

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

**March 12, 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 March 12, 2025.

ROLL CALL

In attendance were Chair Allison Wisniewski, Vice-Chair Dr. Gwen Maxfield, Commissioners Olivia Fryer, and Michael Tree. 1 vacancy.

Absences: Commissioner Julie Kent- Partridge (excused), Commissioner John Billcheck (excused).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

STAFF PRESENT:

Community Initiatives Supervisor Danielle Osborne, Senior Services Supervisor Trisha Weston, and Administrative Specialist Victoria Simmons.

CURRENT EVENTS REPORT

Chair Wisniewski reported on the following:

- The Surprise Youth Council is excited to announce the opening of its 2025 recruitment process for new members! Students currently in seventh through eleventh grades are eligible to apply. For more information or to apply online, visit surpriseaz.gov/SYC.
- The 23rd season of Spring Training is here. Join us on March 22, 2025, for Sensory Awareness Day presented by T.E.A.M. 4 Kids! This event is a day specially designed to provide a sensory friendly experience for fans of all abilities. A special ticket offer available in the designated sensory-sensitive lawn area. T.E.A.M. 4 Kids will have sensory stations. Promo code: TEAM4KIDS.
- The City of Surprise is accepting applications for its Community Outreach Program from March 17, 2025, until May 9, 2025. This City Council-led initiative provides funding assistance to organizations within the City of Surprise for programs, events and activities that enhance the overall lifestyle of the community. Attendance at this in-person meeting or the virtual meeting on Thursday, April 3, is mandatory for all new applicants and optional for return applicants. The meeting will include information about the community outreach program and application process.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Vice Chair Maxfield
 - Attended job fair in Surprise. She mentions that it was great to see all the work Melinda Greenhouse did and all the companies that were out there that day. She says there were a lot of great contacts for those looking for work.
 - Attended Mayor's Roundtable. Mayor Sartor was present and has some changes and goals in mind to make a bigger difference for veterans. She encourages the non-profits present that day to come speak and present in front of the Commission, in the future.
 - Visited and toured WHAM, a non-profit community art center in the West Valley. The facility has an art studio with a variety of art classes, for all ages. There are classes for veterans that help to provide healing through art. She mentions that they offer many options and encourages the community to check out their online website.
 - Met with veterans that represent multiple veteran organizations. She would like to put together an online list of resources for veterans that are local to the West Valley, for quicker access to services. She says anyone who would like to be a part of this, is welcome.
 - Attended the first flag raising by the Honor Guard from Luke Air Force. This took place at the Valley View food bank to celebrate their new location. She mentions that at this location there are no zip code restrictions and that they will never turn people away.
- Chair Wisniewski
 - Attended Mayor's Roundtable. She says it was a great turnout and was excited to see some new non-profit organizations present. A lot of great collaboration and networking. She mentions that Mayor Sartor is ready to do what is needed for our veterans.
 - Attended WHAM tour. Encourages everyone who has not visited, to take a tour. There is beautiful art displayed and classes for the community but also therapy art classes for veterans.
 - Attended first flag raising ceremony at the new Valley View food bank location
 - Introduced and welcomed the new Veterans, Disability, and Human Services Commissioner, Michael Tree, who is also an Air Force veteran.
- Commissioner Tree
 - Served 15 years in the Air Force, serving all around the globe. After his military service, he received a degree in Sports Management. He was eventually presented with an opportunity with the Wounded Warrior fellowship program. This program is a paid internship with a member of Congress who, at the time, was Representative Lesko. Commissioner Tree and his family have lived in Surprise for five years now. He now serves as the Director of Military and Veteran Engagement, for representative Hamadeh. He is very excited to be a part of this commission and is willing to help in any way he can.

STAFF REPORT

Ms. Osborne discussed:

- 8th annual Bean Bag Day on Saturday, April 26th from 8 – 11 am at Freedom Traditional Academy. Women4Women will also host a project to pack feminine hygiene kits for those in need. Additionally, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, a donation drive will take place during the event to celebrate Earth Day. To register as a volunteer for Bean Bag Day, visit surpriseaz.gov/DOSVolunteer.
- KIDZ Jamboree on Saturday, April 5, from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Surprise Resource Center – 12425 W. Bell Rd. For more information about KIDZ Jamboree, please call 623.222.1600.
- We are partnering with the Original Townsite Stakeholder Committee to host Founder's Day on Saturday, April 5th from 4:30 – 8 p.m. at Bicentennial Park! To learn more about the event, call Lord Garcillano at 623.222.1625.
- The City of Surprise Youth Scholarship program annually awards outstanding local students who are active in their community in an effort to help them afford further educational opportunities at an accredited college, university or trade school. To find the full details on the youth scholarship program, including application information, visit surpriseaz.gov/YouthScholar.
- The City of Surprise offers a six-week summer paid internship program for income-eligible Surprise residents between the ages of 15 - 19. Learn more at surpriseaz.gov/SYIP.
- Commissioner Reed has resigned from the commission. The City Clerk's office has advertised the vacancy and will be hosting interviews next week. Applications are accepted on an ongoing basis, so anyone interested may apply at any time.

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 February 12, 2025 Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes.

Commissioner Fryer moved to approve the February 12, 2025, Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes. Vice Chair Maxfield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 4 Yes votes, 2 absences (Kent-Partridge and Billcheck), and 1 vacancy.

Item 2 – Citywide – Presentation and discussion pertaining to SEEDs for Autism.

Executive Director and Founder, Mary Ann LaRoche, presented on services offered by SEEDs for Autism.

Item 3 – Citywide – Presentation and discussion pertaining to Senior Services offered by the HSCV department.

Trisha Weston presented on the Surprise Senior Center and senior services offered.

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

Danielle Osborne discussed updates regarding new partnerships and exhibitors planning to attend. She also discussed final details and various aspects of planning.


The Commissioners discussed final details pertaining to Vet Fest.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- WHAM Community Art Center
- Rod Hage, with DAV
- Rick Kreiberg, with Veterans Affinity
- At the next Mayor's Roundtable, Commissioners would like to invite other non-profit organizations to come present at a meeting

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Chair Maxfield moved to adjourn the meeting of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission on March 12, 2025, 2024 at 7:26 p.m. Commissioner Fryer seconded the motion. The motion passed with 4 Yes votes, 2 absences (Kent-Partridge and Billcheck), and 1 vacancy.


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:

3/12/25

