

# Texas Veterans Commission Meeting Minutes

First Quarterly Meeting (FY 2020) November 14, 2019

## I. Call to order.

Chairman Eliseo Cantu called to order the 4th Quarterly Commission Meeting of the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) at 9:00 a.m. on November 14, 2019 at the Stephen F. Austin building, Room 170, 1700 N. Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas 78701:

The following Commissioners, constituting a quorum were present:

Eliseo "Al" Cantu, Jr. Chairman  
Daniel Moran, Vice Chairman  
Kevin Barber, Secretary  
Laura Koerner, Commissioner  
Kimberlee Shaneyfelt, Commissioner

Also present was Thomas P. Palladino, Executive Director.

Also, present: See attached list.

Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag was led by Vice Chairman Daniel Moran and Commissioner Kimberlee Shaneyfelt led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag. Chip Osborne Director of Resource Management led the opening prayer.

\* Introduction of 2 new TVC HQ Staff Members.

\*\* Chairman recognized Louellen Lowe from the Legislative Budget Board

## II. Public Comment.

None.

## III. Approve the Minutes of the 4th Quarterly Commission Meeting held August 8, 2019.

The minutes for the 4th Quarterly Commission Meeting held on August 8, 2019 were previously distributed to the Commissioners.

**MOTION:** Approve the minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Commission Meeting held on August 8, 2019.

**MADE BY:** Vice Chairman Daniel Moran

**SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Laura Koerner

**ACTION:** The motion passed unanimously.

## IV. Report, presentation and/or action on agency programs and divisions:

A. **Program Operations Division;**

B. **Resource Management Division; and**

C. **Deputy Executive Director.**

The Commissioners reviewed the Quarterly Program Reports that were previously provided. Directors were provided the opportunity to brief the Commission on any new items or highlight significant items that occurred within their program or division.

- A. **Charles Catoe**, Director of Program Operations, reported the 15 of the 19 Claims Representatives have been hired and are planning to have all 19 hired before end of year. We are also funding a second Justice Involved claims person to be hired soon and Wes created and approved a new position for a Claims Inquiry Coordinator to follow up on legislative and everyday claims inquiries. Texas Workforce have a new system that incorporates our veteran's information to their database, but it is currently facing issues and the Workforce Commission is working on fixing the issues.

**Charles Bryant**, Interim Operations Manager of Veterans Education, during FY19 and continuing to this quarter Veterans Education has worked on several items related to GI Bill benefits and program approvals, some highlights that we have done is we have contacted 900 facilities throughout the state referencing the implementation of the Choice Act section 103/107, effective August 1, 2019, schools are not allowed to penalize or prohibit a GI Bill student from attending or participating in courses while awaiting VA payment (for up to 90 days).

**Gary Lee**, Health Care Advocacy Program Manager, provided a brief summary of the what the program did closing out FY19, resolved over 7500 healthcare related cases, this success can be attributed to our training program that was put in place; usage of a training checklist and mentor system to ensure the staff knows what they needed to do when serving veterans. Conducted 718 outreach events, exceeding our goal of 610, had the opportunity to engage with over 16,000 veterans based on these alone.

- B. **Chip Osborne**, Director of Resource Management, wanted to say a special thanks to Tish McCullough for her service as our Director of Mental Health, she was with our agency for 5 years, we wish her all the best with her new job and new endeavors and she will be sadly missed. She was recognized and given a certificate at our last Employee Recognition event. Ron Scoggins will be the Interim Director; Human Resources is working on posting the new position. Also, I want to thank Veteran Employment Services Department for supporting Anna Baker and the Veteran Entrepreneur at the Governor's Small Business Forum in El Paso, with special speaker Chair Ruth Hughes from the Texas Workforce Commission.

**Tina Marberry**, Director of Human Resources, started on November 1<sup>st</sup> of 2019 and will also have the Training Events Management Program under her leadership. I have been meeting with other Directors to see how we can partner together as a team and figure out ways to improve our policies, procedures and functions in our CAPPs processes. We are in the beginning stages of planning a visit with leadership and administrative teams throughout the state providing them 1 on 1 HR training for HR processes. Our 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter current turnover rate is 5.4% which is a little higher than what we would like to see but overall for the year we are 15.4%.

**Elisabeth Webster**, Communications Coordinator, Funds for Veterans Assistance gave an update on the Tour of Texas. Visited every single region in Texas, total of 8 to include, Panhandle, West Texas, Alamo, South Texas, Gulf Coast, Central Texas, East Texas and North Texas. Also, I would like to point out, we represented every branch of service during this coverage. Chairman Cantu thanked Elisabeth Webster for a job well done and putting in the hard work.

- C. **Shawn Deabay**, Deputy Executive Director, provided an update regarding Sunset Deliverables and a couple of updates from the IT department. I want to thank Cruz Montemayor for putting the Sunset Deliverables together along with the Government Relations team and all of the programs that participated. 1<sup>st</sup> Table SB601 shows the exact language on what we need to accomplish according to that bill. Status is green or yellow and to the right is a detailed description of where we are in the process. 2<sup>nd</sup> Table Management Action, indicates we are in

compliance, but are continuing to improve the process.

**Greg Talamantez**, Manager of Government Relations, updated the Commissioners with the latest Interim Charges to include VABS Veteran Treatment Courts, Veteran Health Care and Veteran Mental Health.

V. Quarterly Reports from Advisory Committees (Veterans Communication, Veterans Employment and Training, Fund for Veterans' Assistance and Veterans County Service Officer)

- **Communications Advisory:** Elaine Zavala, Director of Communications, gave a brief overview of activities; Met July 19 but did not have a Quorum, canceled due to Staff Conference, had 2 RSVP.
- **Veterans Employment and Training:** Tim Shatto, Director of Employment, gave a brief overview of activities.
- **Veteran County Service Officer:** Ted Oats gave a brief overview of activities, there was a shaky start to this FY but it got worked out. A better product was created and focused on the Training Conference.
- **Funds for Veterans Assistance:** Jim Bracken, Director of FVA, gave a brief overview of activities for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter.

VI. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Regular Evaluation of Advisory Committees.

**Shawn Deabay**, Deputy Executive Director, briefed the Commissioners on recommendations from TVC staff concerning the advisory committees. These Committees have been very dedicated to Texas veterans and the agency and work extremely well together. However, there are three pervasive and recurring issues which have lent to the staff recommendation to dissolve the two committees:

- Irregular participation and frequent rescheduling due to a lack of a quorum.
- There are very few overall outcomes in either committee in comparison to the resources expended.
- Cost and legal exposure. The agency expends tremendous resources on conducting the quarterly meetings in staff hours, training, and travel costs.

Based on the self-assessment and interviews conducted, there are three proposals for the commission to consider regarding its advisory committees:

- (1) Combine the communications advisory committee with the veterans' employment & training advisory committee into one advisory committee, which would concentrate on the overall needs of veterans in the state of Texas;
- (2) Eliminate both the Communications and Veterans' Employment & Training advisory committees; or
- (3) Retain each advisory committee "as is."

**MOTION:** Adoption of Option (1) Combine the Communications advisory committee with the veterans' employment & training advisory committee into one advisory committee. TVC staff to implement a plan for next Commission meeting.

**MADE BY:** Commissioner Kevin Barber

**SECONDED BY:** Commissioner Laura Koerner

**ACTION:** The motion passed unanimously

**VII. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Advisory Committees Membership.**

**Shawn Deabay**, Deputy Executive Director, briefed the Commissioners on the applications received for the Advisory Committees to include, Funds for Veterans' Assistance, Communications, Veterans Employment and Veterans County Service Officer. At the close of the application period, applications are collected and forwarded to the applicable program directors for review. The Deputy Executive Director convened a panel and compiled a recommended list of applicants to the Commission. Recommendations are submitted for your approval.

**MOTION:** Approve all recommendations with a start of January 2020.  
**MADE BY:** Commissioner Laura Koerner  
**SECONDED BY:** Vice Chairman Daniel Moran  
**ACTION:** The motion passed unanimously

**VIII. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Internal Audit Report.**

Darlene Brown, Internal Audit Director, McConnell & Jones presented the FY2019 Annual Internal Audit Report, we conducted the CAPPs HR Access Controls audit in conformance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing and in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). This audit identified findings that resulted in an overall internal control rating of **Effective**.

\*\* 10 minute break 10:27 am to 10:37 am

**IX. Report, presentation and/or action on Appropriation Year 2019 Fourth Quarter Operating Statement.**

Michelle Nall, Chief Financial Officer, provided a summary of the method of finance and expenditure on each program for the 4th Quarter of FY2019 ending on May 31, 2019. Most of the programs were on target with their spending, there were no issues at this time.

**X. Report, presentation and/or action regarding Executive Director Report.**

Thomas Palladino, Executive Director, provided a report on the agency's priorities and activities over the last quarter. Mr. Palladino mentioned the meetings and events he has attended to include relationships with the Veterans Administration.

**XI. Executive Session.**

Start 11:04 am  
End 11:26 am

**XII. Discussion and take possible action on the items considered in Executive Session.**

There were no items to take action on.

**XIII. Discussion to set date, time, and location of next Commission Meeting**

The Commission agreed for the 2nd Quarterly Commission Meeting of FY20 be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at the Stephen F. Austin Bldg., Room 170.

**XIV. Adjournment.**

Chairman Cantu asked each Commissioner for any closing remarks.

Vice Chairman Scott addressed his retirement and appreciation of the Commissioners and TVC Staff.

Each Commissioner extended their gratitude to Texas Veterans Commission staff for all their support and hard work in serving our Texas Veterans.

Chairman Cantu provided closing remarks as well.

**MOTION:** Adjourn  
**MADE BY:** Vice Chairman Daniel Moran  
**SECONDED BY:** Secretary Kevin Barber  
**ACTION:** The motion passed unanimously.

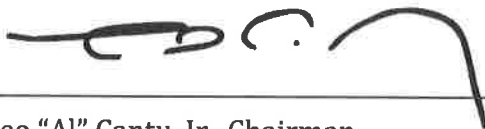
Chairman Cantu adjourned the meeting at 11:41 a.m.

Minutes Approved by:



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Kevin Barber, Secretary



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Eliseo "Al" Cantu, Jr., Chairman

**TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION**

**1st Quarterly Commission Meeting FY 2020  
November 14, 2019 9:00 a.m.  
Stephen F. Austin Bldg. Rm 170**

**Speakers and Visitors**

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**Louellen Lowe**