

VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this committee shall be the Town of Matthews Veteran Affairs Committee (VAC).

ARTICLE II - MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Veteran Affairs Committee is to promote a strong, healthy, and cooperative relationship between the Town of Matthews and service members, veterans and their families; to recognize the role played by veterans in the defense of this country; to promote equal and inclusive opportunities for veterans and their families in all aspects of society; and to identify and support all individuals and organizations that contribute to this mission.

ARTICLE III – ROLE OF THE VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The role of the Veteran Affairs Committee, hereafter referred to as the VAC, is to act in an advisory capacity to the Town's Board of Commissioners and staff on matters of interest and importance to service members, veterans and their families. The VAC may also:

- a) Serve as a centralized point of contact for veterans and their families to bring matters of interest to the attention of the Town;
- b) Advise the Board of Commissioners on matters related to patriotic holidays, ceremonies, or other special events and assist the staff in planning these events;
- c) Advise the Board of Commissioners on how to best increase the participation and effectiveness of veterans in local government;
- d) Increase awareness of education, employment and other community resources available to veterans and separating members of the military; and
- e) Facilitate the integration of veterans into all aspects of local community life by recognizing them as a valuable resource available within the community.

The VAC may become involved in other tasks as requested by the Board of Commissioners or Town staff. Additional subcommittees or task forces may be created as needed.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Potential VAC members must demonstrate a clear relationship to the military and its interests and an understanding of its needs. Past service in the armed forces of the United States, while not an expressed requirement, is a highly valued asset for those interested in serving as members. Employment within, or association with, institutions or agencies with military-specific interests, or whose intent is serving the military community in whole or part is also desirable for those considering membership on the VAC. The VAC actively encourages active representation from each of the local veteran-service organizations. Services of the members of the VAC shall be voluntary and members will serve without compensation. There is no residency requirement for the VAC.

ARTICLE V - TERMS

The VAC shall consist of a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of twenty (20) members who have been duly appointed by the Board of Commissioners for designated terms. The terms, described as follows, shall begin with the calendar year 2016. Members shall be appointed to two year terms beginning on January 1 and expiring on December 31. Members may serve an unlimited number of terms.

If a vacancy on the VAC occurs by reason of death, resignation, or any other cause, the seat shall be filled, upon recommendation of the staff liaison and VAC Chairperson, by the Board of Commissioners in an expeditious manner for the duration of the unexpired term.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS AND STAFF

Section 1 – Officers: the officers of the VAC shall consist of a Chairperson and a Vice Chairperson. Elections shall take place in January.

Section 2 – Chairperson: the Chairperson shall be elected by a majority vote of the membership of the VAC from among its members. The term of the Chairperson shall be for one year and until a successor is elected, beginning with the first regular January meeting of each calendar year. The Chairperson shall be eligible for re-election.

The Chairperson (unless absent or excused), shall chair each meeting of the VAC and shall be a full voting member. The Chairperson shall decide upon all points of order and procedure unless otherwise directed by a majority of the VAC in session at the time. The Chairperson shall represent the VAC when called upon by the Board of Commissioners, staff or as directed by the VAC.

Section 3 - Vice-Chairperson: a Vice-Chairperson shall be elected from among the members in the same manner and for the same term as the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall serve as Acting Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson and in such capacity, shall have the same powers and duties as the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall be eligible for re-election.

Section 4 – Staff: a Town staff member will act as liaison to the VAC. The staff liaison is considered a non-voting position and serves as staff to the VAC.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS

Section 1 – Open Meetings Law: the VAC shall be considered a "public body" and is subject to all rules and regulations for public bodies contained in North Carolina's Open Meetings Law.

Section 2 - Regular Meetings: the regular meetings of the VAC 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. Notice of meetings with information on agenda items shall be supplied before each meeting to all members. The Chairperson shall have the discretion to add or forego certain monthly meetings when necessary and meetings may be cancelled with written notice to the Town Clerk if there is no business to conduct.

Section 3 - Special or Called Meetings: special meetings of the VAC may be called at any time for the purpose of addressing urgent matters, the delay of which could prove detrimental to the success of the issue. Notice of the time and place of a called meeting shall be given to all members and the media at least forty-eight hours prior to the meeting by the Chairperson or staff liaison. The Chairperson or staff liaison will attempt to contact each member of the VAC as soon as possible after a special or called meeting is set.

Section 4 – Quorum: a quorum of the VAC shall be required to open any meeting and to conduct business. A quorum shall be defined as a simple majority of the currently appointed members and is necessary to take any official action.

ARTICLE VIII - ATTENDANCE

In order for the VAC to carry out its duties and responsibilities, it is necessary for all members to attend the meetings. Any member who shall fail to attend at least 75% of the regular and special meetings of the VAC during any one-year period may be removed. The Chairperson shall notify the Town Board of Commissioners of any member who shall so fail to attend. The vacancy can be filled, upon recommendation of the Committee liaison and Chairperson, by the Town Board of Commissioners.

ARTICLE IX – RULES OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

In order to avoid the appearance of conflict of interest, members of the Committee shall refrain from voting on issues that have a direct and narrow fiduciary effect on an organization by whom they are employed or for whom they serve as director. Members of the Committee shall be prohibited from applying for or receiving grants from the Town as individuals.

ARTICLE X - VOTING, ORDER OF BUSINESS

Section 1 – Voting: voting, at the discretion of the Chairperson, shall be by voice or show of hands. All matters to be voted on by the VAC shall be by a duly made motion and second. It is the duty of all VAC members present at a meeting to vote on all issues coming before the VAC unless such member has been specifically excused from voting on an issue. Any non-excused member who abstains from voting shall be counted as having cast a "yes" vote.

Section 2 - Conduct of Meetings: all meetings shall be open to the public. The order of business at meetings shall generally be as follows:

- a) Open Meeting & Declare a Quorum
- b) Approval of Minutes
- c) Old Business
- d) New Business
- e) Adjournment

The Chairperson shall have the authority to amend the order of business at any meeting. Items of business for discussion at the meeting shall appear on the agenda.

ARTICLE XI – ADOPTION AND AMENDMENTS

These bylaws are adopted by a majority vote of the Mayor and Town Board of Commissioners and shall at all times be consistent with all other ordinances of the Town of Matthews and the State of North Carolina. These bylaws may be amended by the Board of Commissioners.

Adopted this 14th day of December, 2015.

Mayor James Taylor

Town Clerk Lori Canapinno