



CITY OF SURPRISE
Veterans Disability and Human Services Commission Meeting
16000 N. Civic Center Plaza
Surprise, AZ 85374
Wednesday, August 12, 2026 @ 6:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

- A. Call To Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Current Events and Reports
- E. Staff Reports
- F. Veterans, Disability and Human Services Commission

CONSENT AGENDA:

Approval of the consent agenda may be by one motion and a passing vote by the City Council. There will be no separate discussion on these items unless a Councilmember requests such. The requested item for discussion will be removed from the consent agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - PUBLIC HEARING:

REGULAR AGENDA ITEM - NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

- | | | | |
|----|----------|--|------------------------------|
| 1. | Citywide | Consideration and action pertaining to the selection of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission Chair. | Human Svcs and Comm Vitality |
| 2. | Citywide | Consideration and action pertaining to the selection of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission Vice-Chair. | Human Svcs and Comm Vitality |
| 3. | Citywide | Consideration and action pertaining to the June 10, 2026 Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes. | Human Svcs and Comm Vitality |
| 4. | Citywide | Presentation and discussion pertaining to Project 24 Seven. | Human Svcs and Comm Vitality |
| 5. | Citywide | Discussion and action pertaining to the Community Legend Awards. | Human Svcs and Comm Vitality |
| 6. | Citywide | Consideration and action pertaining to the 2026 Veterans Day Parade Grand Marshal. | Human Svcs and Comm Vitality |

- G. Call To The Public

INSTRUCTIONS:

In order to address the board, you will need to fill out a Public Comment Form available at the entrance, and turn it in to the Clerk before the meeting begins.

You may also fill out the [Public Comment Form](#). If submitting the online form the Clerk must receive the request at least one hour before the meeting start time. In accordance with A.R.S. 38-431.01(I) - During this time, members of the public may address board only on issues within the jurisdiction of the Commission. At the conclusion of the open call, board may respond to criticism, may ask staff to review the matter or may ask that the matter be put on a future agenda.

Board members may not discuss or respond to matters raised during the call to the public that are not specifically identified on the agenda.

Each speaker shall be limited to three (3) minutes per item. If several speakers desire to speak regarding a single topic, the Chair may limit the number of speakers or the time given to each group.

A maximum time of 30 minutes will be given per topic. However, an equal amount of time will be given to each side of an issue.

- H. Other Business and Future Agenda Items
- I. Adjournment

KRISTI PASSARELLI, CITY CLERK

POSTED: Tuesday, August 11th, 2026 @ 4:30 PM

Council chamber doors will be open at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting.

SPECIAL NOTE: PERSONS WITH SPECIAL ACCESSIBILITY NEEDS, INCLUDING LARGE PRINT MATERIALS OR INTERPRETER, SHOULD CONTACT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE @ 623.222.1200 OR CLERK@SURPRISEAZ.GOV, BY NO LATER THAN 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING TIME.



CITY OF SURPRISE
Veterans Disability and Human Services
Commission Meeting

Council Meeting Date: August 12, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Human Svcs and Comm District: Citywide
Vitality
Staff Recommendations:

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Consideration and action pertaining to the selection of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission Chair.

Motion:

I move to select (insert name here) for the position of Chair of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission.

Background:

A Chair for the Commission must be selected pursuant to the Surprise Municipal Code, Sec. 2-295(11).

Nominations will take place and a paper ballot will be available in the event numerous commissioners are nominated. A motion, a second, and a roll call vote will follow the paper ballots.

Objective Analysis:

This action allows for the nomination and selection of a Chair for the Commission.

Policy Compliant:

This action is compliant with City and Council policies.

Financial Impact:

None

Budget Impact:

None

FTE Impact:

None

ATTACHMENTS:



CITY OF SURPRISE
Veterans Disability and Human Services
Commission Meeting

Council Meeting Date: August 12, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Human Svcs and Comm District: Citywide
Vitality
Staff Recommendations:

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Consideration and action pertaining to the selection of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission Vice-Chair.

Motion:

I move to select (insert name here) for the position of Vice-Chair of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission.

Background:

A Vice-Chair for the Commission must be selected pursuant to the Surprise Municipal Code, Sec. 2-295(11).

Nominations will take place and a paper ballot will be available in the event numerous commissioners are nominated. A motion, a second, and a roll call vote will follow the paper ballots.

Objective Analysis:

This action allows for the nomination and selection of a Vice-Chair for the Commission.

Policy Compliant:

This action is compliant with City and Council policies.

Financial Impact:

None

Budget Impact:

None

FTE Impact:

None

ATTACHMENTS:



CITY OF SURPRISE
Veterans Disability and Human Services
Commission Meeting

Council Meeting Date: August 12, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Human Svcs and Comm District: Citywide
Vitality
Staff Recommendations:

Consent: No	Regular: Yes	Public Hearing: No	Report/Discussion: No
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Agenda Wording:

Consideration and action pertaining to the June 10, 2026 Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes.

Motion:

I move to approve the June 10, 2026 Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes.

Background:

N/A

Objective Analysis:

N/A

Policy Compliant:

This item is compliant with City and Council policies.

Financial Impact:

None

Budget Impact:

None

FTE Impact:

None

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 6.10.26 VDHS Commission Minutes - DRAFT
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**CITY OF SURPRISE
VETERANS, DISABILITY, AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**June 10 | 6:00 PM
City Council Chambers
16000 N. Civic Center Plaza
Surprise, AZ 85374**

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice-Chair Kent-Partridge 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 June 10, 2026.

ROLL CALL

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

Absences: Chair Michael Tree (excused).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

STAFF PRESENT:

Human Services and Community Vitality Director, Seth Dyson, Community Initiatives Supervisor, Kara Poling, and Administrative Specialist, Victoria Simmons.

CURRENT EVENTS REPORT

Vice-Chair Kent-Partridge reported on the following:

- Due to the Juneteenth holiday, City of Surprise administrative offices will be closed Friday, June 19.
- In observance of the Independence Day holiday, City of Surprise administrative offices will also be closed on Friday, July 3.
- Join us on Wednesday, July 8, at St. Mary's Food Bank to assist with sorting and packing food, assisting clients and packing Kid's Cafe meals. Volunteer opportunities start at 7:15 a.m., 9:45 a.m. and noon. Youth ages 12 and over are invited to participate, however all participants under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Registration is required through St. Mary's Foodbank; this process will require you to create an account on their website first. For questions about this event or volunteer opportunities, please visit surpriseaz.gov/DOS or call Daisy Vargas at 623.222.1612.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

- Commissioner Manuel
 - June 10 - Attended a tour of the new Surprise Community & Resource

Center

- Vice-Chair Kent-Partridge
 - May 18 – met with Project Manager, Samuel Pena and Director, Jeanine Jurkovic with the City of Surprise Economic Development department to learn more about the SPARK Hidden Talent Program
 - May 20 - Attended DDD Lunch and Learn, which focused on employment challenges and solutions to help disabled members of the community
 - May 21 - Attended VA Mental Health Advocacy Council meeting on May 21
 - Presentation by Michelle Cleveland with Project 24/7
 - Project 24 Seven, is a suicide prevention app tool for veterans, adults and adolescents meant to target those who do not have access to mental health resources.
 - June 6 - Attended Women's Veteran Recognition Day as a veteran spouse panelist
 - Hosted by West Valley Women Veterans
 - June 7 - Attended a Women Veterans event at the VFW Post 1433
 - June 8 - Attended a meeting with Community Initiatives Supervisor, Kara Poling, Jared Beard of Maricopa County Workforce Development, and Tim Stump with Vocational Rehab
 - Learned about employment resources for those with disabilities and DDD members
 - June 10 - Attended a tour of the new Surprise Community & Resource

STAFF REPORT

None.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC:

None.

CONSENT AGENDA:

None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS - PUBLIC HEARING:

None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS - NON-PUBLIC HEARING:

Item 1 - Consideration and action pertaining to the May 13, 2026 Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes.

Prior to consideration of the item, staff noted that the agenda contained a clerical error. The agenda incorrectly referenced the May 8, 2026, meeting minutes; the item should have referenced the May 13, 2026, meeting minutes. Commissioner Billcheck moved to approve the May 13, 2026, Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Maxfield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 6 Yes votes and 1 absence (Tree).

Item 2 – Citywide – Presentation and discussion pertaining to Brain Injury Association of Arizona.

Director of Veteran Services, Luke Fadell, gave a presentation on the different services and resources offered by Brain Injury Association of Arizona.

Item 3 – Citywide – Discussion and action pertaining to the 2026 Surprise Community Legend Awards application and timeline.

Community Initiatives Supervisor, Kara Poling, gave a presentation regarding the 2026 Surprise Community Legend Awards. Commissioner Billcheck moved to approve the application and timeline for the 2026 Community Legend Awards. Commissioner Wisniewski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 6 Yes votes and 1 absence (Tree)

Item 4 – Citywide – Discussion and action pertaining to the 2026 Veterans Day Parade Grand Marshal selection process, application, and timeline.

Community Initiatives Supervisor, Kara Poling, gave a presentation regarding the 2026 Veterans Day Parade Grand Marshal selection process, application, and timeline. The commissioners discussed options to consider nominees from previous years instead of opening it up for new nominations. Commissioner Wisniewski moved to carry this item forward to August for voting of the 2026 Veterans Day Parade Grand Marshal. Commissioner Maxfield seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 6 Yes votes and 1 absence (Tree)

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- Presentation by Project 24/7

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Wisniewski moved to adjourn the meeting of the Veterans, Disability & Human Services Commission on June 10, 2026, at 7:09 p.m. Commissioner Billcheck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with 6 Yes votes and 1 absence (Tree).

Kara Poling
Community Initiatives Supervisor

Kent-Partridge
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:

Victoria Simmons
Administrative Specialist

DATE:



CITY OF SURPRISE
Veterans Disability and Human Services
Commission Meeting

Council Meeting Date: August 12, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Human Svcs and Comm District: Citywide
Vitality
Staff Recommendations: None

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Presentation and discussion pertaining to Project 24 Seven.

Motion:

Presentation and discussion only.

Background:

Project 24 Seven will share more about their non-profit and the different programs offered.

Objective Analysis:

To promote quality of life, accessibility and equity for all residents of Surprise, including those who are veterans or who experience disabilities, through cooperation with Surprise residents and any veterans, disability and human service organizations that serve the residents of Surprise.

Policy Compliant:

This item is compliant with City and Council policies.

Financial Impact:

N/A

Budget Impact:

N/A

FTE Impact:

N/A

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Project24SEVEN_GENERAL_Capability_Overview
-

WELCOME

“The views expressed herein are those of **Project 24 Seven** and do not necessarily represent the views of the City of Surprise. The information provided herein has not been verified, and the City of Surprise assumes no responsibility for the policies or positions presented.”



SURPRISE
ARIZONA



General Technology Overview

A mobile app built to keep people connected to help in the moments that matter most.

Turning Cell Phones Into Lifelines.

Wellness happens daily — not just at appointments.

Mental health is shaped by ordinary days: sleep, stress, routine, connection. Most of that happens far from a counselor or a scheduled check-in, and small changes go unnoticed until they compound.



Good days go unrecorded

Without a daily habit, there's no baseline — so it's hard to tell a rough week from a real change.



Checking in feels like a big step

People will tap a quick status long before they'll book a session or start a hard conversation.



Care teams lose visibility between visits

Weeks pass with no signal, so support arrives after a decline rather than during it.



Coping tools aren't there in the moment

Wellness plans made in an office rarely reach the phone in someone's pocket at 11 p.m.

Three simple capabilities, built for the moment they're needed.

Project 24SEVEN is live today on iOS and Android. Every capability below is fully built and in use — not a concept.



Emergency Connect

One tap reaches a personal circle of trusted contacts, with automatic escalation to crisis lifelines if there's no response.



Emergency Text Outreach

A pre-configured, customizable message lowers the barrier to reaching out — no need to find the words in the moment.

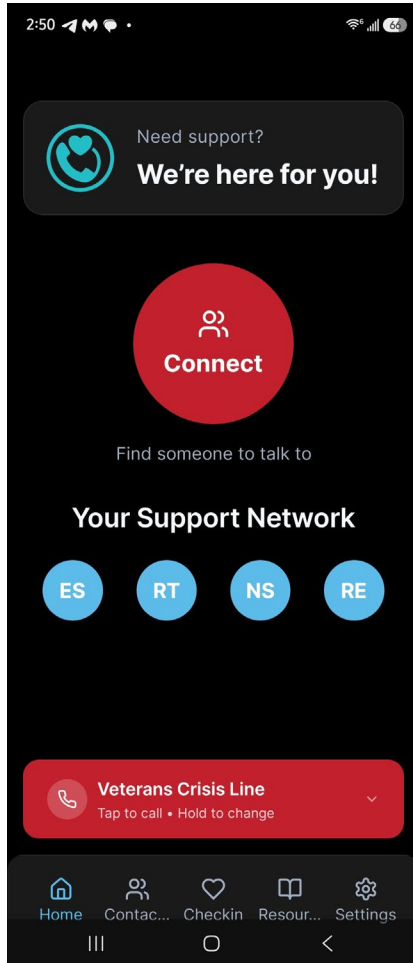


Daily Check-In

A brief daily mood log builds a picture over time and can be shared with just a few clicks.

One tap to a real human — before the crisis escalates.

The home screen is built for the worst moment, when reaching out feels impossible.



Connect button, front and center

A single tap reaches the client's support network — no menus, no friction in a crisis.



A personalized circle of trust

Connects them to known contacts or peers the client chose in advance with their care team.



Always-on crisis backstop

Their selected crisis lifeline is one tap away, every time the app is open.



No one is ever alone

If contacts don't answer, escalation continues automatically until someone responds.

Emergency Text Outreach

For people who won't call, but will reach out.

WITHOUT THIS FEATURE

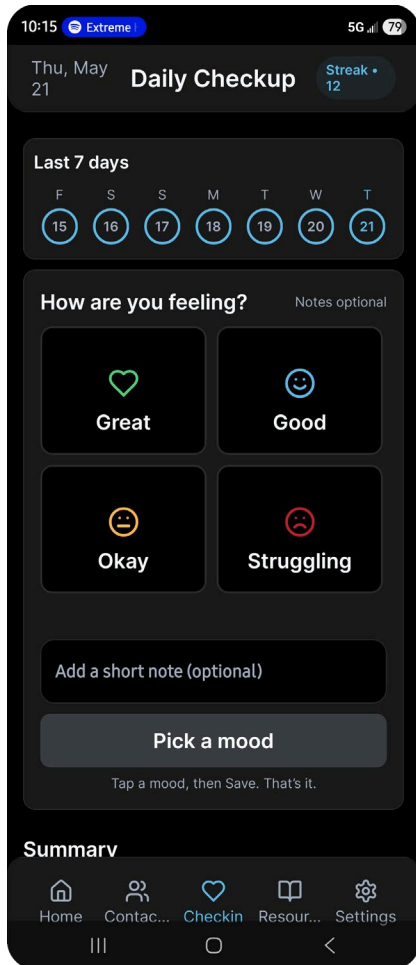
- Composing the right words feels like one more barrier in a hard moment.
- Someone may give up before finishing a message.
- Reaching out requires calling — not everyone's first instinct under stress.

WITH EMERGENCY TEXT OUTREACH

- A pre-configured, customizable message is ready to send in one tap.
- Lowers the barrier — no need to find the words while already struggling.
- Works alongside Emergency Connect, giving more than one way to reach out.

Quiet, daily monitoring between appointments.

A ten-second check-in gives you a continuous read on how a client is really doing.



Effortless mood check-ins

Great, Good, Okay, or Struggling — one tap, with an optional private note.



A visible 7-day rhythm

Streaks and recent history help clients build a habit and notice their own patterns.



Trends, not just snapshots

Day-over-day data surfaces a downward slide early — while there's still time to act.

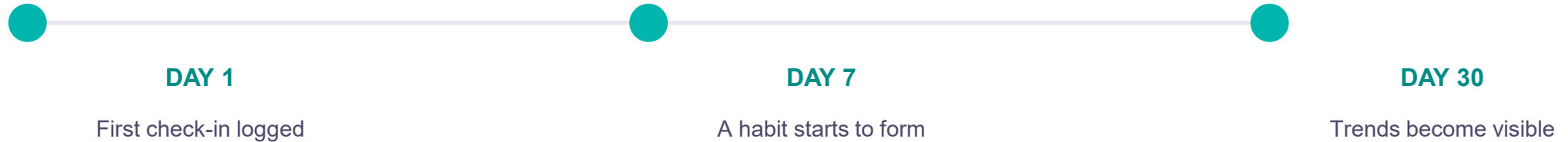


Easily shareable history

The complete check-in history as well as PHQ and GAD assessments are shareable.

Daily Check-In

A small daily habit that builds a bigger picture.



Brief and sustainable

Takes seconds to complete — realistic to keep up daily, not a burden.



Shareable with a care team

History can be shared with a designated care team, by the user's choice.

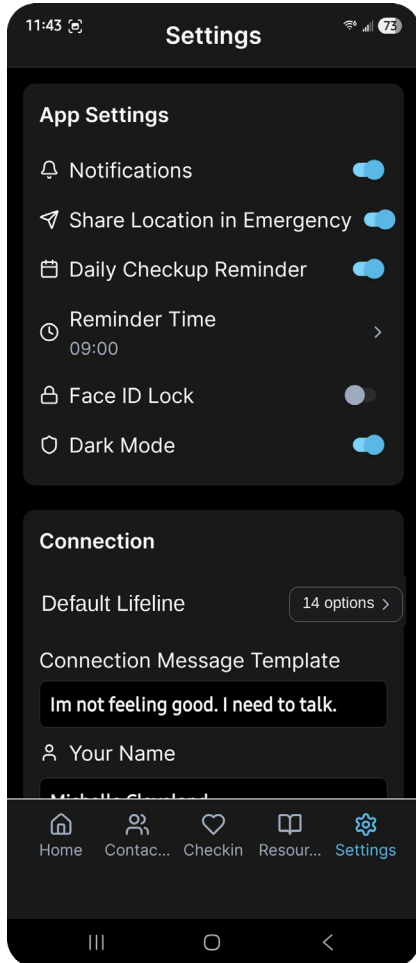


Surfaces gradual change

A slow decline is easier to see across weeks of data than in one conversation.

Configured for the user

Sensible defaults out of the box, with the controls clients and clinicians actually need.



Set the defaults that matter

Default lifeline, reminder timing, and a ready-to-send connection message template.



Words ready when they're hardest

A pre-written 'I'm not feeling good, I need to talk' message lowers the bar to reaching out.



Private by design

Face ID lock and opt-in emergency location sharing* keep the client in control.



Reminders that keep the habit

Daily check-in prompts arrive at the time that fits the client's routine.

*14 crisis lifelines to choose from — included in the free version. *Location sharing will be available in a future version.*

Born from personal loss. Built by the veteran community.

Founder Michelle Cleveland's own family experience with suicide loss shapes Project 24SEVEN's mission: turning knowledge into hope and technology into a lifeline, so no one faces a hard moment alone. Her connection to military and veteran life is part of why the app was built with veterans from the start.



It was deeply moving and resonated strongly with us veterans. As chaplain of American Legion Post 18, I'll be sharing this message with our members.

— Dale, Chaplain, American Legion Post 18



Veterans helped shape the app's design directly, and it's endorsed by two American Legion posts in Mesa, Arizona — validation from the community it's built to serve.

Prefer something built just for your team?

For programs that want a fully custom solution, we also design web-based platforms — matched to your resiliency team's resources, your referral pathways, and the tools you already use.

PLATFORM



Custom Web Platform

A web-based application built around your team's branding, tone, and existing behavioral health resources — no app-store install required.

CONTENT



Tailored Content & Resources

Safety plan prompts, check-in language, and crisis resources written specifically for Guard and Reserve members and your resiliency programming.

INTEGRATION



Connects to What You Already Use

Built to integrate with your existing support tools and referral systems, so it fits into workflows your team already has in place.

Let's design it together — MichelleCleveland@Project24SEVEN.org



One of our own — a U.S. Army Master Gunner from Mesa, Arizona — wrote this about Project 24SEVEN. His words require no introduction.

“

I'm writing to thank you for Project 24SEVEN.

In the past I've been reluctant to use the traditional crisis intervention assets for a variety of reasons. First and foremost I wonder 'will I be reported to some authority?' Will this come back to haunt me in gaining a professional license? If I decide to purchase a gun for duck hunting will I be flagged under some red flag law? Will they come search/confiscate any weapons at my home?

Secondly, why am I pouring my heart out to some stranger? I do not want to pour out my anguished soul to a different person every time who as much as they care, they're paid to be there for me. When they say 'I know your pain,' do they? Did their buddy die in their arms after telling them to 'Cover my move,' because they failed to see the enemy? How many times did they see stray dogs feasting on human remains?

Dialing, pressing the right number to get someone who may be a generic crisis counselor and just hoping someone will be available during holidays is scary too.

With Project 24SEVEN I will speak to friends who've been there and done that. When they say 'I feel you,' I know they're empathizing, they get it. And my Project 24SEVEN contacts live close enough to come to me at 0200 when my demons are strongest. Someone I trust can come to look me in the eye and hug me to jumpstart my humanity if that's what I need.

The only record of my calls, thoughts, and intentions is in the head of trusted friends.

I needed this. Thank you.

— Red Thomas, U.S. Army Master Gunner, Retired | Mesa, Arizona





Project 24SEVEN

Everyone deserves a lifeline in the moment they need it most.

Thank you for the opportunity to share what we've built.

MichelleCleveland@Project24SEVEN.org

www.Project24SEVEN.org

Turning Cell Phones Into Lifelines.



CITY OF SURPRISE
Veterans Disability and Human Services
Commission Meeting

Council Meeting Date: August 12, 2026
Submitting Department: Human Svcs and Comm Vitality
Staff Recommendations:

Contact Person:
District: Citywide

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Discussion and action pertaining to the Community Legend Awards.

Motion:

I move to approve the following nominees as recipients of the Community Legend Awards:

- Individual Legend: Debbie Lee, CEO/Founder of America's Mighty Warriors
 - Volunteer of the Year: Louis O'Brien, Home Service Volunteer with Benevilla
 - Organization of the Year: Veterans Affinity
 - Outstanding Youth: Hadley Gray, Hadley's Hope
-

Background:

The Surprise Veterans, Disability & Human Services (VDHS) Commission will discuss its 4th Annual Community Legend Awards Program, an opportunity to celebrate people and organizations whose actions have made a positive impact on the Surprise Community. Applications for the Surprise Community Legend Award became available beginning June 17 and closed on July 22. After a competitive selection, the VDHS Commission awarded the following individuals and organizations:

- Individual Legend:
- Volunteer of the Year: Louis O'Brien, Home Service Volunteer with Benevilla
- Organization of the Year: Veterans Affinity
- Outstanding Youth: Hadley Gray, Hadley's Hope

This item has been placed on the agenda to allow the evaluation panel an opportunity to present their recommendations to the full commission for final approval. Approved awardees will be invited to receive a plaque and formal recognition at the Surprise Area Interfaith & Golden Rule Breakfast on September 16, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. in the Dysart Unified School District Governing Board Office.

Objective Analysis:

To promote quality of life, accessibility and equity for all residents of Surprise, including those who are

veterans or who experience disabilities, through cooperation with Surprise residents and any veterans, disability and human service organizations that serve the residents of Surprise.

Policy Compliant:

This action is compliant with City and Council policies.

Financial Impact:

None

Budget Impact:

None

FTE Impact:

None

ATTACHMENTS:



CITY OF SURPRISE
Veterans Disability and Human Services
Commission Meeting

Council Meeting Date: August 12, 2026 Contact Person:
Submitting Department: Human Svcs and Comm District: Citywide
Vitality
Staff Recommendations:

Consent: No Regular: Yes Public Hearing: No Report/Discussion: No

Agenda Wording:

Consideration and action pertaining to the 2026 Veterans Day Parade Grand Marshal.

Motion:

I move to approve (insert name) as the 2026 Veterans Day Parade Grand Marshal.

Background:

The Parks & Recreation Department has enlisted the assistance of the VDHS Commission in choosing the Grand Marshal for the 2026 Veterans Day Parade.

Objective Analysis:

This item allows the Commission to choose the Grand Marshal for the 2026 Veterans Day Parade.

Policy Compliant:

This item is compliant with City and Council policies.

Financial Impact:

None

Budget Impact:

None

FTE Impact:

None

ATTACHMENTS:
