

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

**January 8, 2025 | 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 January 8, 2025.

ROLL CALL

In attendance were Chair Allison Wisniewski, Vice-Chair Dr. Gwen Maxfield and Commissioners Julie Kent- Partridge, John Billcheck, and Olivia Fryer. 1 vacancy.

Absences: Commissioner Hasan Reed (excused).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

STAFF PRESENT:

Human Service and Community Vitality Director Seth Dyson, Human Service and Community Vitality Assistant Director Deb Perry, Administrative Specialist Victoria Simmons.

CURRENT EVENTS REPORT

Chair Wisniewski reported on the following:

- Live Christmas Tree Drop Off Sites
 - Lots are open until January 12, 2025, at the following locations: Bi-Centennial Park, Surprise Recreation Campus/Youth Baseball Complex, Dick McComb Softball Park, and Asante Community Park.
 - Removal of ornaments required for drop off and only 2 trees per household allowed.
 - Visit surpriseaz.gov/tree disposal or call 623-222-1900 for more information.
- 9th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Celebration and Service
 - January 18, 2025, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at Willow Canyon High School.
 - To register, visit surpriseaz.gov/MLK for more information and to register.
- SAFE Reporting Application
 - SAFE- Surprise Area Focused on Encampments.
 - Surprise has launched new app that allows community members to submit non-emergency reports to the city about homeless families, individuals, or encampments.

- City staff reviews each report and is able to provide the vetted information to a local street outreach provider, who can help connect those in need of services to housing support or shelter.
- The SAFE Reporting application is available through the ESRI QuickCapture app that is available for download in both the Apple and Android app stores.
- A Matter of Balance
 - Free weekly classes that will focus on practical strategies for managing falls for those 50+ by helping to reduce the fear of falling and increasing activity levels.
 - Will be held at Surprise Senior Center every Friday, starting January 17 through March 7. Classes are from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. and registration is required.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Commissioner Fryer
 - Attended farewell party for Mayor Hall and Council Members Remley and Cline.
 - Attended the Disabilities Roundtable meeting. It may be moved to a later time in the day to accommodate Mayor Sartor's schedule. At the meeting, Officer Galaz reported having challenges connecting to the unhoused individuals who also have a disability and providing specific resources with those with specific needs. PD uses vehicles to help transport the homeless to and from appointments or to receive resources.
 - January 21 - Dysart Special Education PTSA, Spencer's Place, and Autism Society are hosting Looking Forward Job and Transition Fair at Canyon Ridge Elementary School, at 5:30 p.m. Looking for additional partners or vendors for event.
 - February 7- A Night to Shine, which is a prom night for those with disabilities. Will be held at Radiant Church.
 - February 15 – Zoo Walk for Autism Research at the Phoenix Zoo, hosted by ASU Autism Research Center
 - February 16 - Walk and Roll for Inclusion, at Dream Catcher Park, hosted by Dysart CEPASA. Event is open to the public.
 - February 21 and 22 – BE SAFE Certification Training to teach individuals how to safely interact with law enforcement. Training is facilitated by The Autism Society.
 - March 22 – Special Day for Special Kids at McCormick Ranch in Scottsdale, hosted by Raising Special Kids.
 - April 12 – Autism Expo at the Desert Willow Conference Center in Phoenix, hosted by the Arizona Autism Coalition.
 - April 25 through the 27 – The Autism Society is celebrating Autism Acceptance Month holding a special weekend at the Great Wolf Lodge for a discounted rate.
- Commissioner Kent-Partridge
 - VDHS Challenge Coin Awarded to Dana West – She is a veteran who works as a community engagement specialist in Surprise and throughout the State of Arizona. She helps connect veterans and their families to very important resources that benefit their overall well-being and quality of life.
- Chair Wisniewski
 - Attended farewell for former Mayor Hall, Aly Cline, and Council Member Remley. She thanked them for their years of service.
 - Attended city council meeting and was able to witness swearing in of

Mayor Sartor, Council Member Melton, and Council Member Greenberg.

STAFF REPORT

- Mr. Dyson discussed:
 - On behalf of staff and Commission - wanting to thank former Mayor Hall and Aly Cline for their support; along with Council Member Remley for his accomplishments and service to the City of Surprise, since passing in December.
 - Ground-breaking for new Community and Resource Center on January 15, at 9:00 a.m.
 - MLK day of Celebration and Service, on January 18 - Choirs will be performing, free breakfast for the first 500, service projects, and more. Event will begin at 9:00 a.m. at Willow Canyon Elementary School.
 - End of February - City Academy starts for those wanting to learn more about Surprise. For residents at no cost. Questions can be answered about important community concerns within all the departments of the city. Please sign up with Danielle or Victoria.
 - January 28 - PIT (Point in Time) Count to survey the unhoused people in the areas of Surprise. This will provide accurate reporting and help to establish resources needed for those unhoused. This annual survey is mandated by US Department of Housing and Urban Development.
 - Wanted to thank Commissioner Wisniewski for attending the ground-breaking on Native American Connections Project. Shout out to Adam Lane and his team.
 - Thank you to Commissioner Kent-Partridge and Commissioner Hanzel for leading initiative to have entire Police Department, Fire Department, and Human Services Department trained through Autism Certification.

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 December 11, 2024 Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Kent-Partridge moved to approve the December 11, 2024, Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Billcheck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 5 Yes votes, 1 absence (Reed), and 1 vacancy.

Item 2 – Citywide – Presentation and discussion pertaining to RISE Services Inc.

Angela Pelton, Senior Program Administrator, presented on RISE Services Inc.

Item 3 – Citywide – Discussion pertaining to Vet Fest 2025.

Commissioners had a discussion pertaining to Vet Fest 2025.

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

Commissioners discussed ideas to honor former Mayor Skip Hall's years of service to the City of Surprise.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- Discussion on solutions for fair housing, presented by Commissioner Kent-Partridge.
- Discussion on how to make parks more inclusive and safer for individuals with disabilities or challenges.
- Presentation from Officer Jesus Galaz.
- Continue with discussion of recognition for Mayor Skip Hall

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Billcheck moved to adjourn the meeting of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission on January 8, 2025, 2024 at 7:35 p.m. Vice-chair Maxfield seconded the motion. The motion passed with 5 Yes votes, 1 absence (Reed), and 1 vacancy.



Seth Dyson
Human Services and Community Vitality Director

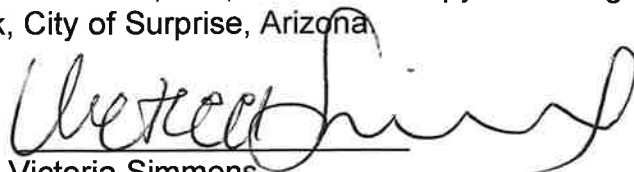


Allison Wisniewski

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:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victoria Simmons", written over a horizontal line.

Victoria Simmons
Administrative Specialist

DATE:

2-12-25