



# CITY OF LAS CRUCES

## VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

September 24, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

### BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lawrence "Sam" Bothern, DAV #10 - Chair  
James (JR) Turner, VFW 10124 - Vice-Chair  
Beverly Drum, UMW of Southwest  
Victor Eres, USMC  
Fred Madrid, Vietnam Veterans of America, Chap. 431  
John Poland, American Legion #10  
Hector Sanchez, Member at Large No. 2  
Brandon Robinson, Member at Large  
Brian Morrow, Member at Large

### BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Daniel Ansbach, Special Forces #80  
Jason Ferguson, MOPH  
Christine Sautter, MOAA  
VACANT, VFW 3242  
VACANT, MEMBER AT LARGE

### STAFF PRESENT:

Larry Nichols, Director Community Development Department

### OTHERS:

Montevis Price  
Heidi Blair  
Mr. Chavez  
Dolores Archuleta

### 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.

### 3. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

1 It was requested to remove the reminder date of October 2, 2024 for Fire Fighter  
2 Memorial as it took place in May.

3  
4 Motion to accept the agenda with the change made by John Poland; seconded by  
5 Hector Sanchez. Motion passed unanimously.  
6

7 **4. VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES - August 27, 2024**

8  
9 Page 3, line "going on Mission Trip" needs to be changed to "going on a Flight."  
10 On Garrison Flag Date Revision, there were other dates added that were not listed.  
11 J.R. Turner will be compiling a list for Garrison Flag list for next year.  
12

13 Motion to accept the minutes with the change made by John Poland; seconded by  
14 Victor Eres. Motion passed unanimously.  
15

16 **5. RECOGNITIONS**

17  
18 There were none.  
19

20 **6. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

21  
22 **Hector Sanchez - NMSU Student at Large** - Nothing to report currently.  
23

24 **John Poland - American Legion Post 10** - American Legion Post 10 service  
25 member is an active member of the planning committee for the Veterans  
26 Standdown as planned for October 18th at the VFW Post 10124 and will participate  
27 in the event. Also will participate in the Veterans Day Parade with two entries, a  
28 float as well as WWII army ambulance.  
29

30 Honor Flight 18. Thirty-three veterans, 21 guardians, and six honor flight staff  
31 members left early September 19th. Two of the Veteran Advisory Board members,  
32 Brian Morrow, and J.R. Turner went as guardians, and both have gone multiple  
33 times. All the veterans were Vietnam era veterans, and also served in the  
34 liberation of Kuwait, and another served also in the Gulf War. Tour on Friday  
35 consisted of a visit to WWII Memorial with support from Joint Armed Services Color  
36 Guard. Honor Flight staff conducted an emotional ceremony overlooking the  
37 Vietnam Wall. Placed a wreath at the Military Women's Memorial. Next time spent  
38 at the Vietnam Wall where several of the veterans stated, "they were finally able  
39 to achieve closure from the stressful memories of the war they have carried for  
40 over 50 years." Next visit to the Korean War Memorial, a tour of the National  
41 Museum of American History, and afternoon ended with the group witnessing the  
42 changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, to the National  
43 Cemetery. Four of the veterans had the honor of participating on the laying of the  
44 wreath ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, followed by the paying of  
45 Taps. The group returned on Saturday afternoon to a heartwarming welcome  
46 home homecoming ceremony at the El Paso airport. If anyone would like to go on

1 an Honor Flight visit nmhonorflight.org for more information etc. The flights are  
2 twice a year, April and September. The entire trip was paid for by the Mayor of El  
3 Paso, Oscar Leaser. He is thanked for the \$70,000 donation and sponsorship.  
4

5 **Victor Eres - USMC** - The Honor Guard provided funeral honors for seven fallen  
6 veterans. Also they provided the Color Guard for T or C September 11th memorial.  
7 He brought the first place trophy for the Honor Guard Conference that the  
8 detachment won.  
9

10 **Fred Madrid - Vietnam Veterans of America** - There will be food drives, one at  
11 Sav-Mart October 6th 8:00 - 2:00 and the second one is Rinconada Walmart on  
12 October 20th from 7:00 - 2:00.  
13

14 **Brandon Robinson, Member at Large** - Nothing to report.  
15

16 **Brian Morrow - Member at Large** - Nothing to report.  
17

18 **Beverly Drum - UMW of Southwest** - Car show, Show and Shine event was held  
19 Saturday, September 21 at the Vado Speedway. There were about 27 entries. On  
20 Thursday, October 10, for all local women veterans there is a free lunch to be held  
21 at the Golden Corral from 11:00 to 1:00. Also invite women veterans to the UMW  
22 of the Southwest meeting on the fourth Wednesday, October 16th at the IHOP on  
23 Del Rey at 5:00 p.m.  
24

25 **James Turner - Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) 10124** - Apologize for missing  
26 Garrison Flag date on September 17th. First time missed. Post 10124 is gearing  
27 up for the Standdown on October 18th.  
28

29 **Lawrence "Sam" Bothern - Disabled American Veterans (DAV) #10** - Had a  
30 successful forms workshop this month. There we not as many members as there  
31 were last year or in spring. Hopefully, this means catching up with the backlog of  
32 people who need assistance with their VA filing. Trying to reactivate a chapter in  
33 Deming.  
34

## 35 **6.1 CITY STAFF COMMENTS**

  
36

## 37 **6.2 UPDATE OF VAB PARKING LOT EXPANSION**

  
38

39 Larry Nichols stated he has been receiving updates from Public Works.  
40 Most of the curbing is done and the outline of boundary for paving. Paving  
41 will begin late September/early October. There will be landscaping and the  
42 remembrance garden area for completion. They are on schedule with  
43 completion at the end of October.  
44

1 Question about the maintenance of the helicopter. Staff will pursue getting  
2 Park maintenance there for the main rotor which had rotated approximately  
3 30-40 degrees.  
4

5 **7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

6  
7 **7.1 PUBLIC COMMENT**  
8

9 Lawrence Orvis asked about additional parking and additional bathroom  
10 and overhead canopy. Larry Nichols stated as the project developed and  
11 getting funding available to accomplish the parking lot expansion of  
12 additional 162 spaces and the remembrance garden, there was value  
13 engineering and the restrooms and overhead structures were removed from  
14 the project. The playground equipment will also be removed. Lawrence  
15 Orvis requested the board to keep on pursuing the bathroom and shade  
16 structure for Veterans Memorial Park.  
17

18 Mr. Chavez echoed what Lawrence Orvis stated about the restrooms. Also  
19 asked about the food drives at the Walmart on Rinconada. He mentioned  
20 the Coalition of Conservatives in Action, they have an initiative where they  
21 identify veterans that need American flags replaced due to wear and tear.  
22 This group will replace those flags at no cost to veterans. He asked if the  
23 City of Las Cruces have that type of program. He suggested the City could  
24 provide a flag to veterans families upon the death of a veteran (NGB23)  
25 when the veteran is not entitled to military burial. J.R. Turner stated  
26 veterans are given information on who gets a flag and why. Victor Eres  
27 stated their group has been contacted by National Guard and they do  
28 provide honor guard funeral services. Also their detachment will provide a  
29 flag if the funeral home does not.  
30

31 Dolores Archuleta emphasized that what she stated last month and was not  
32 understood by Mr. Chavez. She met with him and saw his DD214 and it  
33 was reviewed and he is eligible for Persian Gulf War and Iraq. The process  
34 is she does all that via e-mail, list the name how it will show on the wall, and  
35 need his approval which they have now.  
36

37 Heidi Blair with business of Transforming Life with Heidi. She is a retired  
38 Air Force veteran. She is having an event on October 10th called  
39 Live2Lead. It is a community event and there is a veteran discount. To  
40 register go to [www.live2lead.com](http://www.live2lead.com). There will be six virtual speakers, and a  
41 couple of local veteran speakers.  
42

43 Montevis Price updated on the Veterans Treatment Court and Veterans  
44 Justice programs. They have four pending to come into the court, awaiting  
45 the DA to sign off. The alumni started their group this past Saturday and  
46 connected with present and past participants. Also this past Saturday had

1 a recovery event at Young Park. Yesterday they had a suicide prevention  
2 art contest at the main VA in El Paso, that was for both El Paso and Las  
3 Cruces. The top prize will be sent into the community to promote suicide  
4 prevention and awareness. October 18th is the Standdown and the  
5 breakfast starts at 8:00, and event starts at 9:00. November 14th doing  
6 outreach event in Radium Springs.

7  
8 **7.2 GUEST SPEAKERS**

9  
10 None.

11  
12 **8. OLD BUSINESS**

13  
14 **8.1 VETERANS DAY PARADE UPDATE**

15  
16 J.R. Turner stated they are gearing up for the parade to be held November  
17 9th, Saturday. On pace with the same amount entries as last year. Also  
18 had a committee for the poster, and selected a poster. The posterior  
19 information will be given out October 7th, City Council meeting. Posters will  
20 be available for all next meeting.

21  
22 Larry Nichols stated there will be two different meetings, one to recognize  
23 the poster winner and one to recognize the grand marshals for the parade,  
24 both at City Council meetings.

25  
26 **9. NEW BUSINESS**

27  
28 None.

29  
30 **9. REMINDERS**

31  
32 **OCTOBER 2, 2024 - FIRE FIGHTER MEMORIAL DAY**  
33 **OCTOBER 5, 2024 - VFW POST 6917 ORGAN DAY FIESTA**  
34 **OCTOBER 14, 2024 - INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY**  
35 **OCTOBER 22, 2024 - NEXT VAB MEETING**

36  
37 **11. ADJOURNMENT (9:45)**

38  
39 Motion to adjourn made by John Poland; seconded by Brian Morrow. Motion  
40 passed unanimously.

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Chairperson