



CITY OF LAS CRUCES

VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

April 28, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Luke Rosendo Keith, VFW 3242 - Chair
Brian Morrow, Member at Large - Vice-Chair
Daniel Ansbach, Special Forces #80
James Perry Ashby, American Legion #10
Lawrence "Sam" Bothern, MOAA
Victor Eres, USMC
Len Hampton, Member at Large
Fred Madrid, Vietnam Veterans of America, Chap. 431
Brandon Robinson, Member at Large
James (JR) Turner, VFW 10124
James Bentley, MOPH
Adrian Veseth-Nelson, Member at Large
Thomas Chapin, DAV 38

STAFF PRESENT:

Charles Tucker, CLC Inspector General
Amber Dominguez, Administration

OTHERS:

Dan Lucero
Mr. Chavez
Jerome Hanway

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Keith called the meeting to order.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ALL STAND FOR PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

3. ROLL CALL

A quorum was determined to be present.

4. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

1 Motion to accept the agenda made by Sam Bothern; seconded by Dan Ansbach.
2 Motion passed unanimously.
3

4 **5. VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES - March 24, 2026**
5

6 Page 4, line 25, instead of saying Chair Morrow, it should Vice-Chair Morrow.
7

8 Motion to accept the minutes as corrected by Sam Bothern; seconded by Brian
9 Morrow. Motion passed unanimously.
10

11 **6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
12

- 13 ○ Guadalupe Rodriguez Jaramillo - Not in attendance.
14

15 Dan Lucero reported to the board that he attended the New Mexico Department of
16 Veterans Services event in Las Cruces about a week ago. Staff there provided
17 presentations from State Benefits Cemetery and Memorials, State Approving
18 Agency for Veterans Education and Training, Veterans Business Outreach Center,
19 Healthcare Coordination, Woman Veterans Program, Women's Health Program,
20 Department of Health Medical Cannabis Program, Tribal Liaison activities. The
21 director discusses a variety of issues. Special award presented to 100-year-old.
22

23 Mr. Chavez stated the Veterans Corner on the website needs to be updated,
24 particularly the minutes.
25

26 **7. AGENDA ITEMS TO DISCUSS - None**
27

- 28 ○ Rodriguez Family Memorial Discussion - Len Hampton mentioned they
29 have heard about this, received e-mails and memorandums, and believe
30 they need to provide a vote. He motions not to table but bring it up for a
31 motion for a vote. Charles Tucker stated the board needs to all know what
32 they are voting on prior to taking a vote. Sam Bothern stated it was tabled
33 previously as there was not enough information at that time. He believes it
34 should be tabled until they get more information. Brian Morrow stated at
35 the last meeting a formal written proposal is required which has not been
36 presented yet. Len Hampton withdrew his motion. Victor Eres wants to
37 vote on it now. Charles Tucker stated at the last meeting that the
38 stepmother and the father attended the meeting and asked for the bench to
39 be put in the park for their son. He received an e-mail and a call from the
40 mother, and she told Charles about the death of her special forces son.
41 Currently he is already in the park; his image is on a granite slab underneath
42 the helicopter and on the wall as well. Also, an exit on the interstate is
43 named after him that his mother did shortly after he died. There are two
44 scholarships at NMSU that are named after him. There is a sort of family
45 squabble going on, but not enough information. An additional bench in the
46 park would be above and beyond what has already been done. Are there

1 going to be benches in the park for every veteran? Not enough room. Len
2 Hampton feels due to those reasons; they need to vote on it. Sam Bothern
3 suggested a subcommittee for what will be allowed and not allowed in the
4 park long-term. There is not a current policy. This is only an advisory board.
5 The final say would go to City Council.
6

7 Len Hampton reinstated the motion to call vote on the placement of the
8 bench in Veterans Park. Sam Bothern seconded the motion on the current
9 question of a bench. Motion to place a bench was denied unanimously.
10

- 11 ○ Budget Discussion - Chair Keith stated he had a meeting with Charles
12 Tucker last week about the ability to put a budget in place for the wall
13 specifically to have money as needed. This is not available as it would be
14 with Parks and Rec and would just be at their disposal. A lot of the veterans'
15 groups are trying to gather donations to put names in the park. Dan
16 Ansbach stated the Elks Club has a policy/money to donate to veterans'
17 organizations. A follow-up will be done with Doña Ana County also. Hope
18 to come up with a budget to send to City Council for funding. Charles
19 Tucker stated he did talk to city manager and that the library is in a similar
20 situation and they formed a coalition/group called Friends of the Library
21 because the city has anti-donation. They petitioned in Santa Fe and got
22 some money to help work on the library. If the money goes into the city it
23 goes to Parks and can be used for any park, not a specific park. Sam
24 Bothern stated not put it in the city budget but to get the plates done and
25 then let the city install. The trophy shop still has the list, and the price
26 probably is the same, and they can and are adding names. It will take six
27 weeks to forge them. They need \$4,000, trying to get \$2,000 from the
28 county. Vietnam Veterans of America have already put in a donation. Fred
29 Madrid stated on Tuesday Vietnam Veterans of America voted for \$200
30 donation. Len Hampton asked about a form that had been discussed
31 previously. Charles Tucker stated as long as things are done outside of the
32 city, it is easier and all Board Member agencies are 501(c)(3). They will use
33 the form. Create a Veterans Wall Committee. There is a foundation, New
34 Mexico Veterans and Families Foundation, that can be a pass-through for
35 donations. Mr. Chavez stated they need a commitment from the city that
36 they are going to help with certain priorities. He stated the state has surplus
37 budget of \$70 billion. Need the city to advocate for veterans, ask the county
38 also. Victor Velasquez from Senator Lujan's office stated Congressional
39 Direct Spending (CDS) funding can be applied for. Put a memo, what you
40 want, how much you want. Send to Senator Lujan, Senator Heinrich, and
41 Congressman Vasquez, send to all three. He will check with reach out to
42 cabinet secretary of DVS to see if they have money for flags. CDS funding
43 has been missed for this year but can do for next year. He would like to
44 have two veterans to sit on a board/meeting. Chair Keith stated he would
45 and Fred Madrid also. Senator Lujan will be in the vicinity next week.
46

1 **8. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

2
3 **Len Hampton - Member at Large** - Last weekend he attended Honor Flight 21.
4 He thoroughly enjoyed himself. One of the events he appreciated was the Korean
5 attaché presented a medal of freedom to a veteran. Well organized, good time for
6 everyone. He thanks the Rio Grande Honor Flight.
7

8 **Adrian Vesth-Nelson - Member at Large** - Nothing to report today.
9

10 **Victor Eres - USMC** - From March 24 to April 28 the detachment provided funeral
11 honors for six fallen veterans. They participated in five color guards throughout
12 that time period. It also hosted regional Marine Corps League Division
13 Conference. They had their meeting on April 9. They provided a contingent for
14 the Honor Flight. They had a table at the New Mexico Veterans Services
15 Conference April 17-18. Provided a color guard for the Welcome Home Vietnam
16 Veterans. They competed in the honor guard competition.
17

18 **Fred Madrid - Vietnam Veterans of America** - They had a couple of food drives,
19 Save-Mart on Valley Drive on the first Sunday of every month from 8:00 to 2:00;
20 Walmart on Sonoma Ranch Boulevard May 17, 7:30 to 2:00 p.m. Thanked all the
21 welcome home support personnel. He presented some awards.
22

23 **Daniel Ansbach - Special Forces #80** - Nothing to report.
24

25 **Thomas Chapin - DAV 38** - They had members at the Honor Flight as caregivers.
26 They attended the DVA conference. Attended with Senator Heinrich at the NMSU
27 event. They are doing fundraisers through May, also looking for items to do a yard
28 sale. They got new washers and dryers for the veterans home on Oak Street,
29 these were donated from Home Depot for free.
30

31 **James Bentley - Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH)** - During April and
32 May volunteers from the MOPH Chapter 2004 will participate in Junior ROTC
33 gatherings of local and area high school to present the Purple Heart Achievement
34 Award.
35

36 **James Perry Ashby - American Legion #10** - They hosted the American Hero
37 Honor Ride. Prepared lunch for over 100 riders. This raises money for severely
38 handicapped motorcycle riding veterans. Their next event is Run for the Wall,
39 motorcycles from California to Washington, DC for Memorial Day. About 350
40 riders show up in Las Cruces and feed them breakfast. When they reach D.C.
41 there are about 35,000 cyclists. The American Legion donates every year enough
42 money to pay for 12 veterans on the Honor Flight. On the last flight there were two
43 Korean War veterans, one female veteran and two Purple Heart recipients. He
44 was on mission 13 and it was life changing and continues to be such. Worked
45 hard on having a wonderful band, car show, etc. for the returning vets.
46

1 **Brandon Robinson - Member at Large** - Nothing to report.

2
3 **Brian Morrow - Member at Large** - Last month has been busy. Supported the
4 Vietnam Veterans Homecoming. April 19th supported the food drive. May 17th,
5 next food drive at Neighborhood Walmart Store on Sonoma Ranch. April 23-25
6 Honor Flight, guardian for his fifth trip. He has signed up for the next Honor Flight
7 in September. Fred Huff, a photographer, would like to do a VAB photo, hopefully
8 in May. The next flag day is May 16th, Armed Forces Day. After that is May 25th
9 for Memorial Day, full day event.

10
11 **Lawrence "Sam" Bothern - MOAA** - They are working on passing out their annual
12 scholarship awards to the high school ROTC and university ROTC.

13
14 **Luke Rosendo Keith - VFW 3242** - Donated money to veterans with PTSD to
15 make more quilts. Provided the hall for Services of Life, quinceneras, and
16 weddings. Also rented the building for a film. They have a recruiting event on May
17 1st at NMSU golf course. He did go the Honor Flight.

18
19 **James Turner - Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) 10124** - He was on Honor
20 Flight 2, all World War II veterans. He has been on three other flights, and it is a
21 great organization now compared to what it used to be. The intent is the same.
22 They have a grant approved by Home Depot. Sunday, they hosted the District 3
23 meeting, elected new officers.

24 25 **9. STAFF LIAISON REPORT**

- 26
27 ○ Overview of VAB Ordinance - Charles Tucker sent everyone a copy of the
28 ordinance, and updated ordinance. He wants to talk about duties, and how
29 replacing people as they leave come in. There was trouble replacing board
30 vacancies. He does have two more people standing by not organization
31 associated. Get any resumes to him so that people can be on standby if
32 needed. Members - the board will be made up of 13 members. All members
33 must be veterans residing in the county. All members appointed shall be at
34 large with no more than one member per organization. Board members can
35 only represent the one organization sitting in that seat for, even if associated
36 with a variety of organizations. White Sands Missile Range can have a
37 member on the board. The board have all been invited to White Sands for
38 a meeting.

39
40 This is an advisory board. All matters of fiscal changes to the Veterans
41 Memorial Park shall be submitted to the Veterans Advisory Board for review
42 and recommendation to the Facilities Department and Public Works Service
43 Department prior to submission to the Council for approval.
44

1 Meeting of the VAB shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules
2 of Order. Meetings will be conducted monthly unless modified by a majority
3 vote on the board.
4

5 Duties. The VAB shall advise the City Council on matters affecting veterans
6 and propose solutions to alleviate or remedy the needs of local veterans,
7 and to recognize contributions local veterans have made. The VAB may
8 organize annual ceremonies to be conducted at the Veterans Memorial
9 Park.
10

11 The Council cannot give an advisory board a budget. Any monetary items
12 would need to be approved by Council. The city maintains the park, but do
13 not control the wall or who is on it.
14

15 **10. ADJOURNMENT 09:55)**
16

17 Jerome Hanway with Right At Home, in home care. Right At Home, Home Instead,
18 and NovaCare are companies that were approved by the VA, through TriWest to
19 provide services for veterans. El Paso VA refuses to bring these companies on.
20 He would like a letter from the board to Senator Heinrich to let him know. This will
21 be tabled for today and on the agenda next meeting.
22

23 Charles Tucker received an e-mail from Dolores Archuleta concerning Colonel
24 Roach. May 7th will be a viewing 9:00 at La Paz/Graham's funeral home. At 10:00
25 is a memorial. At 11:30 military honors. At the mesonic cemetery. Colonel Roach
26 was on the committee and is responsible for the 7,000 names on the wall at
27 Veterans Park.
28

29 Motion to adjourn made by Brian Morrow; seconded by Perry Ashby. Motion
30 passed.
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36 _____
Chairperson