



## Minutes Tempe Veterans Commission September 6, 2022

Minutes of the TEMPE VETERANS COMMISSION held on Tuesday, September 6, 2022, 6:00 p.m., via In-person.

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

Chantele Carr  
William (Bill) Blair  
Phillip Kraft  
Beno Thomas  
Cory Pechtl  
Linda Bergevin

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

Celia Sadhu  
Juan Garcia  
Randy Elston

**Staff Present:**

Octavia Harris, Deputy Human Services Director  
Danielle Palka, Administrative Assistant  
Abe McCann, Veterans Services Coordinator

**Guest:**

Kathryn Collins, Director of Training & Education Habitat for Humanity

**Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order**

Chair Philip Kraft called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Agenda Item 2 – Attendance**

**Agenda Item 3 – Public Appearances-**

The Tempe Veterans Commission welcomes public comment. According to the Arizona Open Meeting Law, the Commission may only discuss matters listed on its meeting agendas. Matters brought-up by the public under public

appearances that are not listed on the meeting agenda cannot be discussed by the Commission. A three (3)-minute time limit per person will be in effect.

American Legion Post #138 had several members attend the meeting and each spoke about the current challenges of the Post which include their rising rent and inability to stay within their building. They attended to share their situation, seek assistance and network as they would like to find a new home to keep the Post in Tempe. Attendees included: Darrell Pierce, Adjutant of the Sons of American Legion and American Legion Rider Road Captain; Carol Pierce, Auxiliary Sergeant of Arms; Travis Strickland, Sons of the American Legion Sergeant of Arms and American Legion Rider Sergeant of Arms; Bob Cowgill, American Legion Jr. Vice and Sons of the American Legion Vice and President of the American Legion Riders; Joanie Baginski, Former Founding First Lady; and Tom Felton, Vice President of the American Legion Riders.

#### **Agenda Item 4 – Review and Approval of August 2, 2022 minutes**

**MOTION:** Motion to APPROVE August 2, 2022, minutes by Commission Member Chantele Carr

**SECOND:** Motion seconded by Commission Member Beno Thomas

**AYES:** Commission Members William (Bill) Blair, Cory Pechtl, and Commission Chair Philip Kraft.

#### **Agenda Item 5 – Chair’s Remarks**

New Commission Chair Philip Kraft thanked the Commission for the honor to serve as Chair. He looks forward to more networking and learning about Veteran supporting agencies within Arizona.

#### **Agenda Item 6 – Introduction of new Commission Member – Linda Bergevin**

Commission Chair introduced Linda Bergevin who attended her first meeting. She thanked the Commission for including her and looks forward to bringing her experiences with law enforcement and law to issues that affect Veterans.

#### **Agenda Item 7 – Introduction and Update from Veterans Services Coordinator – Abe McCann**

Abe has been in his position for three weeks and has a number of different initiatives in various stages he will be bringing forward such as Skill Bridge, working with the new Chief Diversity Officer, outreach strategies for the citizens of Tempe, and collaboration with the Veterans Day Parade.

#### **Agenda Item 8 – Habitat for Humanity**

Kathryn Collins presented on efforts by Habitat for Humanity to engage the Veteran community. One such program is the Construction in Training Program (CIT) which began in 2019 and is a workforce readiness program. The CIT program would provide job skills, training and a weekly stipend to Veteran participants. The training location is in Phoenix.

#### **Agenda Item 9 – Commission Member Updates/Announcements**

Bill -no update. Beno – no update. Linda – no update. Cory – no update. Chantele -South Mountain Community College has a speaker on Sept 8<sup>th</sup> . Phil -Operation Shockwave is hosting a 5K run on October 22 to raise awareness on Veteran suicide prevention.

**Agenda Item 10 – Future Agenda Items – October 4, 2022**

Suggested agenda items: American Legion Post 138, update from Nicole Baker with AZ Dept of Veterans Services, Robert Garcia with AZ Commerce Authority, AZ Coalition of Military Families and Operation Shockwave. Any suggestions, concerns or comments for the next agenda, please reach out to Octavia.

**Agenda Item 11 – Adjournment**

**MOTION: Motion to adjourn by Commission Member Beno Thomas**

**SECOND: Motion seconded by Commission Member Chantele Carr**

**AYES: Phillip Kraft, William “Bill” Blair, Cory Pechtl, Linda Bergevin**

**Meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.**

Next meeting will be on October 4, 2022

Minutes Prepared by: Danielle Palka

Reviewed by Octavia Harris

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Philip Kraft, Chair  
Tempe Veterans Commission