AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP FOR ST. CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO FOSTER AN EMPLOYMENT-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES, FURTHER ESTABLISHING AN AWARD OF APPRECIATION TO RECOGNIZE EMPLOYERS IN THE ST. CHARLES COUNTY COMMUNITY WHO ARE WORKING TO DEVELOP THEIR BUSINESSES AS VETERAN FRIENDLY PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT, AND DIRECTING THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT TO AMEND COUNTY BID DOCUMENTS TO CALL ON BIDDERS TO INDICATE WHETHER THEY HAVE DEVELOPED VETERAN FRIENDLY EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND TO PROVIDE COPIES OF THEM FOR INFORMATION

WHEREAS, each generation of Americans returning from serving their Country in the United States Military faces re-entry into the civilian job market; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Labor Statistics has identified that veterans working in the civilian job market throughout the United States number nearly eleven million (11,000,000); men and women who served their country in World War II, the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam Era, the Gulf War Eras and in peacetime; and
WHEREAS, between 2015 and 2020, those who served in the Vietnam Era and the two Gulf War Eras will make up approximately 70% of the veterans working in the civilian work force, more than 7.6 million men and women; and

WHEREAS, the Bureau of Labor Statistics further identified that some 472,000 veterans were residents of Missouri in 2013, 233,000 of whom were in the civilian work force or were looking for work; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Veterans Affairs indicates that there are 30,628 Veterans of all periods of service living in St. Charles County as of September 30, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Census Bureau has published statistics covering a five year period from 2008-2012 which indicate that in St. Charles County more than 14,000 veterans residing in the County are working, or looking for work, in the civilian work force; and

WHEREAS, statistics also indicate that the unemployment rate in 2013 for veterans who live in Missouri stands at 6.1%, a statistic that reflects more than 13,000 Missourians who have served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States who are trying to re-enter the civilian labor force; and

WHEREAS, between 700 and 800 of these Missouri veterans seeking work are part of the St. Charles County community; and
WHEREAS, 29% of Gulf War Era II veterans reported having a service-connected disability in 2013, compared with 15% of all veterans; and

WHEREAS, one in 3 veterans with a service connected disability worked in the public sector in 2013, compared with 1 in 5 veterans with no disability; and

WHEREAS, it is incumbent on civilian employers, both public and private, to re-examine their places of employment and continue to develop practices that are veteran friendly; and

WHEREAS, in addition, employers in the civilian sector, public and private, are also called upon to develop employment practices which support citizen soldiers who serve in the National Guard or Reserves since these men and women must not only support their families, they must also be prepared for potential future deployments as well as for their required training and exercises; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive has directed that a budget request for the 2015 budget be prepared to establish a position of Veteran Coordination and Recruitment, subject to approval by the County Council in the 2015 budget; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive has requested that the Council establish the Veterans Best Practices Working Group as set out in this ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive has further requested that the Council establish an award of appreciation to recognize businesses throughout St. Charles County who have
worked to establish veteran friendly employment practices and work places.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. There is hereby established the St. Charles County Veterans Best Practices Working Group made up of St. Charles County employees who are veterans of the United States Armed Services and Directors or representatives from various departments. The members of the Working Group shall be appointed by the County Executive in accordance with Section 3, below.

Section 2. PURPOSE. The Working Group is charged with developing best practices around the following goals:

A. Establish a link with Key Community Veteran Support Groups to catalogue and make use of resources to attract and retain veterans to County employment.

B. Establish a Relationship with Scott Air Force Base and Fort Leonard Wood to get the word out to military service members planning their separation from active duty about jobs that become open in St. Charles County government.

C. Recommend an effective recruiting methodology;

D. Develop an approach to establishing a presence at military job and recruiting fairs that utilizes
the expertise of County employees who are veterans or currently serving in the National Guard or the Reserve.

E. Establish a program involving current employees of the County who are veterans or National Guard/Reserve to mentor new employees who are veterans; and

F. Act as an Advisory Group to the Department of Human Resources to ensure that County benefits and other resources (both federal and private), including PTSD, are made known to County employees who are veterans; and

G. Establish links with employers who are in the private sector who are developing best practices around veteran recruitment and retention.

Section 3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE WORKING GROUP. The Working Group shall consist of twelve (12) members, at least nine (9) of which shall be current county employees who have served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States, with an emphasis on Vietnam Era and Gulf War Era Veterans. In addition, the Director of the Department of Human Resources, and a representative from the Sheriff’s Department (Police Department effective January 1, 2015), and the Departments of Corrections, shall serve on the initial make-up of the Working Group. The County Executive shall appoint replacement members should openings occur after the initial committee is formed. Administrative and technical assistance to the Working Group shall be as assigned by the County Executive.
Section 4. The County Executive shall select the initial members to serve as Chairman and Vice Chairman, which positions shall thereafter be elected annually by the members. However an employee who is a veteran or currently serving member of the National Guard or Reserve shall hold the position of Chairman.

Section 5. This Working Group shall provide the County Executive a status report on their tasks prior to November 11, 2014.

Section 6. There is hereby established an award to recognize businesses, not-for-profits and other organizations throughout St. Charles County who have developed best practices to ensure that their workplace is friendly to the recruitment, hiring and support of those who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States and/or those who continue their service to the United States in the National Guard or Reserves.

Section 7. The Finance Department shall amend County bid documents such that businesses bidding or offering qualifications to the County are called upon to indicate if they have developed veteran friendly employment policies, and to provide the County a copy of such policy as a point of information.

Section 8. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon passage and approval.