

City of Prescott
Mayor's Veterans Commission



January 7, 2026 | 9:00 AM
Grace Sparks Activity Center
824 E. Gurley St.
Prescott, AZ 86301

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Woods called the meeting to order at 8:57 AM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

STEVE WOODS - Chair
DAN BERRYMAN - Member
BRYAN CAMPBELL – Member (Absent)
MARTY COLLINS - Member
CRAIG FURST - Member
EDWARD REIGER – Member
RICHARD RODRIGUEZ – Member
CARL SPERLING – Member
JEFF TIMM – Member

4. DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

- A. Welcome & Introduction of the Newly Appointed Council Liaison – Councilmember Garing.
- a. Councilmember gave an introduction surrounding the details of his service with the United States Marine Corps.
 - b. Members of the commission had the opportunity to introduce themselves.
 - c. Councilmember Garing expressed a great interest about learning how the City of Prescott can support veterans. He is looking forward to learning what the commission does and how he can aid in the cause.
- B. Approval of the November 5, 2025, Mayor's Veterans Commission Meeting Minutes.
- MOTION BY JEFF TIMM TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED; SECONDED BY MARTY COLLINS: PASSED (8 - 0)**
- C. Presentation and Discussion Regarding Vet-Connect Neighborhood Town Hall Update – Steve Woods/Ed Reiger.
- a. Steve reiterated that the goal of the Vet-Connect Town Hall is to coordinate with neighborhoods within the city to bring in services that veterans can utilize. These events are a great opportunity to raise awareness of available benefits for veterans as well as their spouses and dependents.
 - b. Steve has a meeting arranged with the Executive Director of the VA, Steve Sample. This meeting will be beneficial in determining how we can partner to better serve the community.
 - c. It's a good idea to do a reset with all partners and vendors, to determine

- d. what support exists and what support is needed.
 - e. The members of the commission should work to create an updated list of potential neighborhoods and HOAs that would benefit from a Vet-Connect Town Hall. Areas of interest include: the Dells, Granite Gate, and Las Fuentes.
 - f. Marty mentioned the potential for using churches as space. He will run the idea by his church to gauge possibility.
 - g. Resources on the cemetery benefits are extremely popular, but this is a missing component. Obtaining support on this matter has been a challenge since the administration is not local and there is only one representative in the area. Rich volunteered to stop by the office in Cave Creek to see if he could gather printed materials for future meetings.
 - h. The bottom line is spreading awareness of resources, and the commission should continue to think outside of the box on how to continue outreach.
- D. Presentation and Discussion Regarding USVETS Update – Bryan Campbell.
 - a. Member Campbell was absent, Josh Lawton, Program Manager for USVETS, presented in his place. This item was discussed after Item E.
 - b. The 23 units at Fort Whipple will be opening in 2 weeks. There is a room full of donated items and USVETS could use volunteers to help distribute these items. These units will be made available to disabled, low-income veterans that are unable to work, need affordable housing, and require closer access to medical care. The properties are managed by a third-party company (Gorman & Company) but USVETS assists with referrals and connecting veterans.
 - c. USVETS is still accepting donations such as household items, kitchen items, coffeemakers, recliners, and trashcans. A list will be made available.
 - d. USVETS will be supporting the Point In Time (PIT) Count of Yavapai County at the end of January.
 - e. The organization is strengthening their services for veteran suicide prevention across the country. They provide alternative therapies such as acupuncture and service animals.
- E. Presentation and Discussion Regarding VA Updates – Craig Furst.
 - a. This item was discussed prior to Item D.
 - b. The VA is doing some internal reorganization of positions and divisions. With these changes, Craig is not currently doing any community outreach and has been directed to re-focus to internal services.
 - c. The VA will be hosting a blood drive on 1/13 – details can be found online.
 - d. The VA is now utilizing Artificial Intelligence to help scribe details from appointments. There is the option to decline this but the idea is that it will help better serve patients with accuracy and capacity.
 - e. There will be a virtual town hall meeting from 5PM to 6PM on 1/21, this meeting is intended to help bridge the communication between the community and the department leadership of the VA.

4. UPDATES

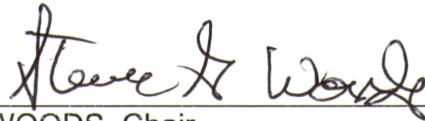
- A. Embry Riddle Aeronautical University will be conducting their unofficial flag retirement on 1/30. This event is used to retire the excess flags that were collected at the annual Flag Retirement Ceremony that was held on 11/7/25.
- B. Jeff shared that they have closed out the academy nomination period for the class

of 2030. There was a goal of 20 but the past years have seen a stall with 12 applicants this year. Of the 12 applicants, 11 were nominated and there is a 60%-70% acceptance rate anticipated. The nomination period for the class of 2031 will be opening in spring.

- C. Craig reiterated that the veteran population in Prescott is nearly 18-20%, one of the largest veteran communities that is not located near a base.
- D. Steve recounted the Wreaths Across America event that took place on 12/13/25; it was a great event and there were many volunteers.
- E. Due to spacing conflicts, the next commission meeting will be held in a different room of the Grace Sparks Activity Center and the meeting will begin at 9:30AM.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chair Woods adjourned the meeting at 9:55 AM.



STEVE WOODS, Chair

ATTEST:



PATRICE BRINKMAN, Staff Liaison