

MINUTES  
STATE OF NEBRASKA COMMISSION ON MILITARY AND VETERAN AFFAIRS  
301 Centennial Mall South, PO Box 95083, Lincoln, NE 68509-5083  
December 20, 2022 - 2:00 p.m. - 301 Centennial Mall South, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, NDVA

The Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs (Commission) met on December 20, 2022, at 2:00 p.m. at the Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs (NDVA), 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, Nebraska. Commissioners also attended via Zoom in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Commissioners present (voting members):

Major General Daryl Bohac, Adjutant General of the Nebraska National Guard  
John Hilgert, Director, Nebraska Department of Veterans' Affairs  
Tami Thompson, 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District  
Dan Donovan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District  
Dave Bloomfield, 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District

Commissioners present (nonvoting, ex officio members):

Rick Evans, Chair, State Committee Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve  
Nikki Nader, 55<sup>th</sup> Wing Designee  
Colonel David Preisman, U.S. Strategic Command Designee  
Colonel John Roberts, 557<sup>th</sup> Weather Wing Designee

Commissioners excused (voting member):

Anthony Goins, Director, Nebraska Department of Economic Development

Commissioners excused (nonvoting, ex officio members):

Jon Lokamas, Veterans' Program Coordinator, Nebraska Department of Labor

**I. CALL TO ORDER – LOCATION OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT**

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Phil O'Donnell, Military Affairs Liaison.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Bohac, Hilgert, Thompson, Donovan, Bloomfield, Evans, Nader, Preisman, and Roberts were present. Goins and Lokamas were excused.

**III. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 24, 2022, COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – Action/Vote**

O'Donnell noted changes to include a simplified format and confirmation from the Nebraska Department of Labor that the minutes reflected the progress report by the Veterans' Program Coordinator pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §48-203.

Moved by Bloomfield and seconded by Hilgert to approve the October 24, 2022, Commission meeting minutes. Voting Aye: Bohac, Hilgert, Thompson, Donovan, and Bloomfield. Motion

carried.

#### **IV. DELIBERATION – DRAFT CONTENT FOR A LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FUTURE MILITARY MISSIONS AND STRATEGIC BASING DECISIONS IN NEBRASKA PURSUANT TO THE DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION DELINEATED IN NEB. REV. STAT. §55-602**

O'Donnell made four initial points. First, that this effort is a follow-up action to the October 24<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting. Second, that the draft content is very similar to LR1 from February 2021, which express support for the United States Air Force to reestablish the U.S. Space Command headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base. Third, that there are new senators in the 108<sup>th</sup> Legislature. Fourth, that similar legislative resolutions are not without precedent. Colorado reaffirmed their desire to host the U.S. Space Command Headquarters through a legislative resolution in February 2022. O'Donnell opened the floor to the Commissioners for comment.

Bohac offered that the draft content could be more inclusive as a state. Bohac suggested writing “Whereas Nebraska and the cities of Omaha, Lincoln, and Bellevue...” to create greater statewide inclusion. Bohac articulated the importance of keeping references to the Governor’s initiatives to create a more veteran friendly state in the resolution as well.

Evans asked if the goal of the resolution is to focus on attracting Delta 13 or Space Force units.

O'Donnell described how a conversation regarding Delta 13 during the October 24<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting was the impetus of this draft content; however, it is open to deliberation as to whether to focus the draft content on a specific unit or mission.

Evans offered that a more generic and broad approach could attract more compatible missions and avoid excluding Nebraska from any other future missions. Evans offered that recognizing the Military Base Development and Support Fund would highlight the financial commitment the state has made in attracting missions.

Bloomfield shared that his intention for the legislative resolution is to let the Department of Defense know that Nebraska is open for any military expansion.

Hilgert offered that including the \$25 million appropriation to the Military Base Development and Support Fund would be a demonstration of what the state can do to support the military and attract new missions.

Bohac offered that the “Be it resolved” statement should be changed to “at Offutt Air Force Base or other military installations or locations in the State of Nebraska.”

Hilgert agreed and observed that there could be investments in the Armed Forces that do not take place at an existing military installation.

Bohac, Hilgert, and Thompson asked that the incoming governor’s staff, and in particular, the incoming Governor’s Policy Research Office, review the final draft content before reaching out to a state senator for possible introduction.

Preisman offered that the revised draft legislative resolution content codifies everything the military community feels from the state and provides a script to tell others around the federal government why Nebraska is the place to be for future missions.

O'Donnell confirmed agreement to broaden the draft content to be more inclusive of the entire state, to remove specific references to Delta 13, to add a provision related to the Military Base Development and Support Fund, to add a provision regarding welcoming veterans, and then to ensure the Governor's Policy Research Office reviews the draft content.

Bohac offered that a provision regarding the reserve component should be added.

Evans described the size of the reserve component in Nebraska. Evans asked if the Commission might encourage the legislature to appropriate more funds to the Military Base Development and Support Fund or is this draft content focused on letting the Department of Defense know that Nebraska is ready to take on more missions.

Bloomfield noted that his intent is to let the Department of Defense know that Nebraska is user friendly and ready for more missions.

Hilgert described how some states, such as Texas, do provide funds for installation enhancement on an annual or biannual basis.

Bohac offered that the legislative resolution could serve as the basis for a bill which could be less restrictive.

Hilgert agreed.

**V. RECOMMENDED CONTENT FOR A LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FUTURE MILITARY MISSIONS AND STRATEGIC BASING DECISIONS IN NEBRASKA – Action/Vote**

Moved by Bohac and seconded by Hilgert to revise the draft legislative resolution content and have the revised content reviewed by the Governor's Policy Research Office. Voting Aye: Bohac, Hilgert, Thompson, Donovan, and Bloomfield. Motion carried.

**VI. MOTION TO ADJOURN – Action/Vote**

Moved by Bohac and seconded by Hilgert to adjourn. Voting Aye: Bohac, Hilgert, Thompson, Donovan, and Bloomfield. Motion carried. Adjourned at 2:27 p.m.