



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, September 3, 2025
Scottsdale Community Design Studio
7506 E. Indian School Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

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

ABSENT: Pete Palmer

STAFF: Kelly Corsette, Communications/Public Affairs Director
Holly Peralta, Public Affairs Manager

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Layman called the meeting to order at 5:00 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 June 4, 2025 commission meeting minutes

COMMISSIONER JACKSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 4, 2025, VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER TEW SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR ASHLEY, COMMISSIONERS CASARES, JACKSON, MAZZARELLA, AND TEW VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

4. Discussion and possible action regarding potential future recognition of National Purple Heart Day

Chair Layman said that he received a request from Vice-Mayor Dubauskas for information about Scottsdale's acknowledgement of Purple Heart Day and the possibility of the City issuing a proclamation. Kelly Corsette, Communications/Public Affairs Director, said that while looking for local chapters of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, he discovered that in 2014, former Mayor Jim Lane issued a proclamation recognizing the City of Scottsdale as a Purple Heart City. National Purple Heart Day was August 7th, but the Commission could consider some sort of recognition for future years.

Discussion ensued regarding ways that the City could recognize National Purple Heart Day. Mr. Corsette said that he does not have any data relating to Scottsdale Purple Heart recipients. The closest chapter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart is in Mesa, and there are several Valley cities that have chapters with which Scottsdale residents might have affiliation. Commissioners made suggestions for ways to honor Scottsdale Purple Heart recipients, including having a recognition during the upcoming event, a marketing/education campaign, designating parking spaces, a Scottsdale Salutes Purple Heart banner, or a video segment. Commissioners offered to consult with Frank Lambert, Joan Fudala, and Imprints of Honor about finding a list of Scottsdale residents who are Purple Heart recipients.

Chair Layman said that he will update the Vice Mayor on their findings and ask for further direction from her.

5. Discussion, updates and possible action to support a veteran community series hosted in partnership with the commission and possible adjustment to commission meeting time

Chair Layman introduced the idea of the Commission participating in a six-part Veteran Community Series in order to engage, empower, and connect with veterans within the community. He suggested that the Veterans Advisory Commission regular meeting time be moved to 4:00 p.m. in order to schedule presentations following the meetings from October through April. He reviewed the tentative list of topics for each month. Commissioners expressed support for the series.

COMMISSIONER JACKSON MOVED TO CHANGE THE REGULAR MEETING TIME OF THE VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION FROM 5:00 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M. COMMISSIONER CASARES SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR ASHLEY, COMMISSIONERS CASARES, JACKSON, MAZZARELLA, AND TEW VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

Discussion ensued regarding the series topics and marketing of the series. Commissioners had a brief conversation about the storytelling session and the hope that it could help veterans open up and talk about their stories. Chair Layman noted that the sessions will be an opportunity to connect with any City staff who are veterans. Mr. Corsette explained that it would be best to start with an in-person session before considering live streaming or recording the sessions.

Mr. Corsette noted that because the Yom Kippur holiday falls on the regular meeting date, the October meeting will be held on the 8th.

6. Discussion and possible action related to community veterans' events and activities

The following activities and events were discussed:

- MIA Lunch being held at the Design Studio on September 19, 2025. Joan Fudala will speak on MIAs from the Vietnam and World War II eras. Frank Lambert will speak about his experiences and the continuing efforts of his comrades to locate several of his troops that are still missing in Vietnam.
- Scottsdale Salutes has approximately 30 nominations so far, with room for 47. The Scottsdale Salutes reception will be held in collaboration with Scottsdale Arts during Canal Convergence starting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 13, 2025.
- Parada del Sol is scheduled for February 1, 2026.
- The 14th Annual Bently Scottsdale Polo Championships. There will be an Army/Navy match held either on November 8th or 9th. The event organizer has agreed to provide complimentary tickets to Scottsdale Salutes honorees, and they have offered the opportunity for an honoree to be selected to do the first drop.
- The Annual Veterans Day event will be held on Tuesday, November 11th starting at 10:30 a.m. The event will include the student essay contest. Scottsdale Unified School District has made the contest an America's 250th Anniversary themed topic requirement.

7. Discussion, updates and possible recommendations regarding the Veterans Advisory Commission Work Plan

There was no discussion on the work plan.

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

Mr. Corsette introduced Holly Peralta, Public Affairs Manager, who will be assisting him with staff liaison duties.

Commissioner Mazzarella announced that he will not be reapplying for his position. Mr. Corsette noted that Commissioner Palmer has termed out, leaving the Commission with two open positions. At this time, there are six applicants for those positions.

The next meeting is Wednesday, October 8, 2025.

9. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER JACKSON MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER TEW SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR ASHLEY, COMMISSIONERS CASARES, 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 6:03 p.m.

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