation was given throughout this agenda item.

A. Discussion of Commission priorities, including but not limited to, full or partial grant funding for the following FVA Grant Programs:

Mr. Catoe provided an overview over the current process of the FVA grant recommendations and the current overarching priorities for all the grant categories within the FVA. He reviewed the three current grant programs (General Assistance, Veterans Mental Health, and Housing4TexasHeroes) and listed the number of current grants they are managing with in each of these grant programs. Lastly, Mr. Catoe briefed the Commission over the geographic distribution of applications received and grants awarded.

Commissioners requested to delay any actions until after the full presentation of Agenda Item III.

1. General Assistance;

Mr. Catoe elaborated on the priorities previously established by the Commission for the service categories associated with the General Assistance grant program category and provided an overview of the effects staff has experienced since the establishment of service category priorities. Mr. Catoe offered suggestions for the Commission's consideration relating to amending the priorities for the service categories associated with General Assistance grant category for the grant program.

2. Veterans Mental Health; and

Mr. Catoe noted to the Commission that no service categories exist within the Veterans Mental Health grant program and explained how FVA prioritized grant awards utilizing Texas Statutes. Mr. Catoe offered suggested service categories for the Commission's consideration.

3. Housing4TexasHeroes

Mr. Catoe noted to the Commission that no service categories exist within the Housing4TexasHeroes grant program and explained how FVA prioritized grant awards utilizing guidelines associated with the Texas Housing Trust Fund. Additionally, Mr. Catoe provided an overview of the current funding cycle for the grant program and the effects staff has experienced as a result of the funding cycle. Mr. Catoe offered suggested service categories for the Commission's consideration for the grant program.

B. Policies and Procedures for Commission review and approval of grant funding, including but not limited to, procedures to amend FVA Advisory Committee grant award recommendations.

Mr. Catoe provided an in-depth overview over the current process of the FVA grant recommendations and offered suggestions on how to improve the process. Mr. Catoe elaborated on each suggestion offered by staff.

Concluding Mr. Catoe's presentation over Agenda III, the Commission deliberated the staff suggestions regarding the FVA grant process and engaged in a discussion with each other and Mr. Catoe.

Commission recessed from 10:42 a.m. to 10:55 a.m.

The Commission reconvened from recess and entertained the following motion and action based on their previous deliberation:

MOTION: Maintain current FVA grant process, authorize FVA Advisory Committee to receive applicant information before Advisory Committee Meetings, and direct staff to complete a transition plan to present to the Commission.

MADE BY: Secretary McLeon

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman Scott

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission deliberated staff suggestions regarding Commission priorities for the FVA grant programs and engaged in a discussion with each other and Mr. Catoe. The Commission entertained the following motion and action based on their deliberation:

MOTION: Amend current priorities applying to all FVA grant programs by removing language that states, "Avoid Duplication of Service in Geographic Areas" and replace with, "Promote Diversity of Services within Geographic Areas."

MADE BY: Commissioner Moran

SECONDED BY: Secretary McLeon

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission deliberated staff suggestions relating to service categories within the FVA General Assistance grant program and the maximum amount of funding for the FVA General Assistance grant program and engaged in a discussion with

each other and Mr. Catoe. The Commission entertained the following motion and action based on their deliberation:

MOTION: Remove the Homeless/Housing service category from the General Assistance grant program and transfer the service category to the Housing4TexasHeroes grant program.

MADE BY: Commissioner Moran

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Ellzey

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Table the remaining priority changes pending the results from needs assessment.

MADE BY: Secretary McLeon

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Lower the maximum amount of award funding from \$500,000 to \$300,000 for regional and multi-regional projects, non-statewide projects, for the FVA General Assistance grant program.

MADE BY: Commissioner Ellzey

SECONDED BY: Secretary McLeon

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Allow maximum amount of award funding at \$500,000 for statewide projects for the FVA General Assistance grant program.

MADE BY: Commissioner Moran

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman Scott

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

The Commission deliberated staff suggestions regarding the FVA Veterans Mental Health grant program and engaged in a discussion with each other and Mr. Catoe. The Commission entertained the following motion and action based on their deliberation:

MOTION: Establish Veterans Mental Health grant service categories and designate service priorities. Establish local matching requirements, and authorize staff to address Mental Health gaps pending the results received from the needs assessment.

MADE BY: Secretary McLeon

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Moran

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

Veterans Mental Health Grant Services Categories

- *Peer-delivered Services*
- *Clinical Counseling*
- *Non-clinical Support Services*

Veterans Mental Health Grant Services Priorities

- *Peer-delivered Services*
- *Clinical Counseling*

The Commission deliberated staff suggestions regarding the FVA Housing4TexasHeroes grant program and engaged in a discussion with each other and Mr. Catoe. The Commission entertained the following motion and action based on their deliberation:

MOTION: Change the funding cycle for the Housing4TexasHeroes grant program from two years to one year.

MADE BY: Commissioner Moran

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Ellzey

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Approve staff suggestions and establish service categories

for the Housing4TexasHeroes grant program.

MADE BY: Commissioner Moran

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Ellzey

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

Housing4TexasHeroes Grant Services Categories

- *Transitional housing to homeless Veterans*
- *Homelessness Prevention*
- *Temporary housing assistance to families of Veterans who are undergoing long-term treatment at a medical facility in Texas*
- *Home Modification and/or repair*

Commission recessed from 12:45 p.m. to 1:05 p.m. for lunch

NOTE: The Commission reconvened at 1:05 p.m. and took up Agenda Item VI after Agenda Item III.

VI. Report, presentation and/or action regarding a new FVA Grant Program for Veterans Treatment Court Programs.

Charlie Catoe, FVA Director, provided an overview of the new FVA grant program for Veterans Treatment Court Programs and the implementation strategy for the program.

MOTION: Remove the Veterans Court service category from the General Assistance grant effective with the Series 16-B grants scheduled to begin July 1, 2016 (application to be posted November 2015). Reduce the amount available for each FVA General Assistance grant by \$375,000 per solicitation effective with the Series 16-B General Assistance grant. Each year, \$750,000 will be moved to fund the Veterans Treatment Court grant, and will be matched by \$750,000 in General Revenue, for a total per fiscal year of \$1.5 million available in grants.

MADE BY: Vice Chairman Scott

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Moran

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

NOTE: The Commission proceeded with its regular order of business.

IV. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Legislative Update.

Jeff Williford, Government Relations Director, provide a summary over the 84th Texas Legislative Session. Mr. Williford highlighted budgetary and legislative items related to Veterans and the Agency.

V. Report, presentation and/or action regarding an increase in the salary of the Executive Director as provided by the 2016-2017 General Appropriations Act.

Chip Osborne, Chief Financial Officer, presented the proposed increase in the salary of the Executive Director as provided by the 2016-2017 General Appropriations Act to the Commission for approval.

MOTION: Approve the proposed increase in the salary of the Executive Director as provided by the 2016-2017 General Appropriations Act.

MADE BY: Vice Chairman Scott

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Ellzey

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Military Veteran Peer Network operating procedures.

Cruz Montemayor, Interim Deputy Executive Director, presented the Military Veteran Peer Network operating procedures to the Commission.

No motion required.

VIII. Executive Session.

None.

IX. Discuss and take possible action on the items considered in Executive Session.

None.

X. Discussion to set date, time, and location of next Commission meeting.

The Commission discussed the date, time, and location of the Fourth Quarterly

Commission meeting. TVC staff suggested the Fourth Quarterly Commission Meeting be scheduled on August 6, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. at the Stephen F. Austin Building, Room 170. The Commission expressed no conflicts and agreed to accept the date, time, and location for the Fourth Quarterly Commission meeting.

XI. Adjourn.

Chairman Cantu recognized each Commissioner for closing statements. The Commissioners extended their gratitude to Texas Veterans Commission staff for all their support and hard work in serving our Texas Veterans.

MOTION: Adjourn.

MADE BY: Vice Chairman Scott

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Ellzey

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Cantu adjourned the meeting at 1:43 p.m.

Minutes Approved by:



Eliseo "Al" Cantu, Jr., Chairman

TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION
Special Commission Meeting
FY 2015 – June 19, 2015
9:00 a.m. – Stephen F. Austin Building – Room 170
Speakers & Visitors

William Meehan
Chair, Fund for Veterans Assistance Advisory Committee

Bruce P. Bower
Texas Legal Services Center

Ken Wallingford
Veterans Land Board

Mike Kirkland

Texas Workforce Commission

Calum Hayes
Veterans Land Board

Bear Engram
Veterans Land Board

Paul Theobald
Office of State Representative Susan King

Bryan Law
Office of State Representative Susan King

Baily Olderog
Office of State Senator Donna Campbell