

Texas Veterans Commission Meeting Minutes

Commission Special Meeting (FY 2011)
September 29, 2010

I. Call to order

Chair Rankin called to order the Special Meeting of the Texas Veterans Commission at 10:00 a.m. on September 29, 2010, in the TVC Conference Room in Suite 800 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 O. Richman, Interim Executive Director.

Also present: See the attached list.

Chair Rankin called the meeting to order and introduced visitors.

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

General Thomas Smith, Chair - Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee, presented the recommendations of the Advisory Committee that were previously provided to Commissioners totaling \$4 million.

Luke's Wings – Multiple questions were raised that require clarification. Commissioners rejected this recommendation, and agreed to set this one aside for the next grant period. DAV, Taylor County Chapter - Approved conditionally pending clarification on costs for utilities. Catholic Charities – Commissioners requested deliverables on services be provided by county. Approved with change as discussed. Knowbility, Inc. - After discussion, the Commissioners rejected this recommendation. MHMR Tarrant County – After discussion, Commissioners approved a revised grant award of \$846,799.00.

Total funding awarded this grant period is \$3,200,120.

Chair Rankin called for a 10-minute recess at 11:50 a.m.

Chair Rankin reconvened the Open Meeting at 12:00 p.m.

MOTION: To approve the applications recommended by the Advisory Committee as presented, with changes.

MADE BY: Secretary Cantu

SECONDED BY: Commissioner McKinney

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

A complete list of the grants awarded by the TVC Commissioners is available on the Texas Veterans Commission website at: <http://www.tvc.state.tx.us/about/awards>

III. Discussion and Approval of VetRides Contract Amendment

Debbie Carter, Grant Administrator for Burnet County, presented to the Commissioners the grant agreement amendments proposed by VetRides. The first proposed amendment is a request to allow grant funds to pay operating expenses for a donated van received by VetRides that was acquired after the initial grant agreement was executed. The second proposed amendment requests an exception to the 1-year lease provision to enter into a 3-year lease agreement, or a lease/purchase agreement, or for additional funds to purchase the vans needed to operate the program.

The Commissioners asked Tina Carnes, General Counsel, to work with Burnet County to find a solution to the second contract amendment request and report back on the final outcome at the next Commission meeting in November.

MOTION: To approve the first contract amendment request to change the scope of work to include the donated van in use of grant funds.

MADE BY: Commissioner McKinney

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman O'Mahoney

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Update on Veterans Courts

David Nobles, Director, Fund for Veterans' Assistance, provided an update regarding the status of grant agreements with the five counties who were awarded grants for their Veterans Courts.

V. Grant Program Performance/Expenditure Reports

Mr. Nobles presented the Cumulative Program Performance Report, and Report Summary containing figures through July 31, 2010. He then presented the Detail FVA Grant Expenditures Report for the period ending August 31, 2010. Mr. Nobles informed

the Commissioners they will be receiving the Expenditures Report and the Cumulative Program Performance Report on a monthly basis.

VI. Discussion on FVA Internal Audit Draft

Chair Rankin noted that this audit was specifically requested by the agency to provide an in-depth review and feedback regarding the Fund for Veterans' Assistance procedures. Chair Rankin requested that such a statement be included at the beginning of the Audit. Mr. Nobles provided an overview and discussion was held on each of the Management Responses prepared for each audit recommendation. Regarding Recommendation #13, the Commissioners agreed that as soon as the procedures are solidified, administrative rules should be drafted in March or April, with the goal that rules for the Fund for Veterans' Assistance grant program would be adopted no later than July 1, 2011.

VII. Discussion and approval of possible revisions to grant calendar dates

Mr. Nobles presented grant cycle calendars for the next grant solicitation to begin October 1, and a proposed revised schedule for the grant solicitation calendar. After discussion, the Commissioners agreed that the next two grant solicitations would begin on November 1, 2010 and on March 1, 2011. The new dates would not affect the current proposed award dates.

VIII. Discussion and approval of revisions to grant forms

Mr. Nobles presented revised Letter of Interest (LOI) and Grant Application forms. He noted these changes did not incorporate the changes suggested in the audit report. After discussion, the Commissioners decided to implement the one-step application process, and discontinue the use of the LOI immediately. Staff was directed to create a revised Grant Application form that incorporates the sections of the LOI that are not currently in the Grant Application form, and complete it in time for the next grant solicitation on November 1, 2010. The Commissioners requested to see a fully revised Grant Application form around mid-November that includes the recommendations from the audit.

MOTION: To approve edits to the Letter of Interest and Grant Application forms as presented.

MADE BY: Commissioner McKinney

SECONDED BY: Vice Chairman O'Mahoney

ACTION: The motion passed unanimously.

IX. Agenda items for next meeting

The Commissioners will review the amended, streamlined Grant Application form.

X. Date and time of Next Meeting

The next Special Meeting for the FVA was scheduled for November 16, 2010 at 8:30 a.m.

XI. Public Comment

Jim Nier, former TVC Executive Director, confirmed the audit was requested by the agency, with the goal to receive a thorough review of the efficiency and effectiveness of the Fund's processes. Mr. Nier expressed regret that he was not able to assist in preparing the responses to the auditor's recommendations as the audit results were completed on his last day with the Commission.

General Smith commented on the issue of grant funds that are received through auto registrations, noting that the information is currently not found on the registration form. The FVA Advisory Committee is contacting the Texas Department of Transportation to add a section to the auto registration form so registrants can make a donation to the FVA.

XII. Commissioners' Closing Comments

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Nobles for his hard work, for the dedication of his staff and the Advisory Committee members.

XIII. Adjournment

Chair Rankin adjourned the meeting at 1:53 p.m.

Minutes Approved by:


T.P. O'Mahoney, Chairman



TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION

Special Meeting
Fiscal Year 2011
September 29, 2010
10:00 a.m.

Debbie M. Carter
Burnet County
Grant Administrator

Kyle Mitchell
Governor's Advisor
Office of the Budget, Planning & Policy

James E. Nier
Former Texas Veterans Commission
Executive Director

General Thomas G. Smith
Chair, Fund for Veterans' Assistance Advisory Committee