

**Bylaws of the  
Veterans Affairs Commission**  
*City and County of San Francisco*

Last amended: September 10, 2013

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS/CHANGES of June 13, 2017 indicated in YELLOW  
HIGHLIGHT below:

**ARTICLE I. Origin and Name**

**Section 1. ORIGIN: A VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION of the City and County of San Francisco** is established.

*Source: City of San Francisco Administrative Code, Chapter 5, Article XI, Sec. 5.100, as per Ordinance 449-82 of Sept. 13, 1982, (and amendments as cited within this document.*

**Section 2. NAME:** The name of the organization shall be the Veterans Affairs Commission of the City and County of San Francisco. Elsewhere in this document, said Commission may variously be referred to as ‘the Veterans Affairs Commission’, ‘the VAC’, or simply as ‘the Commission’. *Source: City of S.F. CODE (as amended in Ordinance #33-94 of 8/3/93),*

**ARTICLE II. Purpose, Powers and Duties**

**Section 1. PURPOSE:** The Veterans Affairs Commission shall advise directly the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors on all matters affecting veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States of America, on the problems, interests and needs of veterans who are residents of the City and County of San Francisco and on the coordination of economic development, health care, and social services programs as they relate to veterans who are residents of the City and County of San Francisco

*Source: San Francisco Administrative Code Sec. 5.101 Purpose.*

**Section 2. POWERS:** The Commission shall have the power to:

- a. **Hold Hearings** and submit recommendations to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor regarding the problems, interests and needs of veterans;
- b. **Make recommendations** to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor concerning the coordination of economic development, health care, and social service programs as they relate to veterans who are residents of San Francisco.

*Source: S.F. Administrative Code, Sec. 5.104, Powers and Duties*

**Section 3. DUTIES – Annual Report:** The Commission shall have the duty to render annually, a written report of its activities to the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor. *Source: S.F. Administrative Code, Sec. 5.105, Powers and Duties.*

**BYLAWS of the Veterans Affairs Commission City and County of San Francisco.**  
**Last amended: 9/10/13.**

**ARTICLE III. Membership**

**Section 1.** The Commission shall consist of Seventeen (17) members who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America, and who are residents of the City and County of San Francisco.

**Section 2.** Twelve (12) of the members shall be appointed by the Board of Supervisors and five (5) of the members shall be appointed by the Mayor as follows:

(a) At least three members of the Commission shall be woman veterans; two appointed by Board of Supervisors, and one Mayoral appointment.

(b) The Commission shall include at least two members who, as consequence of their service in the Armed Forces of the United States of America, have a physical disability in accordance with the definitions applied by the Veterans Administration. The Mayor and Board of Supervisors shall each appoint at least one member pursuant to this subsection.

(c) All Commission members shall reside in the City and County of San Francisco, from date of Appointment, to end of Commission term. The Board of Supervisors may only waive this requirement by ordinance.

*(Source: San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 5.102.)*

**Section 3.** The term of each member of the Commission shall be four years. It is intended that no more than 1/4 of the Commission appointments shall expire at the same time. This ‘staggered appointment system’ limits excessive ‘turnover’, thereby insuring appropriate continuity and enables the Commission to continue its work without undue disruption.

*(Source: San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 5.103.)*

**Section 4.** In the event a vacancy occurs during the term of office of any member, a successor shall be appointed for the unexpired term of office vacated by either the Mayor or Board of Supervisors, as appropriate, to maintain the required representation.

*(Source: San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 5.103.)*

**Section 5.** Services of the members of the Commission shall be voluntary and members will serve without compensation.

*(Source: San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 5.103.)*

**BYLAWS of the Veterans Affairs Commission City and County of San Francisco.**  
**Last amended: 9/10/13.**

**ARTICLE IV. Officers (including Elections and Primary Duties)**

**Section 1. Chairperson/President.**

A Chairperson shall be elected by Commission members. *(Source: City Administrative Code Section 5.103c)*

In practice, over time, the term 'PRESIDENT' has been used interchangeably with that of the (original) 'Chairperson'. It shall therefore be established that any and all usage of the term PRESIDENT (of the Commission) shall, for all intents and purposes be understood to be in reference to the authorized position of 'Chairperson.'

**Section 2., Vice President & Secretary.**

The Commission Leadership shall include additional Officers, namely, a Vice President and a Secretary.

*(Source: San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 5.107 - Rules and Regulations).*

**Section 3. Power & authority of Commission Officers.**

Commission Officers have no authority greater than any other member, except insofar as these Bylaws state otherwise, or insofar as the Commission designates any Officer or member specific authority to perform assigned tasks or duties.

*(Source: City Attorney's Good Government Guide for City Commissioners, Section VI, Par. B and C).*

**Section 4. Election of Officers.**

**(a)** The annual Election of Officers process shall begin during the November meeting of the VAC, at which time

the President shall administer (as an Agenda Action Item) a call for  
 NOMINATIONS for each of the three elected  
 offices.

**(b)** During this process, Commissioners may nominate any sitting Commissioner in Good Standing (including Self-Nomination) for any of the established leadership positions (i.e. President, Vice President, Secretary). As per standard parliamentary nominating procedures, there is no 'second' required for nomination; however, all persons nominated shall be available to state (for the record) if in fact he or she accepts the nomination and is available and prepared to fill the duties of the office, if elected.

**(c)** In the event that a sitting Commissioner is nominated for more than one office, said Commissioner shall publicly announce which position he or she will accept nomination for. Individual Commissioners may not accept nomination or stand for election, for more than one office simultaneously, (in accordance with provisions of Section 7 of this Article).

**BYLAWS of the Veterans Affairs Commission *City and County of San Francisco.***  
**Last amended: 9/10/13.**

(d) The annual Election of Officers process shall continue during the December General meeting at which time the President shall administer (as an Agenda Action Item) a FINAL CALL for NOMINATIONS for each of the three elected offices. Any new nominations shall be added to previous nominations.

(e) Election of Officers shall be the first practicable Order of Business at the January General Meeting of the VAC, each year. The Secretary shall prepare, and bring to the meeting pre-printed BALLOTS. Each BALLOT shall be pre-printed with the name of the voting Commissioner and valid nominees for each office, and space for further 'write-ins'.

**Section 5. Public Ballot.**

The officers shall be elected via a public ballot Roll-Call vote whose individual and collective results shall be announced immediately after the vote, and published in the meeting minutes. Officers are elected to serve for one year or, in the event of early termination, until their successors are elected, the term of office shall begin immediately after public announcement of vote totals

**Section 6. Consecutive Terms.**

Unless specifically authorized by a majority vote of the Commission, no Executive Board member (as defined in Article VI), shall hold more than one Executive Board office at the same time, and unless specifically authorized by a majority vote of the Commission, no Executive Board member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

**Section 7. PRIMARY DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT.**

The Primary Duties of the President include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Preside over the General Meetings of the Commission.
- b. Author the AGENDA for such meetings while incorporating Agenda Item suggestions duly submitted by Commission Members. (adopted 9.10.13)....All duly submitted Agenda Items requested by members of the Commission shall be added to the Agenda as requested. During the Agenda Approval Process, any item on the Published Agenda may be stricken from said Agenda, by appropriate motion, second, and majority vote of the Commission.
- (c) Represent the voice of the Commission at official meetings and functions (as per authorization and direction by Commission.
- (d) At start of term, present the broad Goals and Plans for the Commission and after gaining consensus support, guide the Commission in promulgation of established Goals and Plans.

**BYLAWS of the Veterans Affairs Commission *City and County of San Francisco.***  
**Last amended: 9/10/13.**

- (e) Sign all Official Correspondence of the Commission, or, when impractical, authorize Commission Secretary to sign "For the President".
- (f) Cast a tie-breaking vote (if needed) in any official vote taken by the Commission.
- (g) As the last official act of the Administration, present to the newly elected President a FINAL DRAFT of the ANNUAL REPORT of the Administration year, for consideration and ratification by the Commission.

**Section 8. PRIMARY DUTIES OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT.**

The Primary Duties of the Vice President include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Fulfill the duties of the President at such times when the President is absent or otherwise unavailable to execute the Duties of the President.
- b. Fulfill the duties of the Secretary at such times when the Secretary is absent or otherwise unavailable to execute the Duties of the Secretary.
- c. During the last month of the administration year, Prepare and Author the FIRST DRAFT of the ANNUAL REPORT of the Commission for review by President and eventual ratification by Commission

**Section 9. PRIMARY DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY.**

The Primary Duties of the Secretary include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Fulfill the duties of the President in the event that both the President and the Vice-President are unavailable or otherwise unable to execute the Duties of the President.
- b. Primary responsibility to create and maintain the MEETING MINUTES of the Commission as an official Public Record of its proceedings. Task involves insuring that an official RECORDING of each General meeting is made and preserved for a minimum of 30 days as mandated in the Administrative Code. From the meeting recording, and notes taken at the meeting, the Secretary shall write a DRAFT of the Meeting Minutes, for consideration by the Commission at the next general meeting.
- c. Upon acceptance of the Minutes (by Commission vote), Secretary is responsible to forward Approved Minutes to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors, and Archive Copies to the Government Information Desk at the Main Public Library, and to the VAC Website.
- d. The Secretary shall be responsible for Commission Correspondence, both inbound and outbound. Such responsibility includes, but is not necessarily limited to;
  - Draft Advice Letters to Mayor & BOS as derived from decisions made by majority vote of Commission.
  - Prepare final version of subject correspondence on VAC Letterhead for signature of President.
  - Make copies of signed letters to send to "Copy to" recipients, and Archive records.
  - Answer and/or Forward misc. routine Email inquiries to VAC under title of Secretary.

**BYLAWS of the Veterans Affairs Commission *City and County of San Francisco.***  
**Last amended: 9/10/13.**

(e) The Secretary shall insure the execution of a Monthly Mailing of Official Commission correspondence. The first portion of the Monthly Mailing is the “Internal Mailing”. It transmits official Commission documents to all sitting Commissioners.

Contents of the Internal Mailing shall include, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Copy of the President’s AGENDA for the next General Meeting.
- Copy of the DRAFT MINUTES from the previous General Meeting.
- Copy of any additional significant documents/Resolutions/correspondence for review by Commissioners prior to General Meeting.

The second portion of the Monthly Mailing transmits official Commission documents to City Government Officials,

the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, and the Government Archive file of the Main Public Library. Contents of

the “external mailing” includes, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Copy of the President’s AGENDA for the next General Meeting.
- Copy of the latest APPROVED MINUTES from previous meeting(s)..
- Copy of any additional significant documents/Resolutions/correspondence approved by Commission vote at previous meeting(s).

Commission mailings are to be enclosed in official VAC envelopes, then hand-delivered to the office of the City

Administrator for addition of postage and execution of mailing. The secretary shall insure that all mailings involving

notification of Commission meetings shall be hand-delivered to the office of the City Administrator no later than six

(6) days of Post Office Operation, to ensure that Commission business is conducted within the Public Notice

Requirements of City and State Code.

- f. The Secretary shall maintain an OFFICIAL ARCHIVE FILE of all Commission Business documents, including copies of Official Email, written correspondence, Appointment Documents, and other official documents.

> **MAINTENANCE** and updating of the Official VAC Website.

> Facilitate printing of new **VAC Business Cards** for sitting Commissioners, as required.

> Maintenance and submittal of an official **Quarterly Attendance Report** to the Office of the Mayor

(for Mayoral Appointees), and similar Report to Clerk of the Board of Supervisors for BOS Appointees).

> Execute **Quarterly Update of Commission Data on City Database** on Commissions, Boards and Agencies.

**BYLAWS of the Veterans Affairs Commission City and County of San Francisco.**  
**Last amended: 9/10/13.**

- > Develop and maintain such **Social Media accounts** as are appropriate and approved by the Commission.

**(NEW) Section 10. PRIMARY DUTIES OF SITTING COMMISSIONERS:**

The Primary Duties of the COMMISSIONERS of the SFVAC, include, but are not necessarily limited to:

a. Meeting Attendance: - Commissioners are expected to attend the VAST MAJORITY of the Monthly General Meetings of the SFVAC. See Additional Attendance Details at Article V, Section 5 of this document

b. Meeting Participation: - Commissioners are expected to PREPARE for each General Meeting of the SFVAC, by (at very least):

(b1): Reading, and Printing Out (their own) COPY of the documents forwarded prior to each meeting by the Commission Secretary, including (but not limited to)

(b2): AGENDA for next General or Special Meeting including (but not limited to)

(b3): CHANGES and/or CORRECTIONS to be offered when DRAFT AGENDA is under DISCUSSION for Approval at the subject Meeting, and:

(b4): DRAFT MINUTES for previous VAC Meeting(s). It is suggested that Commissioners

who wish to submit suggested CHANGES to Draft Minutes, **prepare such changes, in writing - on their personal copy** - to be used at the meeting, and to facilitate *MOTIONS to AMEND text of Draft Minutes.*

c. Ethics Training:

(c.1): Commission Bylaws REQUIRE that all 'Sitting Commissioners' COMPLETE the ETHICS TRAINING MODULE (approximately 2-hours), and available (either) In-Person, (See below), or 'On-Line', at:

**[http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish\\_id=127a1ddd-f5e4-1031-a551-f3fb1162b875](http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?publish_id=127a1ddd-f5e4-1031-a551-f3fb1162b875)**

(c.2): Such Training must be completed *within the FIRST YEAR* of the initial Appointment TERM of VAC Commissioners.

d. Ethics Training Certification:

(d.1): Commission Bylaws REQUIRE that all 'Sitting Commissioners' COMPLETE the 60-Question **Post-Training Test** and: **Certification of Successful Completion of Ethics Training.**

(d2): Commission Secretary shall collect and monitor Certification Documents.



**BYLAWS of the Veterans Affairs Commission City and County of San Francisco.**  
**Last amended: 9/10/13.**

The Secretary will complete a ***SUMMARY of Commissioners Completion of Ethics Training Documents***, for inclusion in the ANNUAL REPT of the SFVAC.

**ARTICLE V. Meetings**

**Section 1.** The General Meetings of the Commission shall be held on an established and announced schedule with general intent to hold a monthly meeting, held at an appropriately accessible venue. All meetings shall be open to the public.

**Section 2.** The regular meeting on the first meeting in January shall be known as the Annual Meeting. Its first order of business shall include the election of new officers, and receiving current Status Reports from the retiring officers.

**Section 3.** Special meetings may be called by the President or (if President is unavailable or incapacitated), by any member of the Executive Board and its unique purpose shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency, at least three days' notice shall be given.

**Section 4.** Fifty percent (50%) of the authorized strength of the Commission shall constitute a quorum. Specifically, as the Authorized Strength currently stands at 17 members, the Quorum Threshold stands at NINE (9) members present for all Commission proceedings.

**Section 5.**

(a) Except in the event of a Notified Absence (defined below), each member of the Veterans Affairs Commission is expected to attend and be present for all of each regular or special meeting of the Commission. The Secretary of the Commission shall maintain a record of members' attendance, and shall record as non-notified all absences that do not constitute 'notified absences' under the following paragraph.

(b) A member's absence shall constitute a 'notified absence' where the member, in advance of the meeting, informs the Secretary or President of the Commission that the member will be absent, or where the member's absence is due to unforeseen circumstances such as illness or emergency and the member reports such unforeseen circumstances to the Secretary or President of the Commission soon as reasonably possible.

(c) The Secretary of the Commission shall report all non-notified absences from regular Commission meetings, and shall also report any instance in which a member of the Commission is absent (notified or otherwise) from three consecutive regular meetings, to the Board of Supervisors or Mayor's Office, depending on whether the member in question was appointed to the Commission by the Board of Supervisors or the Mayor.



**BYLAWS of the Veterans Affairs Commission City and County of San Francisco.**  
**Last amended: 9/10/13.**

(d) The Secretary of the Commission shall submit Quarterly written reports to both the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office detailing each Commission member's attendance at all meetings of the Commission held during that Quarter.

(e) The Secretary of the Commission shall include a full-year report of COMMISSIONERS ATTENDANCE as part of the ANNUAL REPORT.

### **ARTICLE VI. The Executive Board**

**Section 1. Executive Board.** The officers of the Veterans Affairs Commission, (i.e. the President, Vice President, and Secretary, shall constitute the Executive Board. *(Source: San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 5.107.)*

**Section 2.** The Executive Board shall execute the administrative functions of the Commission, as defined in Article IV, above.

**Section 3.** The officers of the Executive Board shall meet, and/or otherwise confer, as required, under unusual or emergency conditions. The vast majority of Executive Board activities shall be accomplished within the context of the General Meetings of the Commission.

**Section 4.** The officers of the Executive Board also represent the Order of Succession for the Commission. That is, in the event that the President is temporarily unable to chair a meeting or perform additional duties of the President, responsibility for execution of such duties falls first to the Vice President, then to the Secretary. Such officers shall perform the duties prescribed by the bylaws and by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Commission at Article VIII of this document.

### **ARTICLE VII. Committees and Liaison Assignments**

#### **Section 1. Committees.**

(a) As soon as is practicable after inauguration, the President may appoint sitting Commissioners of his choice to participate in such Committees as he deems appropriate. *(Source: San Francisco Administrative Code, Section 5.107.)*

(b) Such Committees may be Standing, Ad Hoc, or Special; however, both leadership and Committee Members must insure (in all proceedings), full compliance with State law (i.e. the Brown act), and City of San Francisco Sunshine Laws. That is, meetings of ALL Committees must comply with the same Public Access and Public Notice mandates required for all

**BYLAWS of the Veterans Affairs Commission *City and County of San Francisco.***  
***Last amended: 9/10/13.***

full-Commission meetings where applicable.

**Section 2. Liaison Officers.** In addition to establishment of Committees, the President may appoint individual Commission members to serve as Liaison Officers for specific areas of Commission business and research. Individual Commissioners appointed to such Liaison positions may work independently on their various liaison areas to research and write ADVICE DRAFT PROPOSALS for eventual consideration by the full Commission for submission to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors, under provisions of Article II of these bylaws. After due consideration and finalization of such DRAFT proposals, the full VAC may then forward specific issue-related ADVICE to the Mayor and Board of Supervisors.

**ARTICLE VIII. Parliamentary Authority**

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Veterans Affairs

Commission so long as they are consistent with the City and County of San Francisco laws and Administrative code, and State laws, including all Brown Act and Sunshine Law provisions.

**ARTICLE IX. Amendment of Bylaws**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Veterans Affairs Commission by a majority vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing, at least one previous General Meeting of the VAC, and it is duly noted as an Agenda Action Item.