



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 4, 2026
Scottsdale Community Design Studio
7506 E. Indian School Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

PRESENT: Chair Justin Layman; Vice-Chair Donna Tew; Commissioners Mark Ashley, Stephen Casares (MS Teams), Steven Jackson, Marcy Kostewa, and Christie Slegers

STAFF: Holly Peralta, Public Affairs Manager; Kristy Hahn-McDonald, Human Services Manager

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Layman called the meeting to order at 4:30 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 February 4, 2026, Commission meeting minutes

VICE-CHAIR TEW MOVED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 4, 2026, VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER KOSTEWA SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR TEW, COMMISSIONERS ASHLEY, CASARES, JACKSON, KOSTEWA, AND SLEGERS VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

4. Presentation and discussion: Veterans Court

Human Services Manager Kristy Hahn-McDonald gave an overview of the Veterans Court program. Her presentation included background on the initiation of Veterans Court in 2014.

The program was initiated by a group of five judges who felt that veterans needed their own pathway in the criminal justice system, and it was made possible through a grant from the Arizona Department of Veterans Services. She noted that Veterans Court for five municipalities is held at Tempe Municipal Court. The mission of the program is to assist veterans with pending charges and guide them to resources and benefits. Ms. Hahn-McDonald reviewed Veterans Court eligibility requirements, talked about benefits of the diversion program, and outlined her role working with veterans who are referred to her office.

Commissioners asked clarifying questions throughout the presentation. Ms. Hahn-McDonald explained the screening process and the method used for evaluating results and determining appropriate programs and timelines for each individual. She said each veteran is responsible for self-identifying as a veteran, and there are no requirements in place for the courts to notify individuals about the program. Efforts are being made to ensure information is available to the public about the existence of Veterans Court.

Ms. Hahn-McDonald explained that her office is responsible for determining each individual's needs and whether they are entitled to veterans benefits, connecting clients with human services resources, and advocating for the veteran when necessary. She recently worked with the City's purchasing department to arrange for a memorandum of understanding with ABRA Health for drug and alcohol testing for those clients who require ongoing monitoring. The department recently acquired funding to help pay for individuals who need a higher level of treatment. She stressed the importance of advocating for veterans and informing the public about veterans programs.

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

Chair Layman announced that a Vietnam Veterans Day program will be held on Sunday, March 29, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. He gave some background on keynote speaker Francisco Romero, noting that he is currently under review for a Congressional Medal of Honor. Commissioners were enlisted to help with the staff table during the event. He said that there will be a presentation by the winner of the Scottsdale Unified School District student writing contest. An OH-6 helicopter will be on display during the event. Holly Peralta, Public Affairs Manager, noted that they are asking people to RSVP for the event because lunch is being served. A QR code will be made available for people to access marketing materials.

Ms. Peralta mentioned that the City has purchased a table for the Imprint of Honors Gala, scheduled for Saturday, March 7, 2026. Seats are still available if Commissioners are interested in attending.

Ms. Peralta provided an update on the flag ceremony and disposal of old United States flags. She is awaiting more information from Fire Chief Tom Shannon about the fire department assisting with the ceremony. Arrangements have been made for the City to drop flags at the American Legion Post on an ongoing basis.

Chair Layman commented that the Veterans Advisory Commission float was awarded the most patriotic float in Parada del Sol.

Ms. Peralta gave an update on the recent Audit Committee review of the Veterans Advisory Commission.

The next meeting will be April 1, 2026.

7. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER JACKSON MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VICE-CHAIR TEW SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SEVEN (7) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR TEW, COMMISSIONERS ASHLEY, CASARES, JACKSON, KOSTEWA, AND SLEIGERS VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

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