

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

**December 11, 2024 | 6:00 PM
City Council Chambers
16000 N. Civic Center Plaza
Surprise, AZ 85374**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Wisniewski 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 December 11, 2024.

ROLL CALL

In attendance were Chair Allison Wisniewski, Vice-Chair Dr. Gwen Maxfield and Commissioners Julie Kent- Partridge, John Billcheck, Olivia Fryer and Hasan Reed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

STAFF PRESENT:

Community Initiatives Supervisor Danielle Osborne, Administrative Specialist Athba Arnold, Administrative Specialist Victoria Simmons.

CURRENT EVENTS REPORT

Chair Wisniewski reported on the following:

- Sensitive Santa
 - December 14, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Surprise Stadium.
 - In partnership with Autism Society of Greater Phoenix.
 - Private one-on-one visit and photo opportunity with Santa
- AARP Smart Driver Class
 - December 16, 2024, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Surprise Senior Center
 - Register online at aarp.org/Drive or call 1-888-773-7160.
- City offices will be closed on Wednesday, December 25, 2024, in observance of Christmas Day.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Commissioner Kent-Partridge
 - Awarded VDHS challenge Coins-Coins awarded to Anthony Johnson with New Beginnings Worship Center and Cynthia Ortega (Veteran and Veteran advocate as it pertains to mental health) for their selfless service to veterans and those in need within the community.
 - Annual Surprise Party had a larger turn-out this year. This was a wonderful event with many smiling faces and festive spirit.

- Anthony Johnson with New Beginnings Worship Center will be assisting with 2025 PIT count, will contribute services, and continue to work with the City of Surprise.
- Surprise Adaptive Rec Winter Party -Event was a combined effort with Dysart School District. Local group homes and DTA's also attended. Many smiling faces with both children and adults with special needs in attendance.
- Commissioner Fryer
 - Surprise party-overall a heartwarming experience. City did a great job with the lights.
 - Adaptive Rec Winter Party-nice to enjoy event as a spectator and see everything come together.
- Vice-Chair Maxfield
 - Veterans' Roundtable- Attended in November. Agencies and organizations come together to make connections to be able to bring more organizations and resources to our community.
- Commissioner Reed
 - Vets Roundtable- great to have so many organizations collaborate.
 - American Legion Post 94 meeting in Sun City-great to see what is being done within the community for disabled vets. Glad to be working with veterans to ensure they are being taken care of.
- Chair Wisniewski
 - Vets Roundtable-was glad to see so many groups coming together to collaborate
 - Attended Native American Connections groundbreaking ceremony for Crosswinds at 3-star pointe, for the 45-unit housing for low-income families. Great experience.

STAFF REPORT

- Ms. Osborne discussed:
 - Mayor's Veterans Roundtable
 - Next meeting is being rescheduled. Date TBD.
 - New Community and Resource Center groundbreaking ceremony planned for January 15. Formal invitation will go out at a later date.
 - Ground was broken for the new Cross Winds at 3-star Pointe facility in the OTS this week.
 - 45-unit facility will serve as bridge housing for low-income families.
 - Shout out to Adam Lane and his team.
 - MLK Day of Celebration and Service
 - Show how you serve by using the hashtag #SurpriseCelebratesMLK using photos, videos, art, etc.
 - 9th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Celebration and Service on Saturday, January 18.
 - Supriseaz.gov/MLK for more information.
 - Interviews for new Commissioner will take place after new year. Please direct candidates to City Clerks Office at 623-222-1200 or email city clerk.
 - Farewell to Athba Arnold for her time serving as Administrative Specialist.

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 November 13, 2024 Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Billcheck moved to approve the November 13, 2024, Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Vice-chair Maxfield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 6 Yes votes.

Item 4 – Citywide – Discussion and action pertaining to recognition of Mayor Skip Hall's years of service to the City of Surprise.

Items were taken out of order so Vice-Chair Maxfield could participate in this discussion.

Commission would like to recognize Mayor Skip Hall for his years in service. This will be decided at next commission meeting as to how to show recognition.

Vice-Chair Maxfield left the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

Item 2 – Citywide – Discussion pertaining to 2024 GAIN Night.

Commissioners discussed that the event was a great turn-out with about 4-5,000 people attending. There were some challenges for those with disabilities during the event. Ideas were discussed to help address this concern. Some thoughts included creating a committee to help people with disabilities for events like this. Another idea is to look for partnerships to help accommodate projects to provide a more disability-friendly experience and environment. Commissioners will bring this up during the Veteran's Roundtable and also discuss with Parks and Rec to help with collaboration. Sensory Tents by RISE were provided at each corner of the event, which was a great addition for those with sensory disabilities. A Shout out to PD was given for their partnership and support during this event.

Item 3 – Citywide – Presentation and discussion pertaining to Community Development Block Grants (CDBG).

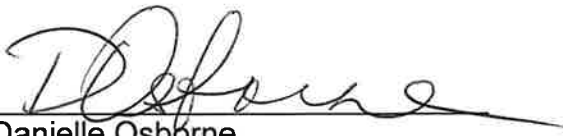
Housing Community Services Manager, Adam Lane, presented on Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). CDBG provides development of viable urban communities, primarily for low-income individuals and families. Discussed source of funding, allocation of funding, key partners, eligibility, national objectives, and more.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- Recognition for Mayor Skip Hall- discussion as to what to provide for years of service.
- Presentation from Seeds for Autism
- Presentation from RISE
- Discussion on VDHS Challenge Coins - highlight individuals on social media when providing coins.
- Presentation by Anthony Johnson with New Beginnings Worship Center

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Billcheck moved to adjourn the meeting of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission on December 11, 2024, 2024 at 7:16p.m. Commissioner Kent-Partridge seconded the motion. The motion passed with 5 Yes votes.


Danielle Osborne
Community Initiatives Supervisor


Allison Wisniewski
Veterans, Disability and Human Services Commission 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:


Victoria Simmons

Administrative Specialist

DATE:

1/8/25