



CITY OF MENIFEE

SUBJECT: Veterans Advisory Committee

MEETING DATE: April 17, 2024

TO: Mayor and City Council

PREPARED BY: Mariana Mitchell, Community Services Manager

REVIEWED BY: Jonathan Nicks, Deputy City Manager

APPROVED BY: Armando G. Villa, City Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Review and provide direction to staff on the potential formation of a Veterans Advisory Committee.

DISCUSSION

On October 19, 2022 the City Council requested the opportunity to discuss the potential formation of a Veterans Advisory Committee (VAC). In the past, the Community Services Department hosted informal meetings for local veteran groups and service organizations to share resources. However, during the many closures related to the COVID pandemic, this group moved toward email as the primary form of communication. Interactions have slowed and most groups have either integrated into the regular community partners meeting hosted by the Community Services Department or have become involved in specific veteran event committees.

At the January 18, 2023 City Council meeting, staff presented on the current methods of communication and recognition that the Community Services Department staff employ to continually engage the Meniffee military and veteran community. These methods consist of past informal gatherings and outreach to all local veteran groups to support the planning and implementation of various annual special events. Staff was directed to further evaluate the interest of the veteran community for a City appointed committee and/or provide alternative solutions to ensure the voice of the veteran community remains heard.

At the November 15, 2023 City Council meeting, staff brought forward additional information on the several commissions and committees that already exist within the City as well as alternatives to the formation of a VAC, such as hosting a summit. Following discussion, direction was provided to staff to further explore the staff time and resources that would be required to form a VAC similar to the Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) in terms of scope and responsibility.

The SAC is a Brown Act body comprised of five members: four district-represented members appointed by each Councilmember and one member, at-large, appointed by the Mayor. Aside from being a Menifee resident and a registered voter, SAC members must also be 55 years of age or better. Regular meetings are held once a month with staff support provided by the Community Services Department.

The average monthly meeting requires a minimum of 40 hours of staff time to prepare agendas, staff reports, and minutes and a minimum of ten hours of staff time to host the regular monthly meetings. These hours are spread across various levels of the department including the part-time support staff, community services coordinator, community service supervisor, and community services manager. The cost of staff time required to support the SAC is approximately \$20,000/year.

With a similar structure to the SAC, a VAC could assist with the planning and organization of the annual veterans focused events such as Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans, Memorial Day Ceremony, and Veterans Day Celebration. Additionally, the powers, duties, and responsibilities of the VAC could include the following responsibilities:

- (A) Promote community involvement, with, for, and by veterans.
- (B) Review proposals for programs, projects, and facilities as they pertain to veterans.
- (C) Assist in the evaluation and planning of arts, recreation, and social service programs with an emphasis on veterans.
- (D) Review and make recommendations on matters pertaining to veteran programming and/or services to the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Commission or City Council.
- (E) Promote veterans' involvement in community events, programs or volunteer projects through public education, service clubs, and community organizations.
- (F) Act in an advisory capacity to the City Council in all other policy matters pertaining to veterans.

Should the City Council recommend the implementation of a VAC, staff would present a formal resolution to the City Council for consideration and adoption at a future meeting. Recruitment for the VAC could take place during the next biennial recruitment for City commissions and committees. The City Clerk's Department will begin accepting applications in Fall 2024 for appointments in January 2025.

STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVE

Community Engagement and Social Infrastructure

FISCAL IMPACT

Any future action on this item could result in additional fiscal impacts, based upon the parameters of any projects or programs that are developed and recommended by the Committee. Future programs and projects would need to be assessed and budgeted for in the corresponding years' budget.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution No. 20-980 – Senior Advisory Committee