



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE  
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

Regular Meeting  
Wednesday, May 7, 2025  
Scottsdale Airport  
Aviation Business Center – Stearman Room  
15000 N. Airport Drive  
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

**PRESENT:** Chair Justin Layman, Vice-Chair Mark Ashley, Commission Members Steven Jackson, Patrick Mazzarella, Donna Tew

**ABSENT:** Commissioners Stephen Casares and Pete Palmer

**STAFF:** Kelly Corsette, Communications/Public Affairs Director

**1. Call to Order/Roll Call**

Chair Layman called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

Members present as listed above.

**2. Public Comment**

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

**3. Discussion and possible action to approve April 2, 2025, Commission meeting minutes**

COMMISSIONER TEW MOVED TO APPROVE THE APRIL 2, 2025 COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER JACKSON SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR ASHLEY, COMMISSIONERS JACKSON, MAZZARELLA, AND TEW VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSIDENTING VOTES.

#### **4. Presentation, discussion, and possible action: Thunderbird Field II Veterans Memorial**

Steve Ziomek, founder and chairman of the Thunderbird II Veterans Memorial, gave a presentation including the history of Scottsdale Airport, current organizational operations, and Thunderbird II Foundation's Aviation Scholarship program. He said that during World War II, Thunderbird Field II, which is now Scottsdale Airport, was used to train U.S. Army Air Corp pilots. Thunderbird Field II Veterans Memorial Inc. Aviation Scholarship program offers Arizona residents attending an aviation-related program at an approved school an opportunity to apply for funds. Mr. Ziomek highlighted Army Air Corps Captain Jerry Yellin, who had his training at Thunderbird Field II and flew in the final combat mission of World War II. A few weeks before his passing, Captain Yellin had an opportunity to fly a Stearman PT-17, the same type plane as was flown during his training, out of Scottsdale Airport.

Mr. Ziomek noted that Thunderbird II Foundation is a nonprofit organization, and 100 percent of the funds go towards scholarships and veteran causes. Thunderbird Fields II Veterans Memorial will be sponsoring a Veterans Day celebration in one of the hangers on Saturday, November 15, 2025. The event will include a silent auction, live auction, dinner, WWII planes, and skydivers. Efforts are being made to secure Sunita Williams as the keynote speaker, and attendance will be limited to 400 people.

Commissioners and staff were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Ziomek said he has made a few other connections with people who trained at Thunderbird Field II. He recalled flying General Edwin Woellner, a B-17 pilot who spent time in a concentration camp after being shot down in Europe.

Chair Jackson suggested that stories about pilots trained at Thunderbird Field II be documented for Scottsdale's historians.

#### **5. Discussion and possible action related to community veterans' events and activities**

Kelly Corsette, Communications/Public Affairs Director, announced that the Annual Memorial Day Commemoration, which is being organized by American Legion Post 44 and their partners, will be held at Scottsdale Memorial for the Fallen on Monday, May 26, 2025, starting at 10:30 a.m. This year the event will include a reading of the names of the 66 Scottsdale residents whose names appear on the memorial. Commission members were invited to volunteer to assist Joan Fudala in the reading of those names.

Chair Layman mentioned that he will attend an event for Armed Services Day, Saturday May 16, 2025.

Mr. Corsette said that Commissioner Palmer suggested that the Commission talk with Scottsdale Arts about including a veterans component as part of the annual Canal Convergence. Commission members briefly discussed possible options for highlighting veterans during the event.

Mr. Corsette said that there are two interns who will be working with Scottsdale Video Network. Having the interns will help to increase the number of Veterans AZ programs that can be recorded. One of the first assignments for the interns was to arrange for an interview of Steve Ziomek about Scottsdale II Memorial. In addition they will be working to schedule an interview with U.S. Army Aviation Heritage Foundation about their program at Falcon Field. The goal is to do multiple episodes focusing on aviation topics.

**6. Discussion, updates, and possible recommendations regarding the veterans advisory Commission Work Plan**

Chair Layman noted that there has been no response from the City Council. He stressed the importance of the work that Scottsdale Video Network is doing with Veterans AZ.

**7. Commissioner reports, staff updates and suggestions for future agenda items**

Chair Layman mentioned that Commissioner Ashley is still looking for a bugler if anyone knows someone.

Chair Layman thanked Commissioner Jackson for working with Mr. Wiebusch in presenting the Commission's statements regarding the Stolen Valor Bill to the City Council.

The next meeting is Wednesday June 4, 2025.

**7. Adjournment**

COMMISSIONER JACKSON MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VICE-CHAIR ASHLEY SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR ASHLEY, COMMISSIONERS JACKSON, MAZZARELLA, AND TEW VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

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