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**VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD
CITY OF LAS CRUCES
September 28, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.**

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MEMBERS PRESENT: Christine Sautter, MOAA
Daniel Ansbach, Special Forces Association
Hubert L. Gay, Vietnam Veterans
James (JR) Turner, Member at Large 1
John Poland, American Legion Post 10
Mike Cano, Member at Large 3
Rod Gajewski, Military Order of the Purple Heart
Sam Bothern, DAV Chapter 10
Victor Eres, Marine Corps League

STAFF PRESENT: Larry Nichols, Community Development Director
Audrianna Sambrano, Administrative Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT: Bill Hawkins, Veterans Parade Committee
Dale Lawrence, Las Cruces Vet Center
Deborah O'Callaghan, Vet Center
Dolores Archuleta, Veterans Wall Chair
Elaine Prickett, Honor Flight Southern NM & El Paso
Frank Carril, Vets for LC, ADA Access
Isabel Gonzales, VA HBPC
Jason Owon, Tender Care Home Health & Hospice
Julie Reyes, Tender Care Home Health & Hospice
Julie Stanton, Tender Care Home Health & Hospice
L-D Palmer, Citizen
Michelle Perez, Tender Care Home Health & Hospice
Montevis Price, Veterans Justice Outreach Specialist
Nelson Crane, Tender Care Home Health & Hospice
Patricia Torres, American Legion Auxiliary
Rick Nezzon, Sisbarro Dealership
Sylvia Chavez, Tender Care Home Health & Hospice
Tony Alvidrez, MVCH
Travis Rogers, VA LC C-Boc
Victor Sanchez, Veterans Treatment Court Coordinator

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I. CALL TO ORDER (9:05 a.m.): Larry Nichols called the meeting to order.

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II. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA:

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- a. Motion to approve agenda by Board Member Mike Cano, seconded by Board Member Rod Gajewski.

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2 **III. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**
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- 4 a. The minutes from August 24, 2021, were approved. Motioned by
5 Board Member Mike Cano and seconded by Board Member Rod
6 Gajewski.
7

8 **IV. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS:**
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10 **a. Rod Gajewski, Military Order of the Purple Heart,** stated that
11 Sisbarro donated to the Military Order of the Purple Heart and will be
12 making donations in the future to other groups that are involved. Mr.
13 Gajewski also mentioned that the Veterans stand down will be at Post
14 10124 on November 10th.
15

16 **b. Christine Sautter, MOAA,** stated that they will be participating in
17 the Veterans Day parade with the Farm & Ranch Trolley. Ms. Sautter
18 also stated that MOAA has picked up four new members.
19

20 **c. Victor Eres, Marine Corps League,** stated that they had seven
21 funerals for the month of August and so far, they have had seven for
22 September. On September 11th they provided a color guard at the
23 car show at Borman. On September 30th, they will be participating
24 in the color guard training in Albuquerque. The startup for Toys for
25 Tots will be on October 15th. Last year, a total of 5,000 children ages
26 infant to 14 years old received an average of three toys each child.
27 If anyone is interested in donating unwrapped toys please contact
28 Joe Montoya, Marine Corps League Coordinator. The refurbishment
29 of the Marine Corps League monument is still pending.
30

31 **d. Sam Bothern, DAV Chapter 10,** stated that they are continuing
32 their outreach table at the Farmer's Market. They are trying to get in
33 contact with Veterans that need assistance with their filings. Starting
34 on October 30th, they will be starting their annual fundraiser at
35 Golden Corral until Veterans Day.
36

37 **e. Daniel Ansbach, Special Forces Association,** stated that he has
38 spoken to Parks & Rec regarding the Special Forces monument at
39 Veterans Park. They would like to put two benches next to the
40 monument similar to the ones next to the Korean Monument.
41

42 **f. John Poland, American Legion Post 10,** stated that there is a
43 non-perishable food pantry at the post for Veterans in need. The
44 website for the American Legion Post 10 is up and running at

1 nmalpost10.org. Mr. Poland stated that an NMSU professor in the
2 Engineering Technology department is looking for Veterans to
3 participate in a hearing-impaired study at the university. Mr. Poland
4 also stated that they are actively involved in the stand down and will
5 be having two meetings in October.
6

7 **g. James Turner, Member at Large 1,** requested to bring a vote to
8 the board at October's meeting to add D-Day, June 6th, to the
9 Garrison Flag calendar. Mr. Turned also stated that there will be a
10 bell ringing ceremony for the Garrison Flag on October 3rd for the
11 Fire Fighters Memorial Day.
12

13 **h. Hubert Gay, Vietnam Veterans,** stated that Las Cruces is the
14 largest chapter in the state. On March 26, 2022, they will be having
15 a welcome home for Vietnam Veterans. There is a food drive on the
16 first Sunday of every month at Save Mart. The new Iraq/Afghanistan
17 monument has been paid for. The money was raised to pay for the
18 installation at the last car show. Mr. Gay stated that they are waiting
19 on the City for the foundation, the plans have been given to Parks &
20 Rec.
21

22 **V. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**
23

24 **a. Larry Nichols, Community Development Director,** stated that
25 the Desert Hope apartments is a 40-unit, single room apartment
26 complex with a community center, laundry mat, and several other
27 items for the complex. Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority is
28 managing the complex and is giving priority to Veterans for
29 occupancy.
30

31 **b. Veterans Park,** Rod Gajewski requested an update regarding the
32 funds and timeline for the parking lot reconstruction. Larry Nichols
33 stated that he will provide an update for the park funding and the
34 schedule for the time during October's meeting.
35

36 **c. Veterans Day Parade, Bill Hawkins,** stated that the parade will be
37 on November 6th. The lineup will start at 9:00 a.m., and it will start
38 at 11:00 a.m. The route will be straight up Main Street to the
39 roundabout, turn to the west, and come back to Water Street.
40 Currently, there is about 37 entries for the parade. For the Grand
41 Marshalls, they are considering the Korean War Veterans. As of now,
42 they have only received three names.
43

1 **d. Tender Care Home & Hospice, Jason Owen**, stated that they are
2 with a program called We are Veterans. It is an outreach and training
3 program that trains staff for community resources to help their
4 patients that are Veterans. Mr. Owens stated that they are currently
5 a one star with the We Are Veterans program and they have
6 submitted for their second star.

7
8 **e. Honor Flight Southern New Mexico and El Paso, Elaine**
9 **Prickett**, stated that they are currently working on a new project
10 called Labor of Love calendar. The calendars have a QR Code for each
11 month that you scan with your phone, and it will give you a video
12 interview from a Veteran. The Honor Flight is a trip for Veterans to
13 have the opportunity to attend. There is currently a waiting list of 90
14 people. Trips have been delayed due to covid. The calendars are for
15 sale and if a company would like to purchase calendars and have
16 their logo on them, that is an option if you purchase 10 or more.

17
18 **VI. Action Items:**

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20 **a. Election for Vice Chair.** There were three nominations for Vice
21 Chair: John Poland, JR Turner and Rod Gajewski. Board Member
22 Poland declined the nomination. The ballots were presented to the
23 chair from the teller. The results of the ballots were that Rod
24 Gajewski was the selected candidate to be the Vice Chair of the
25 board. Mr. Gajewski accepted.

26
27 **VII. Public Participation:**

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29 **a. Frank Carril, Las Cruces Resident**, stated that General Obligation
30 (GO) Bond funds were not used to make City parks ADA Compliant.
31 Mr. Carril stated that he has started a campaign locally, state, and
32 nationally to get this issue addressed. Mr. Carril requested to meet
33 with Larry Nichols regarding this issue to get it resolved. Mr. Nichols
34 agreed to meet with Mr. Carril to address the issues and concerns
35 regarding the City Parks.

36
37 **b. Julie Stanton, Director of Business Development, Tender Care**
38 **Home Health and Hospice**, stated that they have a few events
39 coming up if anyone would like to join them. Ms. Stanton is a board
40 member of the Southern New Mexico Parkinson's Disease group.
41 They meet on the third Tuesday of every month at 9:45 a.m., if
42 anyone would like to join on Zoom. Tender Care is a new hospice in
43 the area and are currently looking for hospice volunteers. They also
44 service White Sands Missile Range, Radium Springs, and all the way

1 to Horizon in El Paso. They are providing a new Palliative care at the
2 El Paso location.
3

4 **c. Patricia Torres, American Legion Auxiliary President,** stated
5 that they continuing to raise funds for a shed at Oak Street. They will
6 be having a spaghetti dinner on October 11th. On every last Thursday
7 of the month, they provide a meal on 330 Oak Street for Veterans.
8 On October 9th they will be having a yard clean up at Oak Street if
9 anyone would like to join them at 9:00 a.m. On October 30th, at
10 American Legion Post 10, they will be having a Halloween fest and
11 music. It will be \$5.00 per person, and they will be serving finger
12 foods and having music. Ms. Torres stated that the Boys State
13 program and the Girls State program will be coming June.
14

15 **d. Victor Sanchez, Drug Treatment Court Coordinator,** stated that
16 they have used the funds they received from the City to purchase
17 iPads, iPhones, etc. Mr. Sanchez also stated that he has accepted
18 another job offer and this will be his last meeting. He assured the
19 board that the treatment court is flourishing and with the help of Mr.
20 Price, it will continue to run smoothly. A replacement for the position
21 is being advertised.
22

23 **e. Travis Rogers, Program Support Assistant, Las Cruces VA,**
24 stated that the flu shots are available at the clinic by walk ins from
25 9:00 a.m-12:00 p.m., and 2:00-4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
26 They are also being offered during Veterans visits; however, they are
27 not available to spouses at this time. If any Veterans want to get the
28 shot afterhours, they can go to Walgreens. They are also offering the
29 3rd dose of Moderna in the office by appointment for high-risk
30 patients.
31

32 **f. Isabel Gonzalez, Medical Foster Home Coordinator, Las Cruces**
33 **VA,** stated that they are still looking for people to open up their
34 homes to foster a Veteran. They are also still accepting new patients.
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1 **VIII. REMINDERS:**

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3 a. **Garrison Flag**

- 4 a. October 3, 2021 – Fire Fighters Memorial Day (Half Staff)
5 b. October 11, 2021 – Columbus Day
6

7 b. **Next meeting October 26, 2021:** will take place at City Hall, in
8 Room 2007-A.
9

10 **IX. ADJOURNMENT (10:42 a.m.)**

11
12 Motion to adjourn by Board Member Mike Cano, seconded by Board
13 Member Rod Gajewski. Motion passes.
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15
16 *Karen Woods*

17 *Oct 26, 2021*

18 _____
Chairperson

Date