



Veterans and Military Affairs Advisory Board

New Mexico Veterans' Memorial

Minutes

16 October 2013

Draft

Present: Chairman Roger Newall, Vice Chairman Archie Garcia, Ken O'Keefe, Brian Leen, Stephen Asher, Lloyd Calderon

Absent: Elise Wheeler, Patricia Gaston, Louis Tafoya, Steve Overman, Nicholas Pisano

Chairman Newall called the meeting to order at 9:15am.

The September 2013 Minutes were accepted as submitted.

Membership

Mr. Nicholas Pisano has resigned; he is moving to the east coast. There are now three vacancies on the Board. Members whose terms expire in September 2013 were asked to submit a letter to request reappointment. Mr. Leen's recommendation for a new member is in selection process.

Albuquerque Veteran Employee Coins

There have been 363 requests for the Veteran coin; Chairman Newall continues to follow up on all requests. He is scheduled to present coins to APD and AFD.

2014 Initiatives:

Provide transportation for veterans to the VA Medical Center

Items of discussion:

- There is a need for handicap accessible vans for transportation.
- Veterans who are treated at the VA Medical Center will have an ID/NM driver's license with veteran status
 - Request federal grant funding.
 - SunVan and the Department of Senior Affairs have accessible vans.
 - What is the current ridership of veterans?
 - Does the current system have the flexibility to provide additional service?
 - What is the economic impact?
 - Could it be as simple as the veteran presenting a VA card to the transit driver?

Mr. Asher will develop a proposal for the Transportation Initiative. Mr. O'Keefe has a meeting with Mr. Marnell, VA Medical Center Director and will mention the transportation initiative.

Support of Innovate ABQ





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Vice Chairman Garcia recommended the Board support *Innovate ABQ*, a collaborative initiative among UNM, STC, government and the business community that will bring Albuquerque's entrepreneurial and the established business community to create new companies and grow existing ones. The idea is to create a one-stop-shop approach for companies, entrepreneurs and investors seeking to evaluate new business opportunities.

Chairman Newall requested Vice Chairman Garcia and Mr. Leen develop a proposal for this initiative.

Housing for Homeless Veterans in Albuquerque

The City of Albuquerque's initiative, *Albuquerque Heading Home*, is a plan that incorporates hundreds of volunteers, the business community, non-profit organizations, hospitals, and the faith community. There have been 273 homeless individuals who have been helped in the program. A homeless individual can cost the City as much as \$100,000 in services for medical care, incarceration, etc.; the program has been able to find housing which costs approximately \$20,000 for a year.

- What is the city prepared to do as far as resources go?
- How many do not want housing?
- There are several programs to assist the homeless.
- There are approximately 3,000 homeless veterans in Albuquerque

Creation of a Veteran Job Corps Center

Mr. Calderon would like to create a Veteran Job Corps Center similar to the federally funded Job Corps; veterans who graduate will be given a job. Armories or churches could be used. Vice Chairman Garcia suggested having veteran owned contracting companies renovate empty City facilities.

- The Job Corps age limit is early twenties; could the age limit be increased to accommodate veterans?
- What programs are being afforded to veterans currently, such as apprentice programs?
- There is duplication of effort in many cases because of the availability of funding.
- Vice Chairman Garcia suggested conducting a study by a business or the university that has credibility in the community; the Board could set the perimeters.

Mr. Calderon will send members his White Paper on the subject.

Next Advisory Board Meeting

Chairman Newall will not be available for the next meeting on November 20, 2013. Vice Chairman Garcia will conduct the meeting.





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Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:55am

