

**MINUTES
of the
SECOND MEETING
of the
MILITARY AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**July 14, 2022
Salon Ortega Ballroom
National Hispanic Cultural Center
1701 4th Street SW
Albuquerque**

The second meeting of the Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee was called to order by Senator Harold Pope, co-chair, on July 14, 2022 at 9:10 a.m. in the Salon Ortega Ballroom of the National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC) in Albuquerque.

Present

Sen. Harold Pope, Co-Chair
Rep. Eliseo Lee Alcon
Sen. Craig W. Brandt
Sen. Brenda G. McKenna
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto
Rep. Debra M. Sariñana
Rep. Luis M. Terrazas

Absent

Rep. Harry Garcia, Co-Chair

Advisory Members

Rep. Rachel A. Black
Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Randall T. Pettigrew

Sen. William F. Burt
Rep. Randal S. Crowder
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson
Sen. Michael Padilla
Rep. Jane E. Powdrell-Culbert
Rep. G. Andrés Romero

Staff

Jeret Fleetwood, Project Coordinator, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Nancy Martinez, Research Assistant, LCS
Grecia Duarte, Intern, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for the agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Thursday, July 14

Welcome and Introductions (9:10 a.m.)

Dr. Margie Huerta, executive director, NHCC, welcomed committee members, staff and guests to the NHCC. She said that the NHCC is a part of the Cultural Affairs Department, and funding comes from the state. She said that the mission of the NHCC is to preserve, promote and advance Hispanic art, culture and humanities.

Committee members and staff introduced themselves.

Veterans' Services Department (VSD) (9:25 a.m.)

Sonya L. Smith, secretary, VSD, gave an update on the community-based outpatient clinics (CBOCs). Since the last meeting in May, there has been a reversal in the proposed closures of the CBOCs. Diane Mourning Brown, director, Healthcare Division, VSD, said that the junior bill from the 2022 regular legislative session provided assistance in funding for organizations that help not only homelessness veterans, but also veterans who need assistance with obtaining COVID-19 vaccines. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/MVAC%20071422%20Item%201%20NMDVS.pdf>.

New Mexico Veterans Integration Centers (VIC) (10:21 a.m.)

Brock Wolff, chief executive officer, New Mexico VIC, said that there are three essential services that the VIC offers: emergency housing, transitional housing and rapid rehousing. He said that there are two licensed therapists to assist with mental health issues. Mr. Wolff gave an update of the construction of the new VIC facility. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/MVAC%20071422%20Item%202%20VIC.pdf>.

United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office (10:47 a.m.)

Kelli May Douglas, pacific southwest regional liaison, Defense-State Liaison Office, United States Department of Defense, said that the Defense-State Liaison Office works with stakeholders to choose key issues to focus on each year based on a study. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/MVAC%20071422%20Item%203%20US%20Dept.%20of%20Defense.pdf>.

Approval of Minutes (11:15 a.m.)

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, and without any objections, the committee approved the minutes of the May 31, 2022 meeting.

Office of Military Base Planning and Support (11:16 a.m.)

Richard Glover, director, Office of Military Base Planning and Support, gave a brief introduction of the work he had done prior to taking the director position. He said that the goal of the office is to make sure that the isolations in New Mexico remain valuable to the United States Department of Defense.

City of Albuquerque Veterans' Programs (1:32 p.m.)

Thomas Tozier, mayor's liaison and coordinator, Veterans and Military Affairs, City of Albuquerque, described the background of the work done within the mayor's office with the implementation of a new division dedicated to military and veterans' affairs. He said that the division partners with nonprofit organizations that can help by bridging gaps. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/MVAC%20071422%20Item%205%20City%20of%20ABQ%20Vet%20Programs.pdf>

Tour of the NHCC (2:28 p.m.)

Committee members and staff toured the facility.

Paws and Stripes (3:07 p.m.)

Lindsey Kay, founder and chief executive officer, Paws and Stripes, said that the program is the second accredited organization in the state that provides service dogs. Paws and Stripes has been in New Mexico for 12 years and works with local shelters and the city to get dogs from rescues and shelters. Ms. Kay said that the mission of Paws and Stripes is to provide animal-based assisted therapy and other mental health services to veterans.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.