



# CITY OF LAS CRUCES

## VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

August 27, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.

### BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lawrence "Sam" Bothern, DAV #10 - Chair  
James (JR) Turner, VFW 10124 - Vice-Chair  
Daniel Ansbach, Special Forces #80  
Beverly Drum, UMW of Southwest  
Victor Eres, USMC  
John Poland, American Legion #10  
Fred Madrid, Vietnam Veterans of America, Chap. 431  
Christine Sautter, MOAA  
Brian Morrow, Member at Large  
Brandon Robinson, Member at Large

### BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jason Ferguson, MOPH  
Hector Sanchez, Member at Large No. 2  
VACANT, VFW 3242  
VACANT, MEMBER AT LARGE

### STAFF PRESENT:

Larry Nichols, Director Community Development Department

### OTHERS:

Montevis Price  
Dolores Archuleta  
Mr. Chavez  
Michelle Johnson  
Karen Woods  
Fernando Caro  
Bill Hawkins

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chair Bothern called the meeting to order. A quorum was determined to be present.

### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ALL STAND FOR PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

1 **3. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA**

2  
3 Motion to accept the agenda made by John Poland; seconded by Victor Eres.  
4 Motion passed unanimously.  
5

6 **4. VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES - July 23, 2024**

7  
8 Correction, Christine Sautter was in attendance for the July meeting. Motion to  
9 accept the minutes with corrections made by Beverly Drum; seconded by John  
10 Poland. Motion passed unanimously.  
11

12 **5. RECOGNITIONS**

13  
14 Officially welcomed Brian Morrow to the VAB.  
15

16 **6. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

17  
18 **John Poland - American Legion Post 10** – Former Post 10 Vice-Commander in  
19 charge of facility and grounds, after decades of the building being on the septic  
20 system, now on the City sewer system, allowing discontinuation of bimonthly  
21 pumping of the septic tanks. Restarting Sons of the American Legion squadron  
22 with currently 13 members. Memberships open to sons whose parents or  
23 grandparents are or were veterans. On July 28th hosted a visit of several  
24 American Legion riders from across New Mexico on the annual fund raising Legacy  
25 Run. Arrived from Silver City/Deming and then headed to Alamogordo. They were  
26 provided with a \$500 donation and needed water.  
27

28 **Victor Eres - USMC** - The Honor Guard did seven funerals for fallen veterans.  
29 The Honor Guard won first place at the Honor Guard Conference in Albuquerque  
30 on Friday. The Honor Guard Captain said there were various VFW and American  
31 Legion posts that competed, and he would be more than happy to do some training  
32 with any of the Honor Guards for competition or to create an Honor Guard for that  
33 post.  
34

35 **Fred Madrid - Vietnam Veterans of America** - They have two food drives,  
36 September 1st from 8:00 - 2:00 at Save Mart, and September 15th, Rinconada  
37 Walmart from 7:00 - 2:00.  
38

39 **Daniel Ansbach - Special Forces #80** - Nothing to report.  
40

41 **Brandon Robinson, Member at Large** -Nothing to report.  
42

43 **Christine Sautter, Military Officers Association of America** - They will start  
44 their series of meetings September 18th, meet on third Wednesday of most  
45 months, and a dinner meeting at Sunset Grill.  
46

1 **Brian Morrow - Member at Large** - Going on Mission Trip 18 to Washington, DC  
2 in September.

3  
4 **Beverly Drum - UMW of Southwest** - September 21st from 8:00 - 1:00 at the  
5 swap meet, at the Show and Shine car show, at Vado Speedway Park. The  
6 Adaptive Cyclers Plus will have their monthly bike ride at La Llorona Park, 3440  
7 W. Picacho on September 4th at 8:00 a.m. All the bikes are brought from El Paso  
8 to ride, and everyone is welcome, not just veterans. In October for women  
9 veterans a free lunch October 10th 11:00 - 1:00 at the Golden Corral. The UNW  
10 of Southwest meeting September 5th at 5:00 p.m. at the IHOP on Del Rey (usually  
11 the third Wednesday of each month).

12  
13 **James Turner - Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) 10124** - Serving coffee and  
14 donuts on September 11th from 9:00 to 12:00. Also the post is the meeting point  
15 for the standdown scheduled for October 18th, between 7:00 - 1:00.

16  
17 **Lawrence "Sam" Bothern - Disabled American Veterans (DAV) #10** - Having a  
18 veterans claims workshop at St. Genevieve's parish hall September 11th 10:00 -  
19 2:00. A variety of vendors there as well.

20  
21 **6.1 CITY STAFF COMMENTS**

22  
23 Larry Nichols stated they are taking updates from veterans regarding the  
24 Veterans Corner. The website has been updated and is having some  
25 challenges in navigating to it. He will be meeting with the City Press  
26 Information Office to find easier access for the Veterans Corner.

27  
28 **6.2 UPDATE OF VAB PARKING LOT EXPANSION**

29  
30 A VIDEO WAS SHOWN OF THE PROGRESS OF THE VETERANS PARK  
31 PARKING LOT.

32  
33 The project is on schedule.

34  
35 **7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

36  
37 Dolores Archuleta, Chair of the Veterans Memorial wall stated they do have a  
38 waiting list eligible to get on the wall. They wait until they have 12 to 15. Each  
39 plaque is \$500. World War I she has one, Korean War there are four and someone  
40 on that list since 2019, Vietnam War there are 12 and someone on that list since  
41 2017, Persian Gulf War have three and waiting since 2023, Iraq, Afghanistan have  
42 six and waiting from 2022. Need to move forward to get these names on a plaque.

43  
44 Mr. Chavez did not understand what Ms. Archuleta was stating. And requested  
45 the requirements for that. Dolores Archuleta stated the in order to get a name on  
46 the wall you have to be from Doña Ana County, and enter service from Doña Ana

1 County. She has all the DD214 for people to be listed on the plaques and will  
2 accept more. There is different program of the bricks which have names on them  
3 for \$35. Mr. Chavez stated on June 6, 2016 the City Ordinance 27-84 established  
4 a Veterans Advisory Board for the purpose of advising City Council on matters  
5 affecting veterans and propose solutions to alleviate or remedy the needs of local  
6 veterans. He would like to know what the major veterans needs or issues the  
7 advisory board is working on. Cannot find a list anywhere. And then what is board  
8 doing to address these issues if they do exist. He feels there should be at least 10  
9 issues the board works on within the next year. He stated the board should identify  
10 and prioritize the issues around October and farm them out to whoever the board  
11 decides is a POC to start coordination and identify whatever resources they need  
12 in 2025. Suggestion - is there going to be a Memorial Day service and how is that  
13 going to be accomplished. Another would be the Las Cruces City webpage to  
14 make it easier for veterans to navigate and obtain information. The webpage  
15 should include all veterans organizations, POC, phone number, and what services  
16 each provides. Also identify a number of veterans 25-50 the board will reach out  
17 to provide assistance. He feels each organization sitting on the board should take  
18 five veterans to help. Also filling all open board vacancies. Mentioned Tulsa,  
19 Oklahoma group that assists veterans with home repairs, etc. The City webpage  
20 still shows Karen Woods as the chair on the board and needs updating. Suggested  
21 that the minutes for the meeting shoulder be posted three days after the meeting  
22 as the information is already old. Asked about a program for replacing veterans  
23 flags when needed. He stated the bricks with names at Veterans Park, do not  
24 need to have served to be eligible. Suggestion of having a program similar to  
25 Mano y Mano, named Veterans Helping Veterans. Larry Nichols suggested he  
26 would meet with Mr. Chavez for further discussion.

27  
28 Montevis Price stated that they have nine veterans in the court and continue to do  
29 good. He pointed out things that have helped the veterans treatment court: got a  
30 City grant through the board, also bikes for veterans, push recovery for veterans.  
31 His program would not work well without this board.

32  
33 Michelle Johnson is with Nationwide Medicare Help. Her information can help  
34 veterans 65 years and older in a variety of ways; dental benefits, transportation,  
35 money for over-the-counter items.

36  
37 Karen Woods, current president of the United Miliary Women of the Southwest. A  
38 VIDEO WAS SHOWN. She stated there is a Congressional inquiry into the  
39 woman, Heather, in the video's issues. She is advocating for Heather and  
40 assistance for training a service dog. Heather lives in Las Cruces with her parents.  
41 Question on how to make a donation. And that is online and she will give that  
42 information out.

43  
44 Fernando Caro stated he is part of the Department of Workforce Solutions.  
45 Disabled Veterans Outreach Program consultant. On September 10th having a  
46 career fair at Doña Ana Branch, East Mesa, 9:30 to 1:00. From 9:00 to 9:30 there

1 will be veterans preference. And going ongoing resume workshops throughout the  
2 day. Main focus is trades, childcare, healthcare, hospitality, and multiple trades to  
3 be worked on.  
4

## 5 **8. OLD BUSINESS**

### 6 7 **8.1 GARRISON FLAG DATES REVISION**

8  
9 Larry Nichols stated there was a subcommittee to discuss the current listing  
10 of Garrison Flag dates. There were 24-25 listed dates. JR Turner has been  
11 coordinating the meetings for many years and it is greatly appreciated.  
12 Found that a number of dates had limited attendance and makes it difficult  
13 to carry on a ceremony for the flag raising. The purpose of the Garrison  
14 Flag is to recognize, honor, and respect certain dates within veteran history.  
15 Some of the dates on the list fit that description.  
16

17 Proposed removal dates:

18 **January 15th**, Martin Luther King, Jr., Day. Motion to remove from  
19 Garrison Flag list made by Daniel Ansbach; seconded by Brian Morrow.  
20 Motion passed unanimously.  
21

22 **February 19th**, President's day. Dan Ansbach stated his group likes to  
23 keep national holidays. Victor Eres stated should keep all national holidays  
24 listed. Sam Bothern stated there are not enough people attending to raise  
25 and lower the flag. Brandon Morrison suggested removing all the  
26 essentially non-veteran specific, and then can add them later if need be,  
27 one by one.  
28

29 Motion to remove all national holidays that are not veteran related dates  
30 from the Garrison Flag list made by Brandon Morrison; seconded by John  
31 Poland. Motion passed unanimously.  
32

33  
34 Proposed added dates:

35 **June 6th**, D-Day. And to add Bataan Memorial day.  
36

37 Motion to add dates listed with double asterisks to Garrison Flag list made  
38 by John Poland; seconded by Brandon Robinson. Motion passed  
39 unanimously.  
40

41 Larry Nichols stated the he spoke to the fire department and police  
42 department about Peace Officer Memorial Day and Firefighters Memorial  
43 Day, and those ceremonies are held at their local headquarters. So these  
44 two dates will be removed as well.  
45

### 46 **8.2 BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

1  
2 Larry Nichols has spoken with City Clerk and City Manager and Mayor  
3 about the current membership listed in the ordinance. Their thought is to  
4 continue with what is there unless there is different recommendation from  
5 the board.  
6

7 Dolores Archuleta stated she was on the City Council at the time of the  
8 Garrison Flag in the old City Hall. She stated a lady came and dropped a  
9 bowl on the dais, and they spread it out and it was the Garrison Flag. It was  
10 going to placed outside but people were complaining. The Council then  
11 looked for other places to put the flag. And people around the Veterans  
12 Park wanted it there. But only to be raised on federal holidays.  
13

14  
15 **9. NEW BUSINESS**

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17 **9.1 VETERANS DAY PARADE REPORT**

18  
19 Bill Hawkins stated it will be on November 9th, Saturday, starting staging at  
20 9:00, and parade to start 11:00. It will go up Main Street, turn west and  
21 down Water Street. There are 22 organizations have agreed to participate.  
22 Call or text him (575) 621-7002) for information or  
23 [wchawkins1962@gmail.com](mailto:wchawkins1962@gmail.com). Meetings are scheduled directly after VAB.  
24 They will discuss the grand marshal selection. This year's theme is  
25 veterans who are first responders. Looking at police, fire, and EMS  
26 veterans. Deadline for recommendation of grand marshal is October 1st.  
27 They are hoping for an Army band from Ft. Bliss, a fly-over also.  
28

29 **10. REMINDERS**

30  
31 JR Turner stated the old Garrison list will hold until January 2025. Also October  
32 2nd, Firefighters Memorial Day is to be determined. That took place in May, so  
33 not on October 2nd.  
34

- 35 **SEPTEMBER 2, 2024 - LABOR DAY**  
36 **SEPTEMBER 11, 2024 - PATRIOT DAY (HALF STAFF)**  
37 **SEPTEMBER 11, 2024 - VETERANS CLAIMS & BENEFITS WORKSHOP**  
38 **SEPTEMBER 17, 2024 - CONSTITUTION/CITIZENSHIP DAY**  
39 **SEPTEMBER 20, 2024 - POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY**  
40 **SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 - NEXT VAB MEETING**  
41 **OCTOBER 5, 2024 - VFW POST 6917 ORGAN DAY FIESTA**  
42

43 **11. ADJOURNMENT (10:15)**

44  
45 Motion to adjourn made by Victor Eres; seconded by John Poland. Motion passed  
46 unanimously.

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Chairperson