



Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee Minutes

July 17, 2025 Microsoft Teams Live

Streamed via City's website:

<http://www.elpasotexas.gov/videos>

Television on City 15

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofelpasotx/videos>

MINUTES

Members Present

Ron Jackson

George Elsaesser

James Green

Melissa Harcrow

Ruben Ramirez

Brian Kanof

Donna Juarez

Donald Brown

- 1. Call to Order.** 10:00 AM
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Roll Call.** 8 of 9 - Quorum met.
- 4. Discussion and Action:** To approve the minutes of May 15, 2025, Motion and second.
Approved
- 5. Citizen Comment Period:** No citizens present for comment.
- 6. El Paso VA Health Care Clinic Update** – No representative present; no update provided.
- 7. El Paso County Update**
 - a. July 28: County to issue multiple resolutions honoring veteran organizations, including UAVO, American Legion Post 36, Military Order of the Purple Heart, and Armed Forces YMCA.
 - b. Encouraged VAAC/VAB collaboration on reviewing state veteran legislation and reintroducing lapsed bills to state representatives.
 - c. Announced County TVC Financial Assistance Grant approval for rent, mortgage, utilities, phone, and car payments – open to all service branches, all discharge types, veterans, family members, and surviving spouses.
- 8. Community Update – National Organization for Victim Advocacy (NOVA) – Kimberly Henry**
 - a. Overview of grant-funded program supporting military-connected survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.
 - b. Provides free training, technical assistance, and resources to community providers, law enforcement, legal professionals, and advocates.
 - c. Discussed need for pro bono legal resources in West Texas.
- 9. Community Update – White Acres Assisted Living – Renee Sigira & Team**



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- a. White Acres operates as a Continuous Care Retirement Community (Independent Living, Assisted Living, Memory Care, Skilled Nursing, Long-term Care).
 - b. VA-contracted skilled nursing and aid-and-attendance pension support for veterans and surviving spouses.
 - c. Reviewed wartime eligibility dates and outlined pension rates.
- 10. Monthly Subcommittee Updates**
- a. **Employment:** Reviewed recent veteran/spouse employment and childcare legislation. Announced Pride Industries Trades Job Fair – July 25, Armed Forces Reserve Center. Civil service hiring freeze extended to Oct 31.
 - b. **Homelessness:** Attended Continuum of Care Governance Charter meeting to improve collaboration among homeless service providers. Established new POCs for joint outreach and will participate in street-level homeless veteran identification.
 - c. **Mental Health:** Legislative review meeting scheduled for August 11. Shared local VA and community-based mental health resources (EHN, Amistad, Endeavors, GI Forum). Promoted SAVE suicide prevention training and American Legion “Be the One” initiative. Announced MST support groups and new VA ketamine clinic for PTSD/pain.
- 11. Discussion and Action – Appoint District 4 VAAC Member James Green to a VAAC Subcommittee** – Motion and approval to appoint James Green to the Employment Subcommittee.
- 12. Discussion on Annual Council Update Presentation** – Update deferred to next meeting; CMO Paul Albright and Veterans Program Coordinator Luther Jones in travel status.
- 13. Discussion / Action on Member Absences**
- a. Brian Kanof – motion to excuse passed. One nay
 - b. Donald Brown – motion to excuse passed.
 - c. Donald Juarez – motion to excuse passed.
- 14. Division of Veteran and Military Affairs Update** – Deferred to next meeting; staff in travel status.
- 15. Announcements:**
- a. July 19: Women Veterans Exhibit collection event, El Paso Veterans One-Stop.
 - b. July 22: VA Disability Claims Workshop (virtual).
 - c. Aug 12: Texas Veterans Commission Q&A.
 - d. Weekly food trucks at Old Glory Memorial to support site upkeep.
- 16. Future Agenda Items**
- a. Veterans Treatment Court presentation.
 - b. Listing of VAC members by district and subcommittee.
 - c. Review of quorum notification process.
- 17. Next VAAC Meeting: Thursday, August 21, 2025, 10:00 AM MDT hybrid- in person.**
- 18. Adjourn. 11:27 AM.**

Approved By:

Paul Albright - Chief Military Officer
City 1 | 300 N Campbell St. | El Paso, Texas 79901 | (915) 212-1447



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