MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Ron DeSantis
    Honorable Ashley Moody
    Honorable Jimmy Patronis
    Honorable Nikki Fried

FROM: Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs
      Danny Burgess, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Agenda – Cabinet Meeting of September 24, 2019

The next public meeting of the Governor and Cabinet to transact the business of the Department of Veterans’ Affairs will be at 9:00 a.m. (EDT), September 24, 2019 in Tallahassee, Florida.

The Agenda and all required back-up materials are attached for your review.

If you have any questions, please call my Legislative and Cabinet Affairs Director, Allison Sitte, at (850) 487-1533 x7723.

cc: Beau Beaubien, Director of Cabinet Affairs
    Executive Office of the Governor

    Chris Spencer
    Governor’s Office of Policy and Budget

Attachments

“Honoring those who served U.S.”
AGENDA
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS’ AFFAIRS
Meeting materials for the following items are available on the web at:
http://floridavets.org/about-us/public-notice/

MEMBERS
Governor Ron DeSantis
Attorney General Ashley Moody
Chief Financial Officer Jimmy Patronis
Commissioner Nikki Fried

September 24, 2019
9:00 A.M. (EDT)
The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida

Contact: Allison Sitte, Director of Legislative & Cabinet Affairs
(850) 487-1533

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<td>Respectfully request approval of the minutes of the December 4, 2018 meeting.</td>
<td>(ATTACHMENT 1) RECOMMEND APPROVAL</td>
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<td>Respectfully request approval of the minutes of the January 11, 2019 meeting.</td>
<td>(ATTACHMENT 2) RECOMMEND APPROVAL</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Respectfully submit nominees for the Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame Class of 2019.</td>
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"Honoring those who served U.S."
STATE OF FLORIDA

IN RE: MEETING OF THE GOVERNOR AND CABINET

CABINET MEMBERS: GOVERNOR RICK SCOTT
ATTORNEY GENERAL PAM BONDI
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER JIMMY PATRONIS
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE ADAM PUTNAM

DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2018

LOCATION: CABINET MEETING ROOM
LOWER LEVEL, THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

REPORTED BY: NANCY S. METZKE, RPR, FPR
COURT REPORTER

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GOVERNOR SCOTT: Now we get to recognize the Medal of Merit honoree. Glen Sutphin with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUTPHIN: Thank you very much, sir.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has two agenda items today, sir. The first one — certainly good afternoon now, Governor, and Attorney General Bondi, and CFO Patronis, and Commissioner Putnam.

The Item Number 1 is the minutes from the August 14, 2018, Cabinet meeting. Respectfully request approval.

COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: So move.

GOVERNOR SCOTT: All right. Is there a second?

CFO PATRONIS: Second.

GOVERNOR SCOTT: Comments or objections?

(NO RESPONSE).

GOVERNOR SCOTT: Hearing none, the motion carries.

Hall of Fame.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUTPHIN: The second item,
sir, is the list of nominees for the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame Class of --

GOVERNOR SCOTT: Okay. Great list.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUTPHIN: Yes, sir, absolutely. And it will get better and better every year as we make sure we find them.

Subject to your questions or comments, respectfully request approval.

GOVERNOR SCOTT: Is there a motion?

CFO PATRONIS: So move.

GOVERNOR SCOTT: Second?

COMMISSIONER PUTNAM: Second.

GOVERNOR SCOTT: Comments or objections?

(NO RESPONSE).

GOVERNOR SCOTT: Hearing none, the motion carries.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUTPHIN: Before we start this, sir, the Department of Veterans Affairs and our veterans want to thank you all, the honor it has been to work with you. Everyone of you have done something that's unique and special for our veterans, our returning troops, and our families.

Governor Scott, you've always stood strong with us and the Department of Military Affairs on budgets, things that we needed to take care of it,
being able to get veterans homes built, being able

to get programs out there and helping us get ahold

of the VA --

GOVERNOR SCOTT: The number one state for

veterans.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUTPHIN: Absolutely, sir.

We're number one veterans and military.

(APPLAUSE).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUTPHIN: And we can prove

that. That isn't just a bunch of words out there.

The other thing is, General Bondi, you made it

available to us so that we received -- oh, she's
gone?

GOVERNOR SCOTT: She'll be back.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUTPHIN: Okay. Well, CFO

Patronis, you made it in such a way that your

military returning could apply to the fire schools

and to other programs that they had not been able

to get into. That's been a big job thing for our

veterans in rehabbing them.

Commissioner Putnam, you've done all kind of

things to make sure our veterans are safe.

Number 2, you've made sure that there is hunting

and fishing and things that those who have suffered

so greatly can now go back and have some semblance
of reality of life.

No other state does these type of things. Everybody brags they did this, Texas did that and everything. In reality, this has been a wonderful, wonderful time.

Your support -- in the military our word is our bond. Your bond is above and beyond, and it shows in the greatest of military traditions; and I thank you from the bottom of our heart.

(APPLAUSE).

GOVERNOR SCOTT: So, Glen, how are you going to do this?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUTPHIN: Steve will come over and read the names, sir. I'll come up there with our chairman of the veterans, and then we'll bring the veterans up, sir -- I mean the nominees -- as they receive their award; and then we'll take a picture with their family, sir.

(WHEREUPON, THERE WAS THE PRESENTATION OF THE VETERANS HALL OF FAME NOMINEES AFTER WHICH THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED WITH PRESENTATIONS BY THE RETIRING THREE CABINET MEMBERS).

* * * * *
STATE OF FLORIDA

IN RE: MEETING OF THE GOVERNOR AND CABINET

CABINET MEMBERS: GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS
ATTORNEY GENERAL ASHLEY MOODY
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER JIMMY PATRONIS
COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE NIKKI FRIED

DATE: FRIDAY, JANUARY 11, 2019

LOCATION: CABINET MEETING ROOM
LOWER LEVEL, THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

REPORTED BY: LISA SNYDER
COURT REPORTER

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GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Danny Burgess, is he here?

COMMISSIONER FRIED: Governor, may I interject for a second?

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Sure.

COMMISSIONER FRIED: While I look forward to working with everybody this year, and-- I would like to remind everybody that we are a collegial body, and these agency heads, including those of FDLE, serve at the pleasure of the entire Cabinet.

Their application process, interviews, selection of appointments deserve the full measure of transparency under the Sunshine Laws.

The people of Florida expect it, and it's the law.

The candidates here today were brought forth without a proper and transparent process, in the darkness and not in the light.

I ask that we move the agency head discussions and procedures until which time that we actually have an agreement about this Cabinet of moving forward with the process, and to make sure that we are affirming our commitment to make these choices.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Well, for the Veterans
Affairs, the Statute require the Governor-- it's a Governor appointment. It's not a Cabinet appointment. So, I am going to go ahead and have Danny be interviewed. I think that that's appropriate.

I do think we do need to discuss the Cabinet appointments, that are not Governor appointments, and arrive at the best way to be able to do that.

So, Danny-- is Danny here today? Oh, there you are.

He is a captain of the Judge Advocate General Corps of the United States Army Reserves. He has been a tireless advocate for veterans during his time in the legislature, and a respected public servant for many years.

I believe Danny has had the chance to meet with each of you individually, and I would now like to appoint him to serve as the Executive Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Will you approach the podium, Danny, so we can conduct your interview.

And, I will open it up to whoever wants to get it started.

CFO PATRONIS: I'll start, Governor.

Danny, thank you-- Representative, thank you for coming by and making an appointment with my office,
meeting with me, answering my questions.

I feel like this is more ceremonial now, because you took the time out to meet on my officials calendar, to meet with me in my official timeline, and as I understand, as you told me, you were meeting with all members of the Cabinet.

I really feel comfortable and confident that you are the-- capaible to do the job.

As I monitored you, your service over through the legislature for the last few years, I know you have a servant's heart. But, more importantly I know that your love for country and service, and taking care of your fellow man, and ensuring that all veterans that have served this country, and those that have served our state, are being taken care of.

So, Governor, good nomination. I support your pick.

REPRESENTATIVE BURGESS: Thank you, Mr. CFO.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Attorney General?

ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY: Thank you, Governor, for giving us the opportunity to speak with Representative Burgess.

What struck me is your experience in the law, and your service to our state and our country.

And, as the top legal officer in the state, I
have, and as a judge, I often saw veterans that are residents of this state intersect with our criminal justice system.

There are mental health issues that are issues that have affected them because of their service, and I was very excited to see that our Governor nominated someone that has experience with our legal system, so that we might work together to improve the lives of our veterans in Florida.

Have you given that thought, and what might be some of your ideas for doing that?

REPRESENTATIVE BURGESS: Thank you, General Bondi-- or, General Moody. I'm so sorry.

ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY: (Laughter) It's not the first time it's happened.

CFO PATRONIS: You want to invite Mr. Zingale up now, because I think--

ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY: Usually it comes from the media.

REPRESENTATIVE BURGESS: Strike that. (Laughter) So, it was great meeting with you yesterday. It was great meeting all of you yesterday.

Governor, thank you so much for your confidence, and your nomination here.

I couldn't be more passionate when it comes to
serving our veterans.

As a person that's in the military myself right now, I think that there are a number of things that we need to continue to build upon, and a lot of those revolve around transitional services.

We have the largest number of post-911 veterans coming to the State of Florida, and moving to the State of Florida, than the entire country. And we need to be there for them, as they are just starting their lives. They are just transitioning out of the military. We need to be there for them, and all of our service members, when it comes to helping them overcome-- our combat veterans overcome post traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury, helping reduce the suicide rate that is just a state of emergency among our veterans.

Ways we can do that is through transitional services, through occupational licensing, streamlining all of that, to help them find good solid careers here in the State of Florida, and not have to reinvent the entire wheel when they are highly trained, highly skilled operators over there, overseas, in very intense environments. They can come and do that here in Florida, and we want that. We want to attract that.

Veterans Court; we had a great discussion on Veterans Court. I think there should be a Veterans
Court in every circuit in the State of Florida. What an awesome, awesome opportunity. I know you have presided over those, and that is something that I would love to work on, going forward, and seeing how we can take that state-wide.

And, I just believe fully that we also need to work on veteran homelessness. We do have a large number of homeless veterans in the state. Too many. One is too many. And, so there are things that we can do there to help do-- to help mitigate what I think is just a dire problem. We need to be there for them. They served us, we should serve them in every way we can. They were there for us in our darkest hour, and this is how we can be there for them in theirs.

COMMISSIONER FRIED: Governor, if I may.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Sure.

COMMISSIONER FRIED: Danny, you and I also had-- Representative Burgess-- a fantastic conversation as well yesterday. I respect a lot of the experience and expertise that you bring to this position, and to this role.

We had a very in depth conversation about being able to deal with mental health issues, and PTSD, and giving our veterans an opportunity to have access to medical marijuana, and alternative relief.
So, I do think that you are highly qualified. Know that I will have to vote no today, just based on the process and procedure, but that I do think that we need to have transparency in this process. But, know that I have the utmost respect for what you have done for our country, for our state, and do look forward to working with you in the future.

REPRESENTATIVE BURGESS: Thank you, Commissioner.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Anymore questions for Mr. Burgess?

CFO PATRONIS: I got one.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Sure.

CFO PATRONIS: Thank you, Governor.

Representative, one of the missions of the Department of Veterans Affairs that you will monitor and carry through, I think it's important for the audience to know, and that's with our VA liaisons. Can you-- because I think this is almost like a secret. I don't think people realize that you will have the opportunity to manage a team of experts, service personnel, that will essentially save the State of Florida money. Could you explain how that program works?

REPRESENTATIVE BURGESS: Sure. Thank you very much for the question. Great question. Great point.
The return on investment from the-- from our expert benefits and claims analyst within the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, I believe-- and the team may know better than I-- but, I believe it's close to a $90 return investment to every one dollar. And, so we save the State money by the service we provide veterans. And, whether it's in our nursing homes, or through the claims and helping soldiers realize what they are eligible for. Some soldiers just-- they don't want to ask, or they don't know. They don't know what they are eligible for. There has been situations, just in my short reserve service, where I didn't know what I was eligible for.

So, we need to improve upon our ability to disseminate that information so all our veterans know that we have services here for them.

And, we also cover now-- the great thing about the FDVA is that we work hand in hand with Federal VA, and we do help assist those people who may have fallen through the cracks, through no fault of anyone necessarily, and help get them the benefits that they deserve.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: Anymore questions?

ATTORNEY GENERAL MOODY: I have no other questions. I think you are imminently qualified,
Representative Burgess.

I would like to thank Governor DeSantis for placing this on the agenda in advance, giving us time to interview him, getting to know Representative Burgess, what he has to offer our great state. Thank you very much, Governor.

GOVERNOR DESANTIS: And, I just appreciate, Danny, your, you know, your passion. It comes through. Your energy. And, I think that, you know, to get a young guy like you out there helping our veterans community I think will do a lot of really good things, and I think you have the passion for it, and, you know, really—that's important. So, we appreciate you coming to conduct this interview. Obviously, we will like to have a vote at a later time, but I thank you for your willingness to serve.

REPRESENTATIVE BURGESS: Thank you, Governor. It's an honor to be able to even be considered for this post, and it's awesome to see a fellow JAG in the Governor's seat.

Thank you all very much.

* * * *
MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Ron DeSantis
   Honorable Ashley Moody
   Honorable Jimmy Patronis
   Honorable Nikki Fried

FROM: Florida Department of Veterans’ Affairs
      Danny Burgess, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame – Class of 2019

The agency is pleased to recommend the following 16 veterans for induction into the 2019 Florida Veterans’ Hall of Fame:

- John Brinkley, Sgt, USAF
- Edward Copeland III, MAJ, USAR
- Donald Courtney, CW4, USA
- Raymond “Ray” Cralle, PFC, USMCR
- Michael Flynt, COL, USAF (deceased)
- Matt Franz, CPT, USA
- Irving Friedman, PO3, USNR
- Ali Frohlich, LT COL, USAF
- Kathryn Gates-Skipper, SSGT, USMC
- Dale Leslie, Capt, USMC (deceased)
- Norman Olson, Captain, USN
- Robert Phillips, Capt, USAFR
- Juan Santiago-Seda, SFC, USA
- Michael Waldrop, CPT, USAR
- William Webb, BG, USAF
- Albert Zant, CPT, USAR

If you have any questions, please call my Cabinet and Legislative Affairs Director, Allison Sitte, at (850) 487-1533 ext. 7723.

cc: Beau Beaubien, Director of Cabinet Affairs
   Executive Office of the Governor

   Cynthia Kelly, Director
   Governor’s Office of Policy and Budget

“Honoring those who served U.S.”