

**OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 6, 2024, 8:30 A.M.
Vezey Veterans Complex
2132 NE 36th Street
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73111**

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING:

The Oklahoma Veterans Commission held a Regular Meeting on Friday, September 6, 2024, at 8:30 a.m., at the Vezey Veterans Complex, 2132 NE 36th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73111. Notice of this meeting was filed with the Secretary of State on October 17, 2023, and an Amended Notice was filed with the Secretary of State on August 6, 2024. The Agenda of this meeting was also properly posted at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to this meeting pursuant to the provisions of Title 25 O.S. § 311.

AGENDA:

CHAIRMAN BRETT MARTIN:

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM

II. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

A. ROLL CALL

Chairman Martin 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 – Absent

The Clerk notified Chairman Martin that 5 Commissioners were present and 1 absent.

B. DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The Chair declared that a quorum was present. Also present were Legal Counsel for the Oklahoma Veterans Commission, John M. O'Connor and General Counsel for the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs and the Oklahoma Veterans Commission John M. Settle. Commissioner Perry arrived at 8:36 AM.

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

The Clerk verified proper notice and posting of the Agenda.

IV. INVOCATION AGENDA

Commissioner Ellington led the Invocation.

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Orr led the Pledge of Allegiance.

VI. INTRODUCTION OF ODVA STAFF AND WELCOME TO VISITORS AND GUESTS.

Chairman Martin welcomed all visitors and guests to the Commission meeting and asked if anyone would like to introduce themselves to the Commission. Former ODVA Executive Director Greg Slavonic and Oklahoma Secretary of Military and Veterans Affairs, Johnathan Nash, were in attendance. Rob Arrington introduced Candice McIntire, Marketing and Veteran Homes Outreach, and Jeff Livingston, Administrator of the Sulphur Veterans Home. The Chairman acknowledged and welcomed the visitors and guests.

VII. BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 2, 2024, OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING.

Chairman Martin asked the Commission if there was any further discussion. There was no further discussion.

Commissioner Allen made the motion to approve the August 2, 2024, meeting minutes.

Commissioner Offel seconded the Motion

Chairman Martin asked the Clerk to call the roll.

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 Martin declared the motion passed.

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

1. CHAIRMAN BRETT MARTIN:

Chairman Martin introduced former ODVA Executive Director Greg Slavonic, Chairman Martin acknowledged the former Executive Director and presented him with a gift of appreciation. Chairman Martin gave an update on the State Task Force for Suicide Prevention and stated the final report is in the final stages and will be delivered in November 2024.

C. GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. DISCUSS AND POSSIBLY ADOPT 2025 OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE.

Chairman Martin asked the Commission if there was any further discussion. Chairman Martin proposed quarterly meetings for Calendar Year 2025 and Commissioner Orr concurs. Commissioner Allen proposed the 2025 meetings begin at 10:00 AM and a preference for holding meetings at the State Veterans Homes.

Commissioner Allen made the motion to schedule the 2025 OVC meetings as follows: January 31, 2025 at Clinton; May 9, 2025 at Sallisaw; August 8, 2025 at Claremore; and November 7, 2025 at Lawton.

Commissioner Orr seconded the Motion

Chairman Martin asked the Clerk to call the roll.

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 Martin declared the motion passed.

2. NEW FISCAL YEAR PRIORITIES.

Chairman Martin advised the Commission will continue to be wise with State dollars and continue with transparency.

D. REPORTS WITH DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. OKLAHOMA SECRETARY OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS: JOHNATHAN NASH, REPORT, DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

Secretary Nash welcomed Ted Perry to the Commission, gave an update on the Cabinet retreat, and gave an update on Governor Stitt’s initiative of modernization and optimization process for ODVA. Secretary Nash reported on his meeting with Governor Stitt and introduction of Executive Director Bynum.

2. ODVA: ADMIRAL JAY BYNUM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE ACTION:

Executive Director Bynum reported on his travel and visits to all the Oklahoma State Veterans Homes where he spoke to culture and local ownership, transparency, and communications. Executive Bynum

addressed his priorities as customer focus/mission focus; getting the fiscal house in order; and increasing efficiency of data analysis; digitizing and formalizing processes; training; and professional development of employees.

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

Ms. White gave updates to quarterly, yearly, service connected, and private pay per diem trends by fiscal year. A digital copy of this presentation is available as an attachment to these minutes.

4. NISHA YOUNG, CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATOR, REPORTS, DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

Ms. Young gave updates on the Ardmore New Veterans Home Project, Union Soldiers Cemetery, Seaman 1st Class Turner Ardmore Cemetery, and Sallisaw Veterans Home construction. OMES Risk Management will be conducting building assessments for the Claremore, Norman, and Lawton Homes. The Sallisaw Home construction is nearing completion, building 200 is complete and buildings 300 and 400 are on schedule. The Sallisaw Veterans Home is on track for completion by end of this calendar year.

ROB ARRINGTON, STATE HOMES DIRECTOR, REPORTS, DISCUSSION WITH POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

Rob Arrington discussed reinstating the Commissioners Cup Trophy for outstanding performance by an Oklahoma Veterans Home. The Trophy was last awarded to a Veterans State Home in 2015 and recommends reinstating trophy in 2025. Chairman Martin advised the Veterans Commission approves and requested a committee be established to develop standards and guidelines. Secretary Nash commented that this could also include bonus incentives.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

IX. OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

October 4, 2024, 10:00AM
Sulphur Veterans Home
304 E Fairlane
Sulphur, OK 73086

Chairman Martin asked the Commission if there was any further discussion. Chairman Allen Martin suggested canceling the October 4th meeting. Chairman Martin stated the November 1, 2024, meeting will be at ODVA Vezey Veterans Center at 8:30 AM.

Commissioner Allen made the Motion to cancel the October 4th meeting.

Commissioner Offel seconded the Motion.

Chairman Martin 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 the Roll Call vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Chairman Martin declared the Motion passed.

X. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING ADJOURNMENT.

Chairman Martin asked the Commission if there was any further discussion.

There was no discussion.

Commissioner Allen made the Motion to Adjourn.

Commissioner Orr seconded the Motion.

Chairman Martin 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 the Roll Call vote was 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Chairman Allen declared the Motion passed.

The Meeting Adjourned at 9:46 AM.