

Fulton County Veterans Empowerment Commission, Inc.

Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 1 p.m.

Zoom Recording (Passcode: eg!^vjL7):

https://zoom.us/rec/share/e5j79S9I_aYfzv6TSs4f5h8B-DRQq80IqHatRzsq_vr45M_EyT7vdEosUCISH6eI.4LE8-LoAe3IIqZAh

POST AGENDA MINUTES – RATIFIED

This document has been ratified or approved by the Fulton County Veterans Empowerment Commission, Inc. and is not binding on the County or any officer.

Call to Order/Welcome

Shawn Hanley, Chairman

- The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m.

****A QUORUM WAS PRESENT****

Roll Call

- **Members Present:** Shawn Hanley, Dr. Samantha Brown-Parks, Eldson McGhee, Richard White, Anthony Merritt, Michael Mizell, Stephen Leake, Patricia Lewis, Craig Kidd
- **Members Absent:** Jim Garcia, Michael Moore
- **Staff Present:** Fran Calhoun (External Affairs), Jasmine Campbell (External Affairs), Carlos Thomas (Community Development), Lauren Hansford (County Attorney’s Office), Mario Avery (Purchasing & Contract Compliance)

Approval of April 21, 2022 Meeting Agenda

- Treasurer Mike Mizell made a motion to approve the April 21, 2022 meeting agenda. Secretary Samantha Brown-Parks seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ratification of March 17, 2022 Meeting Minutes

- Richard White made a motion to approve the March 17, 2022 meeting minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Remarks / Update

- Focus of meeting will be RFP sent to all members the day it was released to the public.
- Requested Carlos Thomas address ethics concerns and provide an update on the status of the RFP.

Carlos Thomas, Department of Community Development

Request for Proposals Update

- Reviewed the following documents sent to all members via email on April 21, 2022:
 1. Fulton County Press Release pertaining to the Veterans Services Program RFP.
 2. Flyer and graphics for posting on social media
 3. Timeline for 2022 Veterans Services Program RFP

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4. RFP: 22RFP051322C-MH Veterans Services Program
 5. PowerPoint presented at VSP the Technical Assistance Workshop April 21, 2022, 10am
- Timeline highlights include:
 - May 5, 2022 at 2pm: All questions must be submitted in writing to Fulton County Purchasing.
 - May 13, 2022 at 3pm: Deadline for all submissions.
 - June 15, 2022: Recommendations will be presented to the Fulton County Board of Commissioners for approval.
 - August 2022: First payment disbursed to approved vendors for services. Second payment will be disbursed in November 2022.
 - Evaluation Committee members selected from the VEC will receive an email this week with more information on duties as well as confidentiality and conflict of interest forms that must be completed to participate in evaluations May 23, 2022-June 3, 2022.

Ethics Guidance for Procurements

- Reviewed Pages 5-6 of Technical Assistance Workshop PowerPoint titled “Contact Guidelines During Procurement Process”. Requested all members review these guidelines to become aware of RFP prohibitions which include but are not limited to verbal communications and technical question answers.
 - Example: Now that the workshop has been conducted, Carlos Thomas is unable to answer any questions from potential vendors. All questions must be submitted in writing to Mark Hawks in Purchasing.
- On Page 7 of the Technical Assistance Workshop PowerPoint it states the last day to submit questions is May 5, 2022 at 2pm. Contact information and the website where written questions can be submitted are included as well, please CC Mark Hawks on all RFP communications. The RFP document also includes this information on Pages 7-8.

Questions and Answers

Shawn Hanley, President

- How should members respond to any questions about the RFP? Believes everyone should respond the same.
 - Carlos Thomas: Direct all questions to be submitted in writing to Mark Hawks at Mark.Hawks@FultonCountyga.gov and do not discuss the RFP technical areas at all.
 - Mario Avery suggested the following response: “Due to Fulton County’s no contact policy, please contact Mark Hawks as I am unable to answer any questions at all.”
- Requested confirmation that promotion of RFP is allowed and can be shared but members are not allowed to follow-up and answer any questions regarding submissions.

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- Mario Avery: Promotion and RFP information can be shared but no inside information such as how to answer technical questions is allowed. Direct all questions to Mark Hawks.
- If this RFP ends on December 31, 2022, what are the steps for our next RFP? Members should begin thinking about adjustments for the next RFP to make including the amount, timeline deadlines, and issues to be addressed. Suggested open discussion on shaping of next RFP be placed on next month's agenda.
 - Carlos Thomas: We do not have a definitive answer currently. Provided example of Community Service Program RFP contract timeline which is released in October for a contract period of January-December. VEC members can recommend this timeframe and new funding priorities to the Board of Commissioners for any future RFPs.
- Are two points awarded for certified veteran owned businesses?
 - Carlos Thomas: Scoring sheet and all additional eligibility criteria included in RFP document, please review and share. Also agreed to send this question to Mark Hawks in writing to allow posting of the answer.
 - Mario Avery: Recommends organizations include Veteran certification documents in responses.
- Next VEC meeting will be after submission date of May 13, 2022.
 - Carlos Thomas agreed to attend this meeting and provide an update.

Eldson McGhee, Vice-President

- Would like veterans to know of this opportunity and requested flyer to promote the RFP.
 - Carlos Thomas: The press release, flyer, and social media graphic were included in the email sent today before the meeting. The website for the bid page and submission page are included on the flyer and can be shared.

Treasurer Mike Mizell

- Invited to speak on a radio program with 300,000 listeners and would like to mention this RFP, please advise.
 - Mario Avery spoke with Mark Hawks who requested the following information be shared on the radio: Announce all organizations must first register on the Purchasing Department Bid page (<https://www.bidnetdirect.com/georgia/fultoncounty>) and then search for the project. Only provide contact information for Mark Hawks, do not answer any questions.

Secretary Samantha Brown-Parks

- Was the workshop today recorded?

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- Carlos Thomas: No, it was not. The PowerPoint presentation can be shared and all other documents can be downloaded online by the public.

Discussion

Eldson McGhee, Vice-President

- Preparation for next year is critical and should begin soon. Therefore, Bylaws and a review of appointments by commissioners are necessary at the next meeting.
 - Jasmine Campbell informed members that Bylaws were adopted in January 2022 and she will send out a copy later today. Lauren Hansford confirmed her department has a copy of the adopted Bylaws.

Shawn Hanley, President

- Discussion and potential vote on next RFP will be on next month's agenda to allow research and consideration of updates by members. Suggested to Richard White that the current RFP be used as a template to determine any changes that will need to be made. Must make amendments research based to get approval from Board of Commissioners.
- A Subcommittee will be formed to address the next RFP.
 - Vice-President Eldson McGhee would like to work on subcommittee. Also suggested VEC have townhall meetings with community veterans groups to help shape ideas and become aware of problems.
 - Treasurer Mike Mizell believed it will be better to wait until after current bid is closed and proposal responses are reviewed. This will help target new areas that need to be addressed. Also agreed to be on subcommittee.
- Everything in current RFP will need to be done immediately so we don't have any long-term issues addressed. One area to add to the next RFP might be hiring a consultant company to study creating a long-term care facility for veterans in Fulton County since the two state run facilities in Georgia are outside of metro-Atlanta.
 - Vice-President Eldson McGhee: We will need to work with the VA to obtain funding and partnerships. President Shawn Hanley agreed and provided a brief overview of the 80/20 funding requirements for these facilities. Recommended the 20 percent required by Georgia be obtained over a five-year period.
 - Treasurer Mike Mizell: Currently there is capability in North Fulton for female veterans but none for males in that area, they must go to Atlanta for the same services. After RFP responses received, we will know more information on who and where to address our efforts.

Old business

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- Vice-President Eldson McGhee would like to discuss his old business at next meeting. President Shawn Hanley agreed to this request.

Announcements

- Vice-President Eldson McGhee invited all members to participate on his weekly show.
- Richard White
 - Georgia Military Hall of Fame will be moved into the State Capitol. Requirements and examples for the definition of a Georgia Veteran provided to members. Deadline for nominations is the last week in August each year and inductions are in November. Please email any questions and visit <https://gmvhof.org/>.
 - Spoke at memorial service for six homeless veterans buried this week for the Missing in America Project for Georgia.
- Treasurer Mike Mizell
 - Georgia Military Hall of Fame is being modeled in other states thanks to leadership efforts of Richard White. A nomination includes a certification document even if person is not inducted; encouraged members to nominate a veteran before the deadline.
 - Discussed program in Johns Creek where veterans in hospice centers are being identified and sent someone to fellowship with during their last days. If there are any additional veterans in hospice locations in the county, please inform him to help coordinate a visit.

Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.