

**OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 12, 2023, 10:00AM
Vezey Veterans Complex
2132 NE 36th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73111**

REGULAR MEETING:

The Oklahoma Veterans Commission held a regular meeting on Friday, May 12, 2023, at 10:00 AM at the Vezezy Veterans Complex 2132 NE 36th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73111. A Notice of this meeting was filed with the Secretary of State's Office on December 11, 2022, and an amended Notice, changing the location of this meeting, was filed with the Secretary of State's Office on April 18, 2023. Jennifer Bloomfield served as the Clerk of the Commission for this Meeting.

AGENDA:

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Allen called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

II. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

A. ROLL CALL

Chairman Allen asked the Clerk to call the roll. The roll was taken as follows:

Commissioner Allen – Present
Commissioner Ellington – Present
Commissioner Martin – Present
Commissioner Offel – Present
Commissioner Orr – Present
Commissioner Perry – Present

B. DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The Chair declared that a quorum was present.

III. VERIFICATION OF PROPER NOTICE OF MEETING AND POSTING OF THE AGENDA.

Chairman Allen asked the Clerk to verify proper notice to the Secretary of State and posting of the agenda. The Clerk verified that Notice of this meeting was filed with the Secretary of State's Office on December 11, 2022, and an amended Notice, changing the location of this meeting, was filed with the Secretary of State's Office on April 18, 2023. The agenda was posted to the front door of the ODVA Central Office and was available at the reception desk of the ODVA Central Office on May 11, 2023,

at 7:58 am. The agenda was posted to the ODVA website on May 10, 2023, at 5:57 pm.

IV. INVOCATION

Commissioner Ellington led the Invocation.

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

VI. ODVA STAFF AND OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Secretary of Military & Veterans Affairs John Nash
Legal Counsel to the Commission John O'Connor
Interim Executive Director Greg Slavonic
Deputy Director Shawn Kirkland
Director of Homes Rob Arrington
Communications Director Jennifer Bloomfield
Chief Financial Officer Lisa White
Construction Programs Administrator Nisha Young
Payroll Programs Administrator Leona Watson
Human Resources Director Jennifer Shockley

VII. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME TO VISITORS AND GUESTS

Chairman Allen welcomed all visitors and guests to the Commission meeting and asked if anyone would like to introduce themselves to the Commission. Present in the gallery was Rob Haugh, Adjutant American Legion, Department of Oklahoma.

VIII. BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE APRIL 14th, 2023, OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION MEETING.

Commissioner Ellington made the Motion to approve the April 14, 2023, Minutes.

Commissioner Orr seconded the Motion.

Chairman Allen called for discussion.

There was no discussion. Chairman Allen asked the Clerk to call the roll. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Allen – Aye
Commissioner Ellington – Aye
Commissioner Martin – Aye
Commissioner Offel – Aye
Commissioner Orr – Aye
Commissioner Perry – Aye.

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.
Chairman Allen declared the Motion passed.

**B. COMMITTEE REPORTS, WITH DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION
ON THE FOLLOWING:**

**1. HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE: COMMISSIONER
SIDNEY ELLINGTON:**

- i. Number of total pins; 2,218
- ii. Number of unfilled pins; 439
- iii. Number of new hires since last meeting; 24
- iv. Number of resignations since last meeting; 18
- v. Number of terminations since last meeting; 2
- vi. Total number of resignations in 2022; 647
- vii. Total number of terminations in 2022; 108 and
- viii. Employee Survey Feedback from Greg Slavonic

Commissioner Ellington gave a report related to the number of pins vs unfilled pins agency wide. A discussion of all new hires, resignations, and terminations since the last scheduled Commission meeting was given.

Commissioner Ellington requested that Interim Executive Director Greg Slavonic speak to the Employee Survey.

Director Slavonic stated that the survey received almost 400 responses from ODVA staff. He stated that there was a feeling of lack of communication from leadership to the staff. Slavonic stated that he was actively working to address this issue. The Director stated that ODVA is going to reestablish the employee hotline as well.

Director Slavonic stated that he was also bringing back an employee of the quarter and employee of the year incentive, as well as looking into the pay issues that were reported by most individuals who took the survey.

Commissioner Ellington stated that many individuals who took the survey voiced that they were concerned about retaliation. He stated that a Lunch & Learn was being planned to address this issue.

2. AUDIT COMMITTEE: COMMISSIONER BRETT MARTIN:

- i. Ongoing actions with respect to the 2017 audit; and

- ii. Possible new Audit of ODVA.

Commissioner Martin stated that the 2017 Audit goes “*Hand and glove*” with the Employee Survey. He referred to the 2017 Audit as a “*Stephen King novel*”. He stated that May 31st a meeting will be held with the State Auditor about the possibility of a new audit being completed. He stated that this will be at the request of Director Slavonic and the Commission.

3. CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE: DANIEL ORR:

- i. Sallisaw Veterans Home Progress Update; and
- ii. Ardmore Veterans Home Progress Update

Commissioner Orr stated that he met with Ms. Young a few weeks ago. Commissioner Orr gave a brief overview of the Ardmore property and the concerns some residents have regarding the road access in front of the site. He deferred to Ms. Young for the remainder of the report.

Nisha Young, Constructions Programs Administrator stated that she, along with Commissioner Martin, Deputy Director Kirkland, and Director Slavonic met with the City of Ardmore on April 22nd to discuss the community concerns at a town hall. Ms. Young stated that they have come up with a plan to design a round-about to address the concerns from the residents. May 22nd is the next meeting where a vote is anticipated.

Ms. Young stated that ODVA and OMES has given the Legislature everything that they need to make a decision on the supplemental funding. She stated that ODVA is just waiting to hear if the funding will be approved.

Chairman Allen asked if there was any concern that funding would not be approved. Secretary Nash stated that based on the conversations he has had with various members of the legislature, he anticipates that funding would be approved.

C. REPORTS, WITH DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. OKLAHOMA SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND MILITARY: JOHNATHAN NASH:

- i. Report from Cabinet Meeting;

Secretary Nash stated that Education has dominated the conversation over the last several meetings. He stated that as they move forward into the next fiscal year, priorities will

focus on compensation for staff as indicated in the Employee Survey. He stated that several of the concerns raised within the survey will be addressed in the coming months.

- ii. Security Forces Suicide Awareness;
Secretary Nash turned the floor over to Rob Haugh, Adjutant American Legion, Department of Oklahoma to give a presentation on Security Forces Suicide Awareness.

Mr. Haugh stated to the Commission that since November, 2022, there has been a loss of 12 members of Security Forces to suicide.

- iii. House Bill 1036, Veteran Suicide Prevention Task Force; and
Secretary Nash stated that HB1036 has been signed into law. He shared that it was now in beginning planning stages and he will be meeting with the House to determine where this task force will meet and who will staff it.
- iv. Veterans Service Organization Advisory Forum.
Secretary Nash stated that he has spent the past year visiting a number of Veterans Service Originations. He stated that he noticed that ODVA was rarely in front of these various VSOs in a setting that could bring issue to action. Secretary Nash stated that beginning in July 2023 an Advisory Forum will be put into action where this process can be streamlined.
A digital presentation of the Veterans Service Organization Advisory Forum is posted on the ODVA website.

2. ODVA: ADMIRAL GREG SLAVONIC, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

- i. Travel;
Interim Executive Director Slavonic stated that he had traveled to the Ardmore Town Hall on April 22nd.
- ii. Employee Newsletter, Jennifer Bloomfield, Communications Director;
Communications Director Jennifer Bloomfield stated that an employee newsletter was in the works. She stated that this will be released quarterly to all ODVA staff. Ms. Bloomfield stated that one of the biggest concerns from the staff was learning about what was happening within the ODVA from the media. Ms. Bloomfield stated that the agency had set a priority that all updates come from Leadership and will be shared openly with staff moving forward.
- iii. Personnel update related to the position of the:
 - i. ODVA General Counsel; John Settle
 - ii. Deputy Director; Shawn Kirkland

- iii. Director of Homes; Rob Arrington
- iv. Commission Agenda Deadline; June 1, 2023
- v. Recommendation of audit of the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs;
Director Slavonic stated that this was already discussed in a previous line item.
- vi. Update and discussion on alleged ODVA Data Compromise; and
- vii. Status of investigation and legal action relating to the Sallisaw Home construction project:
 - i. PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION REGARDING DATA COMPROMISE AND SALLISAW CONSTRUCTION DISPUTE, PURSUANT TO TITLE 25 O.S. §307 (B) (7) DISCUSSION OF ANY MATTER WHERE DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION WOULD VIOLATE CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS OF STATE OR FEDERAL LAW AND PURSUANT TO TITLE 25 O.S. §307 (B) (4) CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN A PUBLIC BODY AND ITS ATTORNEY CONCERNING A PENDING INVESTIGATION, CLAIM, OR ACTION IF THE PUBLIC BODY, WITH THE ADVICE OF ITS ATTORNEY, DETERMINES THAT DISCLOSURE WILL SERIOUSLY IMPAIR THE ABILITY OF THE PUBLIC BODY TO PROCESS THE CLAIM OR CONDUCT A PENDING INVESTIGATION, LITIGATION, OR PROCEEDING IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST.

Commissioner Ellington made the motion to enter Executive Session.

Commissioner Orr seconded the Motion.

Chairman Allen called for discussion.

There was no discussion.

Chairman Allen asked the Clerk to call the roll. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Allen – Aye
Commissioner Ellington – Aye
Commissioner Martin – Aye
Commissioner Offel – Aye
Commissioner Orr – Aye

Commissioner Perry – Aye.

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.
Chairman Allen declared the motion passed.

The Commission entered Executive Session at 11:34 am.

Commissioner Martin made the motion to close the executive session and return to the open meeting.

Commissioner Ellington seconded the Motion.

Chairman Allen called for discussion.

There was no discussion.

Chairman Allen asked the Clerk to call the roll. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Allen – Aye

Commissioner Ellington – Aye

Commissioner Martin – Aye

Commissioner Offel – Aye

Commissioner Orr – Aye

Commissioner Perry – Aye.

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Chairman Allen declared the Motion passed.

The Commission returned to open meeting at 12:34 pm.

3. NISHA YOUNG, CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR:

- i. Pursuant to 61 O.S. Section 121 (F) the following Change Orders were executed under the authority to the Executive Director since the last Oklahoma Veterans Commission meeting: Change Order #1 – \$25,804.00 + CAP Fee \$00.00 – CORE Construction, Sulphur Veteran Center, Sulphur, OK – OMES CAP # 000307 –Upgrade to the chemical treatment system due to the new Cooling tower; and
- ii. Over Executive Director Delegation of Authority: Change #001- \$52,250.00 + CAP Fee \$3,657.50– REES – Sulphur Veteran Center – Sulphur Cognitive Care Renovation – Expand the architect and engineering scope of services to update the common areas outside of the rooms.

Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the change order related to the Sulphur Veterans Home Renovation #001.

Commissioner Ellington seconded the Motion.

Chairman Allen called for discussion.

There was no discussion.

Chairman Allen asked the Clerk to call the roll. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Allen – Aye
Commissioner Ellington – Aye
Commissioner Martin – Aye
Commissioner Offel – Aye
Commissioner Orr – Aye
Commissioner Perry – Aye.

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.
Chairman Allen declared the motion passed.

4. LISA A. WHITE, ODVA CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

- i. Operating Budget to Actual;
- ii. State Homes Operating Budget;
- iii. Staffing Agency Budget to Actuals by FY;
- iv. Payroll Budget to Actual by FY;
- v. Capital Budget to Actual;
- vi. Projected Revenue to Actual;
- vii. Revolving Fund Revenue by FY;
- viii. Federal Reimbursements by FY (per Diem);
- ix. Average Daily Cost of Care;
- x. Current Accounts Receivable; and
- xi. Cash Flow Analysis.

A digital copy of the financial presentation is available on the ODVA website.

5. LEONA WATSON, PAYROLL PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATOR, DISCUSSION RE: PAYROLL AND OVERTIME.

Ms. Watson presented a report of the payroll and overtime usage.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Pursuant to 25 O.S. § 311, “New Business” shall mean any matter not known about or which could not have been reasonably foreseen prior to the time of posting this Notice (24 hours prior to the meeting).

No new business was presented.

X. DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS BY THE OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION AND DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

XI. OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING DATE TO INCLUDE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

NEXT MEETING:

June 9th, 2023, 10:00AM
Vezey Veterans Complex
2132 NE 36th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73111

XII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Martin made the motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Ellington seconded the Motion.

The Motion is not debatable.

Chairman Allen asked the Clerk to call the roll. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Allen – Aye

Commissioner Ellington – Aye

Commissioner Martin – Aye

Commissioner Offel – Aye

Commissioner Orr – Aye

Commissioner Perry – Aye.

The Clerk notified the Chair that the vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays. Chairman Allen declared the Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 1:41 pm.

JGB 05/22/2023