

The Social Services Commission is an advisory body to the City Council that generally meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. The Commission may make recommendations to the City Council on Veterans affairs, homeless issues, adults with development disabilities, and children with special needs. All meetings are open to the public except for those portions that under law may be considered in closed session.

Staff reports are available for review at the Civic Center Main Library and the City Clerk's Office. Direct any other questions or concerns to the Social Services Commission liaison at 310.618.5880. Agendas are posted on the City of Torrance Home Page www.TorranceCA.Gov.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Manager's office at (310) 618-5880. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. [28CFR35.102-35.104 ADA Title II]

TORRANCE SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION AGENDA
JUNE 27, 2024
REGULAR MEETING
6:00 P.M. WEST ANNEX COMMISSION MEETING ROOM
SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION MAY TAKE ACTION ON ANY ITEM LISTED ON THE AGENDA

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1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**
ROLL CALL: Commission Members Bickford, Reynolds, Sansalone, Scotto, Chair Leys
2. **FLAG SALUTE:** Commissioner Bickford
3. **REPORT OF STAFF ON THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA** The agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Bl. and on the City's Website on June 20, 2024
4. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWN, DEFERRED, AND/OR SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS**
5. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS (Limited to a 15-minute period)**
*This portion of the meeting is reserved for comment on items on the Consent Calendar or items not on the agenda. Under the Ralph M. Brown Act, the Commission cannot act on items raised during public comment, but may respond briefly to statements made or questions posed; request clarification; or refer the item to staff. **No longer than 1 minute per speaker.** If presenting handout material to the Commission, please provide 10 copies to staff before speaking.*
6. **CONSENT CALENDAR**
Matters listed under the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion and one vote. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed by a Commissioner from the Consent Calendar and considered separately.
 - 6A. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MAY 23, 2024**
7. **ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**
 - 7A. **ACCEPT AND FILE PRESENTATION FROM BILL BLISCHKE ON SOLES 4 SOULS**
8. **COMMISSION ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

9. ADJOURNMENT

9A. Adjournment of the Social Services Commission Meeting to Thursday, July 25, 2024, at 6:00 pm for a regular meeting in the West Annex Commission Meeting Room



**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
TORRANCE SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Social Services Commission convened in a regular session at 6:02 p.m. on Thursday, May 23, 2024 at the West Annex Commission Meeting Room, Torrance City Hall.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Bickford, Reynolds, Scotto and Chair Leys

Absent: Commissioner Sansalone

Also Present: Deputy City Manager Hoang, Leanne Chen, Veteran's Appreciation Event Coordinator, and Julia Smith, Staff Liaison-in-Training

2. FLAG SALUTE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairperson Leys.

3. REPORT OF THE STAFF ON THE POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Julia Smith, Staff Liaison-in Training, stated that the agenda for the Social Services Commission was properly posted on Thursday, May 16, 2024 on the Public Notice Board by the City Clerk's office and on the City's website.

4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF WITHDRAWN, DEFERRED, AND/OR SUPPLEMENTAL ITEMS

Staff Liaison-in-Training Smith stated that there were no items.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

There was no public comment.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

6A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 25, 2024

MOTION: Commissioner Scotto moved to approve Item 6A, as submitted; motion was seconded by Commissioner Reynolds. The motion passed by a 4-0 roll call vote. (Absent Commissioner Sansalone)

7. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

7A. ACCEPT AND FILE PRESENTATION BY DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV)

Staff Liaison-in-Training Smith introduced Staff Sergeant Adam Barnes from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) of the Los Angeles Office.

Staff Sergeant Adam Barnes introduced himself and gave an overview and history of the services that the non-profit organization, DAV, offers including helping Veterans and surviving spouses receive services.

He explained that originally the organization was created with the focus of bringing back veterans from World War II and helping them transition back into the workforce. Now the organization includes Transition Service Officers, a Legislation Team, and a Membership Department.

Transition Service Officers provide benefits counseling, and assistance to service members and surviving family members who are filing initial claims for benefits, at military installations throughout the nation. This includes offering transition classes for those leaving service at San Pedro's Coast Guard Base and El Segundo's Space Force Base.

The Legislation Team takes the resolutions adopted by DAV members at their annual National Conventions to Congress to advocate for improved federal laws, regulations and policies of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other federal agencies whose programs support the veteran population.

- "Commanders Action Network" is a free program available to anyone who wants to stay informed on VA relevant bills and take action by signing their name to a letter of support that is sent to the Senator and Congressman in your area. You can sign up at dav.org.
- Every year in February the DAV has their Midwinter conference in Washington D.C. wherein, one day of the conference they go to Capitol Hill and watch their commander present a bill to the Veterans' Commission.

Medical Transportation Volunteers provide free transportation to VA medical facilities for injured and ill veterans.

Employment Department established in 2016, the DAV does not hire but they cosponsor with the organization called "Recruit Military". DAV cosponsor 75 virtual and live job fairs a year across the United States, including SoFi Stadium and Dodger stadium. It is only for active-duty veterans and veterans leaving service and their families to get jobs from businesses that are looking to recruit veteran workers.

Staff Sargeant Barnes discussed the magazine the organization publishes which offers resources such as legal services, military detail services for funerals, etc.

Commission member Bickford inquired if veterans who have medical issues that are related to service but may have developed later or even issues that are unrelated to service can receive service. Staff Sargeant Barnes confirmed that they do offer services for direct, secondary, and presumptive injuries and medical issues.

In response to a question by the public, Staff Sargeant Barnes explained that the organization is non-profit, so they do need to report where their funding goes to Congress. He confirmed they receive allocations from Congress and VAs, they also receive grants and donations from the public.

In response to an inquiry by Commissioner Bickford, Staff Sargeant Barnes confirmed that information regarding legislative issues can be found on their website www.dav.org under the Legislative Department, it will have a list of all the resolutions.

MOTION: Commissioner Bickford moved to accept and file the presentation from Disabled Americans. Commissioner Reynolds seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 4-0 roll call vote. (Absent Commissioner Sansalone)

7B. ACCEPT AND FILE UPDATE FROM STAFF ON THE 2024 VETERANS APPRECIATION EVENT

Leanne Chen, the Veteran's Appreciation Event Coordinator, introduced the item and provided a recap of the confirmed plans for the 2024 Veterans Recognition Event.

The "Veterans Appreciation Event" will be held on Friday, November 8, 2024 from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the outdoor Torino Festival Plaza at the Toyota Meeting Hall. DJ Ozzie will handle announcements and Mrs. Ford will present the National Anthem. Invitations are currently in the final stages of preparations.

Ms. Chen discussed the outstanding details for the event:

- Possibly Changing the catering company from Gaetano's to Lalo's Catering Company in order to offer waiter services.
- Adjusting the performance time of the "Torrance Chorale" to the timeslot before dinner, to ensure the undivided attention of the public.
- Options for gifts and giveaways with the focus on usefulness such as solar powered flashlights with a whistle or lanyards with pouches, which could be personalized to read "Thank you Veterans".
- "Coastal Cleanup" will occur on September 21, 2024 at Torrance Beach. Where participants could be given zero-waste giveaways such as water flavor packets in return for writing thank you messages to the Veterans which will then be presented at the event.
- Next steps include reaching out to the agencies and volunteers and sending the invites to the Veterans, as well as possibly reaching out to Lieutenant Flores of the Junior Reserve Officers' Corp in Torrance and inviting 4 officers to sit at each of the tables as part of the engagement.

In response to Commissioner Scotto's inquiries, Ms. Chen confirmed Lalo's catering company is located on 213th street, and they offer several different dinner packages that include a Chicken or Pasta entrée as well as salad and a dessert. Ms. Chen also advised that she would be working with the City Manager's office to stay within budget and find cost-effective options for the giveaways.

Commissioner Bickford recommended that it may be a good community project for the high schools who may have students who are looking to volunteer.

In response to a question from the public, Ms. Chen confirmed that the Veterans are invited via a direct phone call, a physical invitation is also sent in the mail.

MOTION: Commissioner Bickford moved to accept and file presentation. Commissioner Scotto seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 4-0 roll call vote. (Absent Commissioner Sansalone)

7C. DISCUSS COORDINATING A SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE WITH TORRANCE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Staff Liaison-in-Training Smith introduced the item; she confirmed the commission has held this drive since 2019. During the 2023-24 school year, Torrance Unified School District's (TUSD) McKinney Vento Homeless program has 229 homeless students and 99 foster youths. Requested items include backpacks, lunch boxes, pencil boxes, water bottles, notebooks folders, loose leaf paper, dividers, binders, crayons, markers, and glue sticks as well as hair products, scarves and gloves.

Staff recommends holding the drive from June 24- July 25th to ensure that TUSD has time to distribute the supplies. It is also recommended that a Commissioner attend the City Council meeting of July 2, 2024 to announce the drive during the announcements portion of the meeting. CitiCABLE will be making an announcement on their weekly news magazine show "Torrance Today" and through social media channels. A flyer will also be created through a collaboration between TUSD and the City's marketing team. Donation boxes will be placed in the City Hall Lobby, Civic Center Library, & the Permit Center.

In response to a question by Chairperson Leys, Deputy City Manager Hoang stated they did not do a count of the supplies that were collected from last year but there is an infographic he can forward. He also stated Daniel from the Torrance Sierra Company has already donated 80 backpacks.

Commissioner Bickford inquired what marketing TUSD will do to help with the drive, Staff Liaison-in-Training Smith confirmed TUSD uses several listservs of parents that are utilized to send out information. Due to the audience that the City has, the City would take on a majority of the marketing, using e-newsletters, social media pages, and possibly the marquee if that is requested.

Commissioner Bickford inquired about the City developing a brochure and disseminating the information during summer school. Staff Liaison-in-Training Smith confirmed most promotional materials will be done in-house by the City's Cable and Community Relations Team and a lot of it will be published online. She confirmed they will collaborate with TUSD to ensure no duplicate materials are made.

Chair Leys and Staff Liaison Smith confirmed the drop off locations are the same as the Toiletry Drive, with the Civic Center Library being the most popular location, and that donations are welcome by all members of the public including students. Chair Leys also suggested contacting TUSD about having unused supplies be donated by the high school seniors.

In response to Commissioner Bickford, Staff Liaison Smith confirmed since students are minors, they cannot work the event. Deputy City Manager Hoang confirmed that due to liability reasons most of the under 18 volunteers work at the Madrona Marsh, since that program was already audited for any issues with labor laws.

Staff Liaison Smith did request that any commissioners who are free, please attend the City Council meeting of July 2nd and announce the event to the public.

MOTION: Commissioner Scotto moved to accept and file presentation. Commissioner Bickford seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 4-0 roll call vote. (Absent Commissioner Sansalone)

8. COMMISSION ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Staff Liaison-in-Training Smith announced that on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27th, at 2:00 PM, the Torrance Historical Society would conduct a memorial service for Torrance service personnel who gave their lives in U. S. military actions. The program would take place on the Memorial Plaza at the corner of Torrance Blvd. and Maple Ave., and would include the reading of the 146 Names on the Wall plus the five "new" names recently added.

9. ADJOURNMENT

At 6:54 p.m., Commissioner Scotto moved to adjourn the meeting to the regular meeting on Thursday, June 27, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the West Annex Commission Meeting Room, Torrance City Hall. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Reynolds and the motion passed by a 4-0 roll call vote. (Absent Commissioner Sansalone)

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Subject to Approval

Honorable Members of the Social Services Commission
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Commission:

SUBJECT: Accept and File Presentation from Bill Blischke on Soles 4 Souls

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of staff that the Social Services Commission accept and file a presentation from Bill Blischke on Soles 4 Souls.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

The item before your Honorable Body is to accept and file a presentation from Bill Blischke on Soles 4 Souls. Mr. Blischke is the South Bay Ambassador for the organization.

Soles 4 Souls has several initiatives targeting different populations in need. Through the 4Relief Program, Soles 4 Souls provides shoes and clothing to people experiencing economic hardship. This hardship can be chronic or due to an unexpected emergency. This program has assisted households in a variety of circumstances including those experiencing: poverty and homelessness, natural disasters/health crises, domestic violence, and war/political unrest. Through the 4EveryKid Program, Soles 4 Soules partners with schools across the country to provide new athletic shoes for children experiencing homelessness. Through the 4Opportunity Program, Soles 4 Souls and their partners assist entrepreneurs in low-income countries start businesses that sell donated shoes and clothing.

This evening, Staff has asked Mr. Blischke to provide an overview of Soles 4 Souls including how the programs are accessed and targeted beneficiaries of the programs. Mr. Blischke will also provide ways in which the City can support Soles 4 Souls and address questions from your Honorable Body.

Respectfully submitted,



Viet Hoang
Staff Liaison to the Commission



Julia Smith
Staff Liaison-In-Training