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STEVEN M. FULOP
MAYOR OF JERSEY CITY

E.O. 2018-005

March 28, 2018

**EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF JERSEY CITY
CREATING A VETERANS' ADVISORY TASK FORCE TO ADVISE AND ASSIST THE NEW
DIVISION OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Mayor of the City of Jersey City by law, I hereby issue the following Executive Order:

WHEREAS, the City of Jersey City understands itself to have an obligation, inherent in its being an American city, to intentionally and robustly welcome and integrate veterans and military personnel of the United States armed forces into its communities and institutions; and

WHEREAS, the number of veterans continues to rise due to ongoing United States military commitments; and

WHEREAS, Jersey City is positioned to be a compelling destination for recent veterans seeking a new home, opportunities for post-service excellence, and a healthy transition to a rewarding civilian life; and

WHEREAS, to address these concerns, the City of Jersey City established a Division of Veterans' Affairs to develop forward-thinking opportunities and partnerships to improve the quality of life of veterans, military personnel, and both groups' respective families; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Veterans' Affairs will also develop capacities for total health and wellness in veterans, military personnel, and both groups' respective families; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Veterans' Affairs will also develop interdepartmental competencies and relationships to best care for veterans, military personnel, and both groups' respective families.

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority vested in me by law as Mayor of the City of Jersey City, I hereby issue the following Executive Order formally creating a multi-disciplinary Veterans' Advisory Task Force to advise and assist the new Division of Veterans' Affairs, enhancing emerging capacities to best anticipate, assess, address the needs of Jersey City's veterans, military personnel, and both groups' respective families.

A. Creation of a Veterans' Advisory Task Force

There is hereby created a Veterans' Advisory Task Force ("VATF") which shall advise and assist the new Division of Veterans' Affairs for two (2) years from the date of this Executive Order.

B. Membership, Terms, and Removal

- a) The VATF shall consist of seven (7) voting members, as well as the Director of Veterans' Affairs who shall serve as an ex-officio, nonvoting member. As outlined below, four (4) members shall be appointed by the Council and three (3) members shall be appointed by the Mayor. Each member shall be appointed to a particular seat on this body, meeting respective specific criteria so to provide the VATF with diverse perspectives and areas of functional expertise:
 - i. Appointed by Council:
 - Veteran discharged no more than ten years (10) from date of appointment, who shall serve as Co-Chair;
 - Veteran discharged no less than ten years (10) from date of appointment, who shall serve as Co-Chair;
 - Veteran (military service period irrelevant) who possesses demonstrable and substantive experience, influence, and relationships in Jersey City's business community and private sector;
 - Councilmember selected by the Council.
 - ii. Appointed by Mayor:
 - Educational professional with demonstrable, substantive expertise in higher education relevant to veterans' affairs, to include adult and second-career education, college transition, vocational skills training, and job skill development;
 - Health care professional with demonstrable, substantive expertise in public health relevant to veterans' affairs, to include mental health coverage, trauma-informed care, senior affairs, and comprehensive family wellness;
 - Business professional with demonstrable, substantive expertise in community and job force development relevant to veterans' affairs, to include entrepreneurial skills training, financial navigation and planning, and facilitation of first-time homeownership.
- b) Members appointed by the Mayor shall be veterans when candidate pool allows, but the dispositive factor in appointment by Mayor shall be demonstrable, substantive expertise in a specific functional area relevant to veterans' affairs, as outlined above.

- c) Members who are veterans shall provide upon appointment documentation of military service and characterization of discharge. Documents can include a DD214, Honorable Discharge Certificate, or similar forms. Characterization of discharge shall be provided, though appointing authorities shall consider the total candidate and evidence of post-service excellence when evaluating prospective appointees.
- d) Members shall be residents of Jersey City and provide proof of residency upon appointment.
- e) Members other than the Director of Veterans' Affairs and appointed Councilmember shall not hold elected or appointed office in the government of the City of Jersey City, nor be employees of the City of Jersey City.
- f) The VATF shall expire after two (2) years following the issuance of this Order and it shall be renewable at the option of the Mayor. All the members shall serve for a term of two (2) years. Vacancies created by resignation or otherwise shall be filled by the respective appointing authority for the completion of the term.
- g) All vacancies on the VATF, including at its establishment following the issuance of this Order, shall be filled by the respective appointing authority within sixty (60) days of vacancy.
- h) All members of the VATF shall serve at the pleasure of their respective appointing authority and can be removed by their respective appointing authority at any time and for any reason.
- i) Voting members who fail to attend two (2) consecutive regular meetings, held quarterly, may also then be removed, at the following regular meeting, by two-thirds majority vote of the VATF voting members themselves.

C. Meetings

- a) The VATF shall meet at least once every quarter at a time fixed by the Chairpersons. These will serve as the VATF's regular meetings. The Chairpersons may call special meetings as necessary.
- b) The VATF shall not be construed as a body whose meetings are subject to the Open Public Meetings Act, though it will announce its meetings via a public, forward-facing platform at least two (2) weeks in advance of convening; keep minutes documenting attendance of members; and hold its meetings in public venues accessible to a range of disabilities and via a variety of transportation options.
- c) The VATF shall establish further internal processes for administration, operations, and record-keeping as necessary, as permissible by law and established by simple majority vote of its voting members.

D. Duties

- a) The VATF shall advise and assist the Division of Veterans' Affairs in standing up robust capacities, competencies, and relationships in the following areas:
 - i. Health and wellness. Explicitly includes mental health; suicide intervention and prevention training; disability access; senior affairs; nutrition; family wellness; and both women's and children's health.
 - ii. Housing. Explicitly includes facilitation of first-time home ownership; disability access; and homelessness intervention and prevention.
 - iii. Education and vocational training. Explicitly includes adult education; examination and licensure preparation; and job skill training.
 - iv. Employment and career transition. Explicitly includes veteran entrepreneurship; navigation of governmental regulation; career counseling and transition; interview coaching; facilitation of employment networks; creation of private sector partnerships; and educational initiatives to elevate private sector awareness of veterans' concerns, opportunities, and strengths.
 - v. Community integration and service. Explicitly includes civic engagement; facilitation of social networks; elevation of veterans' profiles in public service; and educational initiatives to elevate public sector awareness of veterans' concerns, opportunities, and strengths.
 - vi. Transportation and quality of life. Explicitly includes senior affairs; disability access; facilitation of veterans' travel to and from public events; and nurturing of veterans' role in civic life.
 - vii. Benefits, celebrations, and memorials. Explicitly includes leadership in civic parades, ceremonies, and rituals; dissemination and expansion of veterans' resources; and greater engagement between established institutional opportunities and new local actors.
- b) The VATF shall communicate with and solicit information from veterans service organizations, other community associations, nonprofit organizations, private sector entities, and government departments and agencies so to both (1) find data on the state of and challenges experienced by Jersey City's veterans, military personnel, and both groups' respective families, and (2) recommend how the City of Jersey City might best anticipate, assess, and address the needs of veterans, military personnel, and both groups' respective families.
- c) The VATF shall submit an annual report to the Council and Mayor of its findings and recommendations, once twelve months (12) following the issuance of this Order and once twenty-four (24) months following the issuance of this Order. An advance copy of this annual report will be provided in full to the Director of Veterans' Affairs for review two (2) weeks prior to its scheduled date of submission. The Director of Veterans' Affairs will be

permitted to submit an addendum to the VATF annual report, due to the Chairpersons within one (1) week of receipt of advance copy, which will be included in the final product submitted to the Council and Mayor.

E. City Cooperation and Technical Assistance

- a) All departments and agencies of the City of Jersey City shall cooperate with and support the work of the VATF and its investigations related to the care of veterans, to the degree possible and permissible by law.
- b) The Division of Veterans' Affairs shall be resourced to include a budget which provides for the reasonable clerical, material needs of the VATF.

F. Limitations of Power

- a) Notwithstanding its duty to communicate with and solicit information from veterans service organizations, other community associations, nonprofit organizations, private sector entities, and government departments and agencies, and notwithstanding its role in investigating concerns related to care for veterans by departments and agencies of the City of Jersey City, the VATF shall have no authority within itself to bind the government into agreements, nor expend any funds. Any such agreements or expenditures would require action by the appropriate respective entity.

G. Effective Date

- a) This Order shall be effective immediately. It shall be kept on file in the Offices of the City Clerk and the Business Administrator, as well as the Division of Veterans' Affairs, and it will also be made available to the public upon request.

Very truly yours,



STEVEN M. FULOP
MAYOR

SMF/kk

cc: Robert Kakoleski, Business Administrator
Robert Byrne, City Clerk
Jeremy Farrell, Corporation Counsel
All Department Directors