



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, September 2, 2026
Scottsdale Community Design Studio
7506 E. Indian School Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

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

ABSENT: Commissioner Stephen Casares

STAFF: Chris Coffee, Police Commander; Virginia Bermudez, Director of Strategic Initiatives; Sarah Harp, JoBeth VerHoef

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Layman called the meeting to order at 4:34 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 3, 2026 Commission meeting minutes

Chair Layman noted a correction to Sara Carsas's title in the list of staff members.

COMMISSIONER JACKSON MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 3, 2026 VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED. COMMISSIONER KOSTEWA SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR TW, COMMISSIONERS ASHLEY, JACKSON, KOSTEWA, AND SLEGERS VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

4. Presentation and discussion: Marcus Denetdale, Home Base

Marcus Denetdale, Regional Associate Director of Arizona's Regional and Tribal Relations, gave a presentation outlining the Home Base's programs and goals. The organization is dedicated to healing invisible wounds for veterans of all eras, service members, military families, and families of the fallen through clinical care, wellness, education, and research.

Mr. Denetdale presented statistics of veterans who have received care through their program, noting that Arizona has the 13th largest veterans' population in the United States and that there are 22 Federally recognized Native American tribes in Arizona. He reviewed the four pillars Home Base and the partnerships that have been established with various organizations, including Honor Health. He gave an overview of the outpatient clinical programs, including the Intensive Clinical Program, Special Operations Program, and intensive program for families of the fallen; wellness and support programs, including resiliency programs and Operation Health at Home; the Warrior Health and Fitness program; and the Adventure Series social program. He noted that Home Base funds travel and boarding expenses for participants to attend the intensive two-week program.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Denetdale said that veterans go through a screening process before being admitted to the outpatient program and once admitted they are able to participate in all of the other program areas. He estimated that the Arizona program has capacity for approximately 30 participants per year, the health and fitness program could go to approximately 40, and the Adventure Series has no limit. Mr. Denetdale noted that they are in search of physical fitness facilities in the Phoenix area that would be interested in offering complementary or discounted membership to the participants upon completion of the 90-day Warrior Health and Fitness program. Commissioners suggested facilities that might be interested, including Scottsdale Community Centers, Club SAR, Cactus Pool, The Village, and the local YMCA.

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

Chair Layman reported on items he has worked on with Human Services Department over the summer:

- Veteran Community Series will be scheduled on Thursdays during the month of October, from 11:00 a.m. to noon. Topics will include: a wellness seminar; Imprints of Honor at Saguaro High School; Called to Duty - helping veterans discover their purpose; and Rally Point at Granite Reef Senior Center – connecting veterans to organizations and resources. Invitations will be extended to Scottsdale employees who are veterans.
- Adopt-a-Veteran. Human Services is now including a question about veteran status as part of their service application process. Chair Layman noted that he plans to suggest that the income-based eligibility requirement not be considered for veterans.
- VASH vouchers.
- Million Veteran Program (MVP).

Chair Layman gave an update on the Scottsdale Salutes program. He has met with Canal Convergence about holding the Scottsdale Salutes reception as part of their program this year. Scottsdale Arts has arranged for the U.S. Navy band to perform. He suggested that during the band's 30 minute recess, a special Scottsdale Salutes ceremony be held, honoring one veteran selected from Scottsdale Police or Fire Department staff. He reminded the group that veterans who have been employed in the City of Scottsdale for more than five years are eligible for nomination to Scottsdale Salutes.

Virginia Bermudez, Director of Strategic Initiatives, confirmed that according to Scottsdale Salutes program rules Kelly Corsette is eligible for nomination.

COMMISSIONER JACKSON MOVED TO SUPPORT HOLDING A SEPARATE CEREMONY DURING CANAL CONVERGENCE, HONORING ONE VETERAN CHOSEN FROM THE SCOTTSDALE POLICE DEPARTMENT OR SCOTTSDALE FIRE DEPARTMENT. VICE-CHAIR TEW SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR TEW, COMMISSIONERS ASHLEY, JACKSON, KOSTEWA, AND SLEGERS VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

Commissioner Kostewa commented that there are a lot of veterans in the police and fire departments and suggested that all of them be honored during the ceremony. Chair Layman explained that the plan is to make it an annual program, honoring one exemplary veteran employee of the police or fire department each year.

Chair Layman gave an update on the Veterans Day celebration. The program will be held at McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Chair Layman said that he presented to City Council in August, outlining details that have been in the annual report. He noted that Councilman Kwasman had questions about training and the career services programs. Chair Layman noted that the Scottsdale Chamber, through partnership with Honor Health, has put together a five-week veterans' business bootcamp that is available to any veteran who has a small business or is interested in starting a small business.

6. Discussion and possible action regarding the commission's start time

Agenda discussion item was pulled from the agenda.

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

There were no future agenda items discussed. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7, 2026.

8. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER JACKSON MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VICE-CHAIR TEW SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0). CHAIR LAYMAN, VICE-CHAIR TW, COMMISSIONERS ASHLEY, JACKSON, KOSTEWA, AND SLEGERS VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

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