

**CITY OF SURPRISE
VETERANS, DISABILITY, AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**March 13, 2024 | 6:00 PM
City Council Chambers
16000 N. Civic Center Plaza
Surprise, AZ 85374**

CALL TO ORDER.

Chair Hanzel called the Veterans, Disability, and Human Services Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at Surprise City Hall, 16000 North Civic Center Plaza, Surprise, Arizona 85374, on March 13, 2024.

ROLL CALL

In attendance were Chair Hanzel, Commissioners Phillip Lair, Shawna Daigle, John Billcheck, Gwen Maxfield, and Julie Kent-Partridge.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

STAFF PRESENT:

Assistant Director Deb Perry, Community Initiatives Supervisor Danielle Osborne, Administrative Specialist Athba Arnold, Senior Services Supervisor Trisha Weston.

CURRENT EVENTS REPORT

Chair Hanzel reported on the following upcoming events:

- Citywide Day of Service at Surprise Senior Center
 - Saturday, March 16th
 - Contact Larry Garcia to register, larry.garcia@surpriseaz.gov or 623-222-1522
- Out of the Park Music Fest
 - Saturday, March 23rd from 2-10pm
 - Live music with food trucks, beer garden, and games for all ages
 - Tickets can be purchased at outoftheparkmusicfest.com
- City of Surprise 2024 State of the City
 - Thursday, March 28th from 6-8pm
 - City Hall Council Chambers
 - State of the City address from Mayor Skip Hall along with music, snacks, and city showcase
- Surprise Youth Internship Program
 - Applications being accepted through March 31st
 - Income-eligible Surprise teens between the ages of 15-19 can apply at surpriseaz.gov/syip

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Commissioner Lair attended the Mayor's Veteran's Roundtable 2 weeks ago and reported there was a great turnout. He also mentioned there was a great presentation by the VA and the pros and cons of Vet Fest were discussed.
- Commissioner Daigle provided an update on the Transit Working Group.
 - The Working Group has come up with 4 goals:
 - Ensure disabled residents can access our city transit options
 - Research and recommend resources for disabled riders who cannot access current transit options
 - Identify potential transit barriers for our disabled riders
 - Provide training and outreach on how to utilize transit options for our disabled riders
 - Working group has met with Councilmember Cline twice and has asked her for a survey on what ADA riders think of current services; awaiting a response
 - Invite for Transit group to attend next Roundtable on Disabilities meeting in April

STAFF REPORT

- Danielle Osborne discussed:
 - Youth Scholarships available for college-bound Surprise students
 - Opportunity is open to high-school seniors & home-schooled students graduating in Spring of 2024
 - Scholarships range from \$1000 - \$5000 per awardee
 - Applications are being accepted through March 25th
 - Surpriseaz.gov/youthscholar for more information
 - Annual Bean Bag Day
 - Partnership with Valley View Community Food Bank, Seeds of Hope International Ministries, and Dysart Unified School District
 - Saturday, April 20th from 8am-12pm at Freedom Traditional Academy
 - Volunteers needed to help package dried food goods into smaller bags to be distributed through the local food bank
 - Register with Larry at 623-222-1522 or larry.garcia@surpriseaz.gov

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS - PUBLIC HEARING:

None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS - NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

Item 1 – Citywide – Consideration and action pertaining to the selection of a Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission Vice-Chair.

Process review for election of Vice-Chair

- Chair will open floor to nominations
 - Nominees can self-nominate and can decline nomination
- Chair will then close floor to nominations
- If there is only 1 nominee, there will be an open vote
- If there is a ballot vote, results will be read out loud
- Majority vote of 4 votes will be needed to open a motion
- After majority decides on a selection, a motion will be needed
- Commission meeting cannot recess or adjourn until election is made

Chair Hanzel opened floor to nominations.

Commissioner Lair nominated Commissioner Billcheck.

Commissioner Daigle self-nominated.

The Commissioners submitted their votes. John Billcheck received 3 votes (Lair, Maxfield, Billcheck), Shawna Daigle received 3 votes (Hanzel, Daigle, Kent-Partridge). Ms. Osborne advised repeating the process until a majority vote is reached.

The Commissioners submitted their votes. John Billcheck received 3 votes (Lair, Maxfield, Billcheck), Shawna Daigle received 3 votes (Hanzel, Daigle, Kent-Partridge). Chair Hanzel asked the nominees to make their case.

The Commissioners submitted their votes. John Billcheck received 3 votes (Lair, Kent-Partridge, Billcheck), Shawna Daigle received 3 votes (Hanzel, Daigle, Maxfield). Chair Hanzel opened the floor to all Commissioners who wished to make their case for the nominees.

The Commissioners submitted their votes. John Billcheck received 4 votes (Lair, Maxfield, Kent-Partridge, Billcheck), Shawna Daigle received 2 votes (Hanzel, Daigle).

Commissioner Lair moved to accept Commissioner Billcheck as Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission Vice-Chair. Commissioner Maxfield seconded the motion. The motion passed with 6 Yes votes.

Item 2 – Citywide – Consideration and action pertaining to the February 14, 2024 Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Lair moved to approve the February 14, 2024 Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Daigle seconded the motion. The

motion passed with 6 Yes votes.

Item 3 – Citywide – Presentation and discussion pertaining to Duet: Creative Partners in Aging.

Janelle Tapphorn, Marketing & Outreach Manager, provided information on Duet. Duet is a non-profit which aims to create a community where every person ages with passion, dignity, and hope. Duet offers kinship services, homebound services, and family caregiver services. There is currently a large demand for volunteers to help with these free services which Duet provides. Volunteer opportunities and information can be found at duetaz.org.

Commissioner Maxfield asked about volunteer opportunities. All volunteers undergo background checks and fingerprint clearances, in addition to a 2-hour orientation. Commissioner Lair asked about funding, which comes from donations and grants. Chair Hanzel asked about Duet's needs which Ms. Tapphorn stated is more volunteers.

Item 4 – Citywide – Update and discussion pertaining to Surprise Vet Fest.

Danielle Osborne led discussion debriefing inaugural Vet Fest. Ms. Osborne estimates about 350 people were in attendance. Feedback was requested from veteran organization representatives at last Mayor's Veterans Roundtable and Ms. Osborne received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Roundtable participants are thankful the Commission brought forth the idea for Vet Fest and put it together successfully. They also were glad that it was well-marketed, provided useful resources, and appreciated the awareness that was spread for veteran issues.

Commissioner Lair stated that 42 exhibitors showed up to provide their resources. More feedback from the Veterans Roundtable includes moving start time to earlier in the day and having the event include a small job fair. There are plans to have more static displays next year. VFW had highest membership drive they have ever had at any event; majority was female.

Commissioner Kent-Partridge heard most complaints about layout; pros were friendliness, music, and the food.

Commissioner Maxfield would like to have seen the event be more organized and suggested a more focused setup with a designated entry area. She would also like to see more representatives at tables to avoid delays with helping veterans. She also suggested having a back-up plan ready and in place. She seconded having a job fair at next event and more variety in music.

Commissioner Billcheck stated that weather was a large factor and suggested having the event later in year. Overall, he thought it was a great event and gave kudos to Commissioner Lair for coming up with idea.

Chair Hanzel would also like to see a back-up plan in place to avoid last minute decisions. Regarding the job fair at the event, he suggested reaching out to AZ@Work to get vetted partners.

Item 5 – Citywide – Presentation and discussion pertaining to the Community Legend Awards Program.

Danielle Osborne reviewed general information, deadlines, and criteria for this program which celebrates those who have made a positive impact on the community. The four categories will be individual, youth, volunteer of the year, and organization of the year. Nominations can be submitted through June 28, 2024. Information can be found at surpriseaz.gov/CommunityLegend. There will be online and paper applications and they will include nominee's info, nominator's info, brief description of reason for nomination, nomination category, and will ask how nominator heard of program.

Chair Hanzel discussed rubric used last year and would like to ensure that nominees are making an impact to the City of Surprise. As the process gets going, rubric can be discussed and updated.

Commissioners Maxfield, Kent-Partridge, and Daigle will be working group.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- Commissioner Kent-Partridge would like an update on all transportation programs for disabled residents. Chair Hanzel would like to have an update on WeRIDE's tracking of this information. Commissioner Lair asked to get an estimated number of residents who have disabilities in Surprise.
- Commissioner Lair would like to see if US Vets can give presentation. Surprise will be building veteran homes and would like to have a presentation from the representatives in charge of that project.
- Chair Hanzel asked that the Commission keep the Strategic Plan in mind and make sure it is moving forward. Chair would also like to look at budget numbers and start looking ahead to next year's budget.
- Commissioner Lair volunteered to be in Budget working group after Vice-Chair Kupper's resignation.
- Chair Hanzel resigned from the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Lair moved to adjourn the meeting of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission on March 13, 2024 at 7:41 p.m. Commissioner Kent-Partridge seconded the motion. The motion passed with 6 Yes votes.


Danielle Osborne
Community Initiatives Supervisor



John Billcheck
Veterans, Disability and Human Services Commission Vice-Chair

The foregoing instrument is a full, true, and correct copy of the original document on file in the office of the City Clerk, City of Surprise, Arizona.

ATTEST BY:



Athba Arnold
Administrative Specialist

DATE:

4/16/24