TEXAS VETERANS COMMISSION
FOURTH QUARTER COMMISSION MEETING (FY 2025)
Tuesday, August 12th, 2025, 09:00 a.m.
George HW Bush Bldg, 1801 Congress Ave, 4.300 Conference room, Austin, TX 78701

MINUTES

I. OPENING

A. Chairwoman Laura Koerner calls the meeting to order at 09:00 a.m.
B. Roll call:

Secretary Chuck Wright informs Chairwoman Koerner that there is a quorum.

Chairwoman Laura Koerner, Vice-Chair Kevin Barber (online), Secretary Chuck Wright, Commissioner Mike Hernandez, Commissioner Mary Dale
Also present: Executive Director Thomas P. Palladino.

C. Commissioner Chuck Wright led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag, and Commissioner Mary Dale led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Texas Flag.
D. Chip Osborne led the Commission in prayer.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. None

III. CONSENT AGENDA

Action regarding approval of the Consent Agenda*. Chair Koerner asked if any commissioner wanted to remove anything from the consent agenda and place it on the FY 25, 4Q Commission Meeting agenda.*

Chair Koerner removed Agenda item III.A. Acceptance of Gifts from the agenda, no gifts were received.

No additional items were moved from the consent agenda.

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Mary Dale and seconded by Commissioner Chuck Wright to approve the Consent Agenda.
VOTE: 5-0: Motion Passed.

IV. PRESENTATIONS

A. ***Agenda Item IV.A. is the presentation of the FY2025 Internal Audit Update.*** *Richard Galindo, Partner, Garza/Gonzalez & Associates, L.L.C., gave the presentation..*

V. REPORTS

A. ***Report on Agency Departments and Programs.***

i. **Program Operations Division**. Charles Catoe, Division Director of Program Operations.

- **Healthcare.**
  - Partnered with the Veteran Mental Health Department to get additional training to assist employees in recognizing veterans who may have mental health issues.
  - Attended American GI Forum National convention.
- **Claims.**
  - Focus Groups – six meetings across three districts. The Northwest District has been difficult to get started.
- **Employment.**
  - Introduction of new Director, Katherine Tamez.
  - Kalahari Resort & Spa Employment event
    - 1253 job seekers attended, 436 veterans, 42 transitioning, 98 family members
    - 120 employers attended the event/187 interviews/61 employers hired from the event
  - VES West Texas District won the Mark Sandars Exceptional Service to Veterans award.

ii. **Resource Management Division**. Michelle Nall, Chief Financial Officer, provided DRM updates.

- **Finance. – Michelle Nall, CFO**
  - Appropriation Year (AY) 2025 Third Quarter Operating Statement
  - Grant money –
    - Chair Koerner confirmed we have approximately 44 million for grants in May.

B. ***Deputy Executive Director Report***. Shawn Deabay, Deputy Executive Director, provided DED updates.

i. **Updates.**

- **FVA Advisory Committee.**
  - Applications are being taken through the end of August.
    - Added conflict of interest form to be completed when applying.
    - Added interview process.
- **TVC Structure.**
  - Reorganized Division Programs – starting September 1, 2025
  - Centrally funded departments move to Deputy Executive Director.
  - Renamed divisions
    - Director of Veteran Services Division – Chip Osborne
    - Director of Veteran Benefits Division – Charles Catoe
- **House Bill 114 –** Transfer of Health and Human Services move to TVC
  - Removed HHSC as a co-administrator of the mental health program for veterans. 37 contracts and 16 grants that will move to TVC.

- Transfers responsibility of the annual mental health report to TVC, due December 1st, to the Governor.
- Transfers the responsibility for the development and implementation of a long-term action plan to prevent veteran suicide.

C. ***Executive Director Report***.

i. **Agency Updates.**
- Transfer of Mental Health Program from HHSC to TVC.
- Texas Family and Alliance Grant – 16 grants – 5 year grants
- New Mental Health Director, Brenda Kessler, starting September
- Veteran Reference Database – ability to connect to all service members leaving the services
- Finalizing the Hazlewood Database
- All employees at the agency are at or above the state average – kudo's to Michelle Nall, Lawrence Cruz and Tina Whitis
- Upcoming events
  - FVA Grant Presentations
  - Employer Awards Presentations
  - Hiring Red, White, and You – in November

ii. **Centinnial Celebration**

VI. CONSIDERATIONS

A. ***Action Regarding Appropriation Year (AY) 2026 Operating Budget..*** Michelle Nall, CFO will present this item for approval.

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Chuck Wright and seconded by Commissioner Mary Dale to approve Appropriation Year (AY) 2026 Operating Budget.
VOTE: 5-0: Motion Passed.

B. ***Action Regarding 2025 Veteran Education Excellence Recognition Award (VEERA).*** David Salgado, Director, Veterans Education, will present this item for approval.

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Mike Hernandez and seconded by Commissioner Mary Dale to approve the 2025 VEERA winners.
VOTE: 5-0: Motion Passed.

C. ***Discussion Regarding the Grant Amendment Request from Central Texas Council of Governments (CTCOG), Vet Ride.*** Thomas Palladino, Executive Director, will provide an update.

No Motion.

D. ***Action Regarding the Fund for Veterans' Assistance 2025-2026 Grant Renewals for the FY 2027 Grant Period.*** Erv Leos, Director, Fund for Veterans' Assistance, will present this item for approval.

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Mary Dale and seconded by Commissioner Chuck Wright to approve the removal of grant renewal options as stated in the 2025-2026 RFA for the awarded grants from July 1, 2025, through August 2026. This will require all

organizations to apply for a new grant.
VOTE: 5-0 Motion Passed.

E. ***Action Regarding the Fund for Veterans' Assistance FY2027, Request for Application.*** Erv Leos, Director, Fund for Veterans' Assistance, will present this item for approval**.**

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Chuck Wright and seconded by Commissioner Mike Hernandez to approve the FVA FY2027 Request for Application.
VOTE: 5-0 Motion Passed.

VII. ***Executive Session.***

None.

VIII. ***Discussion about setting the date, time, and location of the next Commission Meeting.***

The Commission agreed that the 1st Quarterly Commission Meeting of FY 2026 would be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., at HQ Austin, TX, George H.W. Bush building, 4.300 conference room.

IX. ***Adjournment.***

Chairwoman Koerner asked each Commissioner for any closing remarks. The Commissioners extended their gratitude to the staff and the Advisory Committee members. The Executive Director thanked the Texas Veterans Commission staff for their support and hard work in serving Texas Veterans.

MOTION: Made by Commissioner Mary Dale, seconded by Commissioner Kevin Barber, motion to adjourn.
VOTE: 5-0: Motion Passed.

Chairwoman Koerner adjourned the meeting at 10:37 a.m.