

Veterans Empowerment Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 24 2023, 2023 at 1p.m.

Meeting Recording: [https://zoom.us/j/94750938926?](https://zoom.us/j/94750938926?pwd=SW9rWDIBNGlqOFpnU01sbXRWVWhHQT09)
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Call to Order/Welcome

- The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hanley at 1:00pm

Roll Call

- **Members Present:** Shawn Hanley, Mike Mizell, Dr. Samantha Brown-Parks, Rev McGhee, Rick White, Patricia Lewis, Anthony Merritt (Quorum met)
- **Members Absent:** Michael Moore, Stephen Leake, Brad Mitchell
- **Staff Present:** Ann Isaac

Invocation by Rick White
Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of July 20, 2023 Meeting Agenda

- Sam Brown-Parks made a motion to approve. Rick White 2nd.

Ratification of July 20 2023 Meeting Minutes

- S Brown-Parks made a motion to approve. Rick White 2nd.

Special Presentation of the Veterans Service Projects previously awarded Grants

1. **Frontline Community Services** by Alycia Robinson, Executive Director and Tony Barrs, President: Frontline Vet22 Suicide Prevention Program was detailed and reminded the committee of their goal to Rebuild the Veteran through Emergency Housing, Counseling, and the Mobile suicide prevention team.
2. **Gateway Performance Productions** by Sandra Hughes, Director/Producer and Michael Hickey with testimonials by David Shorter of LSPCC and Robert Watson demonstrating the positive outcomes of the art therapy, performance art and mask making.
3. **Pianos for Peace** by Malek Jandali and artist Reggie. The Healing Arts Program was explained. Pianos are being used for reclamation of memories in Seniors and Veterans and multiple permanent pianos have been placed where they can be used by the homeless and passersby.
4. **Project Open Hand Atlanta by Aleta McLean-** a meal delivery program that operates 6 days per week and also provides healthy meal training by Registered Dietitians to veterans from the VA system or through self referral.

Discussion by the committee members regarding the need for an evaluation of the long term effects of program intervention. Dr. Brown-Parks suggested amending the RFP to include more rigorous explanations before grants are awarded regarding follow up of outcomes. She agreed to provide a draft statement to be evaluated by the VEC for inclusion in the RFP at the September meeting.

Announcements

- Andrea Giese=Sweat of the Atlanta VAMC- Operation Revelry will take place on 9/12/23 at KROC on Metropolitan Parkway from 10am-2pm
- Mike Mizell_2nd Annual Remembrance for the Kabul 13 with presentation by Dan “Santa 6” Stenson at the Johns Creek Memorial Park/ Afghanistan memorial at 10am. The new relandscaping will be provided by the corporate division of the Home Depot and set to be the second most beautifully landscaped memorial in the US

Meeting Adjourned 2:35