

**OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 24th, 2021, 10:00AM
Vezey Veterans Complex
2132 NE 36th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73111**

NOTICE OF REGULAR MEETING:

The Oklahoma Veterans Commission held a regular meeting on Friday, September 24, 2021, at 10:00 AM. This meeting was held at the Vezey 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 August 19th, 2021.

AGENDA:

Friday, September 24th, 2021 10:00 AM

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:00am

II. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

a. ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Ball: Present

Commissioner Costilow: Present

Commissioner Jackson: Present

Commissioner Kokendoffer: Present

Commissioner Lasser: Absent

Commissioner LeDay: Late 10:02am

Commissioner McEver: Present

Commissioner Miles: Late 10:15am

Mr. Chairman: Present

The Clerk notified the Chairman that 6 Commissioners were present, with 3 absent.

b. DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The Chairman declared a quorum.

III. INVOCATION

Commissioner Ball led the Invocation.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Kokendoffer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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V. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME TO VISITORS AND GUESTS

The Chairman acknowledged and welcomed the visitors and guests.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING SIGN-IN FOR OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

Individuals requesting to speak are required to sign-in onsite at the meeting prior to the commencement of the meeting.

The Chairman confirmed that there were no sign-ins for public comments.

VII. OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION

a. DISCUSSION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 24th, 2021 OKLAHOMA VETERANS COMMISSION MEETING

i. Action

Commissioner Costilow made the motion to approve the August 24th 2021 minutes.

Commissioner Jackson provided the second.

The Clerk called the vote, and the vote is as follows:

Commissioner Ball: Aye

Commissioner Costilow: Aye

Commissioner Jackson: Aye

Commissioner Kokendoffer: Aye

Commissioner Lasser: Absent

Commissioner LeDay: Aye

Commissioner McEver: Aye

Commissioner Miles: Absent

Mr. Chairman: Aye

The vote is 7 Aye 0 Nay 2 Absent. Motion Passes

b. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING TRAVEL OF COMMISSIONERS SINCE PRIOR REGULAR MEETING ON AUGUST 24th, 2021

i. Written Travel Reports Filed by Commissioners

The Chairman requested that all Commissioners submit their written travel reports to the Clerk.

ii. Presentation of Summary Travel Reports by Commissioners in Lieu of Written Reports

Commissioner Ball: No Report

Commissioner Costilow: No Report

Commissioner Jackson: No Report

Commissioner Kokendoffer: No Report

Commissioner Lasser: Absent

Commissioner LeDay: Lawton Veterans Center

Commissioner McEver: Clinton Veterans Center

Commissioner Miles: Absent

Mr. Chairman: Ardmore, Claremore, Clinton, Lawton, Norman, Sulphur, and the Talihina Veterans Centers.

VIII. OKLAHOMA SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND MILITARY

a. BEN ROBINSON, CABINET SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR STITT, REPORT WITH POSSIBLE DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING:

i. Report from Monthly Cabinet Meeting

The Secretary was not able to attend due to a prior commitment.

IX. OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

a. JOEL KINTSEL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND SARAH LANE, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, REPORT WITH POSSIBLE DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING:

i. Leadership Training

a. Aaron Long, Summit Partners Consulting

Mr. Long led the Commission through a condensed version of the Leadership training. A Digital copy of this training is attached to these recorded Minutes.

The Chairman called for a break at 11:16am

The Chairman called the meeting back to order at 11:30am

ii. Travel

a. Ardmore, Oklahoma

The Director stated that they had traveled to the Ardmore facility to visit with the Resident Counsel. He stated that they discussed the climate survey conducted at the facility earlier in the year. He stated that they also hosted Congressman Cole for a tour of the Ardmore Cemetery and the current construction progress. He stated Senator Simpson joined them for that as well.

b. Talihina, Oklahoma

The Director stated that they had traveled to the Talihina facility to visit with the Resident Counsel. He stated that they discussed the climate survey conducted at the facility earlier in the year.

c. Sallisaw, Oklahoma

The Director stated that they traveled to the Sallisaw location the same day as the visit to the Talihina facility. He shared drone footage of the site with the Commission.

d. Norman, Oklahoma

The Director stated that they traveled to the Norman facility to participate in their annual Alzheimer's walk. He stated that the University of Oklahoma also sent their mascot as well as the cheer team to also participate.

iii. Governor's Challenge/Suicide Prevention

The Deputy Director stated a new media campaign has been launched and will be divided up into three parts. She stated that the first phase is called "Courage to Connect"

iv. Governor's Symposium

The Deputy Director stated that the dates for the Symposium have moved. She stated pending the availability of the Oklahoma Capitol building, she stated the dates of the event will be the 15th and 16th of November 2021. She stated that there is a backup location in mind should the Capitol building not be available. The Deputy Director stated that the backup location is the Norman AFRC. She stated that the theme of the event will be a focus on mental health.

v. COVID-19 Report

The Director gave an update to the Commission on the current cases of COVID-19 in the states seven veterans homes. He stated that the overall vaccination rate among the Residents was currently 88%.

b. SHAWN KIRKLAND, ODVA DIRECTOR OF STATE VETERANS HOMES, REPORT WITH POSSIBLE DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING:

i. Center License Renewal

- a. Ardmore
- b. Claremore
- c. Clinton
- d. Lawton
- e. Norman
- f. Sulphur
- g. Talihina

a. Action

Commissioner Kokendoffer made the motion to renew the license for the Ardmore, Claremore, Clinton, Lawton, Norman, Sulphur, and Talihina Veterans Homes.

Commissioner Jackson provided the second.

The Clerk called the vote, and the vote is as follows:
Commissioner Ball: Aye

Commissioner Costilow: Aye
Commissioner Jackson: Aye
Commissioner Kokendoffer:
Aye
Commissioner Lasser: Absent
Commissioner LeDay: Aye
Commissioner McEver: Aye
Commissioner Miles: Aye
Mr. Chairman: Aye

The vote is 8 Aye 0 Nay 1 Absent. Motion Passes

The Chairman called for a break at 11:57am

The Chairman called the meeting back to order at 12:14pm

c. JOEL KINTSEL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AND SARAH LANE, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION PRESENTATION WITH POSSIBLE DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING:

i. Claims & Benefits

The Director stated that he would like to continue to deepen relationships with the VSOs. He stated that he would also like to create an incentive structure for the VSOs. He stated that the State of Oklahoma was currently sitting at #1 for Claims and Benefits, and the goal now was to widen the gap. The Deputy Director stated that Oklahoma VSOs were experts in what they do, but fell under a pay cap. She stated that the incentive program would help compensate for that cap. The Director stated that there was also a plan in place for an outreach and training position geared toward the VSOs.

ii. State Approving Agency

The Director stated that many areas of SAA were functioning well. He stated that one area for potential growth was with apprenticeship participation.

iii. Data Analyst

The Director stated that with the upcoming requirement of registration in the Veterans Registry for the tax-exempt status, the agency is looking to develop a software program to better interact with the registry. He stated that this is for marketing purposes. The Deputy Director stated that the Data Analyst is also involved in the VALOR system and is helping to build out that program.

iv. OK Step & Employment Coordination

The Deputy Director stated OK Step was a new program that was onboarded at the beginning of FY22. She stated the goals were to

recruit veterans to the State of Oklahoma, and to put them on a track for success within the State. She stated that the staff is building the content, and they are currently seeking a platform.

v. **Cemetery**

The Director stated that focus was on completing the Ardmore Cemetery and it's opening. He said that increasing awareness statewide was a priority. He stated that the Military Department had also agreed to apply jointly for funding to care for and maintain the Union Soldiers Cemetery. The Director stated that a new Cemetery Director had been hired and was in the process of training.

vi. **Legislative Requests**

The Deputy Director stated that under Federal Legislation, our Veterans Centers are referred to as State Veterans Homes. Under State Legislation, they are referred to as State Veterans Centers. She stated that to eliminate confusion, the agency would like to submit a State Legislative request to rename the Centers to The Oklahoma State Veterans Homes. The Deputy Director stated that authority for Pandemic Leave ended last Spring. She stated that they would like to offer additional Pandemic Leave for vaccinated staff. The Deputy Director stated that under the Quality Workforce for Oklahoma's Heroes program, a team member can apply to go to school to improve their skillset for the agency and in turn, the agency will pay for that education. The team member would then agree to work for a set amount of time to return investment. She stated that under the current statute, it is a requirement that the education be obtained via an Oklahoma public school. She stated that she would like to be able to open that up to private institutions as well. The Director stated that he would like to repeal the last 25% of the state income tax. He stated he would also like to ask for an exception from the State Use program, or a change in the law that would allow for profit businesses to participate. He stated that he would like to be able to open that up to Veteran owned businesses.

vii. **Veterans Centers**

The Director stated that census growth through marketing and outreach was a priority. The Deputy Director stated that they are also looking at revamping the admissions process. The Director stated that considerable effort is being put into seeking out federal grant opportunities to obtain additional equipment related to infection control. He stated that it is the goal to continue to work with local law enforcement to create a landing space for law enforcement at all seven centers.

viii. **Finance**

The Director stated that he would like to establish a tighter document management system. The Deputy Director added that there was an opportunity to bring greater efficiency to the current process.

- ix. **Legal**

The Director stated that he would like to review and update the agency regulations. He stated that this will probably come in the form of a contracted relationship. The Deputy Director stated they were also interested in evaluating case management software.
- x. **Human Resources**

The Director stated that there have been many struggles with the personnel contractor that was the singular option from the State Use Program. He stated that he has asked for an exception and been granted as such the ability to bid out for a new contractor. He stated that he would also like to engage a streamline scheduling study that could be rolled out agency wide. He stated he would also like to put a system in place for PMP tracking. He stated that he has also created a new role within the agency of Deputy HR Director. He stated that this individual has been hired but has not provided notice. He stated that an announcement would be made once that has taken place.
- xi. **Construction & Properties**

The Director stated that the plan was to continue to work on the sale of the Talihina Veterans Center. He stated that plans were to also move forward with acquisition of property in Ardmore for the replacement center. He stated that the renovation of the Sulphur Veterans Center was also a priority, and he was actively seeing funding opportunities. The Director stated that an application is also in the works for a replacement center in Clinton.
- xii. **Women Veterans**

The Deputy Director stated that a 2022 regional road trip was in the planning stages. She stated that this will go hand in hand with the Her Story project.
- xiii. **Mental Health & Suicide Prevention**

The Director stated that the plan was to continue the training process with current (and future) partners. He stated that Aaron Ashworth would continue to promote events that addressed the topics and raise awareness within the community.
- xiv. **Veteran Owned Businesses**

The Director stated that he struggled to come up with a line item for this category because the current Programs Administrator was doing such a great job.
- xv. **FY23 Strategic Planning Items**

The Director stated that the long-term goal for FY23 was to get to the point where we had the capability to know every student Veteran in the state. He stated that the goal would be to track as they near the

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end of their education so that interviews could be set up at the point of graduation.

X. PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO TITLE 25 O.S. § 307(B)(1) DISCUSSION REGARDING THE EMPLOYMENT, HIRING APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, DISCIPLINING, OR RESIGNATION OF ANY INDIVIDUAL SALARIED EMPLOYEE:

- a. Action to Adjourn to Executive Session.
Commissioner Kokendoffer made the motion to enter Executive Session.
Commissioner McEver provided the second.

The Clerk called the vote, and the vote is as follows:

Commissioner Ball: Aye
Commissioner Costilow: Aye
Commissioner Jackson: Aye
Commissioner Kokendoffer: Aye
Commissioner Lasser: Absent
Commissioner LeDay: Aye
Commissioner McEver: Aye
Commissioner Miles: Aye
Mr. Chairman: Aye

The vote is 8 Aye 0 Nay 1 Absent. Motion Passes

The Commission entered Executive Session at 1:30pm

- b. Discussion of Performance Evaluation and Compensation of Executive Director, Joel Kintsel.
- c. Action to Return to Open Meeting from Executive Session.
Commissioner Kokendoffer made the motion to return to Open Meeting.
Commissioner Miles provided the second.

The Clerk called the vote, and the vote is as follows:

Commissioner Ball: Aye
Commissioner Costilow: Aye
Commissioner Jackson: Aye
Commissioner Kokendoffer: Aye
Commissioner Lasser: Absent
Commissioner LeDay: Aye
Commissioner McEver: Aye
Commissioner Miles: Aye
Mr. Chairman: Aye

The vote is 8 Aye 0 Nay 1 Absent. Motion Passes

The Commission returned to Open Meeting at 2:11pm

XI. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOEL KINTSEL.

- a. Action
There was no action taken.

XII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING COMPENSATION OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JOEL KINTSEL.

- a. Action
Commissioner Miles made the motion to increase the Executive Director's compensation to \$173,000.
Commissioner McEver provided the second.

The Clerk called the vote, and the vote is as follows:

Commissioner Ball: Aye
Commissioner Costilow: Aye
Commissioner Jackson: Aye
Commissioner Kokendoffer: Aye
Commissioner Lasser: Absent
Commissioner LeDay: Aye
Commissioner McEver: Aye
Commissioner Miles: Aye
Mr. Chairman: Aye

The vote is 8 Aye 0 Nay 1 Absent. Motion Passes

Commissioner Miles made the motion to increase the Executive Director's compensation to \$173,000 effective October 1st.
Commissioner Ball provided the second.

The Clerk called the vote, and the vote is as follows:

Commissioner Ball: Aye
Commissioner Costilow: Aye
Commissioner Jackson: Aye
Commissioner Kokendoffer: Aye
Commissioner Lasser: Absent
Commissioner LeDay: Aye
Commissioner McEver: Aye
Commissioner Miles: Aye
Mr. Chairman: Aye

The vote is 8 Aye 0 Nay 1 Absent. Motion Passes

XIII. OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

NOTE: The Oklahoma Veterans Commission may decide to discuss or not to discuss any item on the agenda and may re-order, table, approve, disapprove, or strike any item listed. All discussion items are subject to possible action by the Commission.

The Oklahoma Veterans Commission shall hear public comments limited to only matters that are listed on the current meeting agenda. Topics that are outside the scope of the present agenda will not be recognized. Individuals requesting to speak are required to sign-in onsite at the meeting prior to the commencement of the meeting. Speakers must provide the speaker's name, address, email or phone number, and the subject on which they wish to speak. Open public comments are limited to not more than five (5) minutes per person. The Board Chairman may limit, interrupt and/or terminate any presentation during public comment which is disruptive to the meeting or does not conform to the procedures outlined under this section. The Board Chairman reserves and retains the right to limit, interrupt, terminate or postpone public comments as necessary to effectuate the management of the public meeting.

There were no public comments.

XIV. 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 (24 hours prior to the meeting).

There was no new business.

XV. CARRYOVER TOPICS DEFERRED TO A FUTURE AGENDA

i. Military Trails Project

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

None.

XVII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING DATE TO INCLUDE TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

November 19th, 2021 10:00am

Vezey Veterans Complex

2132 NE 36th Street

Oklahoma City, OK 73111

There was no discussion.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

i. CHAIRMAN

a. Motion

Commissioner Costilow made a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Kokendoffer provided the second.

There were no objections.

Meeting adjourned at 2:23pm

JGB

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