

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY
VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES**

San Diego County Veterans Service Office
5560 Overland Avenue, Suite 310, San Diego CA 92123
January 10, 2015

Meeting Held at the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center in Balboa Park (VMMC)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mary Beth Newton, District 1; Laurie Martell, District 3; Wil Quintong, Deputy Director AIS, San Diego County Interim VSO; Ted Kagan, District 2; Nancy Owen, Member-at-Large; John Weaver, District 4; Bill Dillingham, Member-at-Large; Michael Robledo, District 5;

MEMBERS ABSENT

Will Rodriguez, Member-at-Large (U); Commander, Navy Region Southwest

OTHERS PRESENT

Tim Mathues, Veteran Outreach Coordinator, Human Resources San Diego County

1. Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Introductions/Public (3 minutes)

4. Approval of Minutes Previous Meeting

Motion was made by Michael Robledo and seconded by Nancy Owen to approve prior meeting minutes

5. Chairman's Report

Mary Beth wished Happy New Year to everybody.

Mary Beth asked for participation from members on ways to revitalize the VAC meetings and to work on ways to increase interest and attendance. There were discussions and suggestions on how to do this. Also, she asked members to pass the word on the VAC vacancy now posted on the Clerk of the Board's website.

Legislative:

Mary Beth spoke about an email from Pete Conaty that CALVet Secretary Peter J Gravett retiring at the end of the month (Attachment A)

John Weaver spoke about the pending legislation, the Toxic Exposure Research Act of 2014. He brought more written information on the bill. This legislation directs the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish a national center for research on the issue. John wants VAC to propose a resolution that County supervisors use their office to support the passage of this.

Proposal passed by VAC for the County Board of Supervisors to support this measure, seconded and agreed by all.

One VA

Michael Robledo is not able to attend this meeting temporarily so Mary Beth asked for other members to attend, possibly take turns each month if their schedule permits.

Chula Vista Veterans Home (CVVH)

Nancy Owen spoke about the discussion with Luis Monteagudo about the Memory Care Unit at the last meeting of the CVVH Support Foundation. This is still in the forefront in Sacramento. The administrator, Lael Hepworth, was agreeable to including this in a strategic plan for the future. Currently there are no resources or infrastructure to support a Memory Care Unit.

Wil Quintong added the other memory care units in California are funded through the California Department of Veteran Affairs. The recommendation that went forward from the Board of Supervisors proposed by Supervisor Cox, was to express the County's support to CALVet for the funding of the Memory Care unit at the Chula Vista home.

Mary Beth was asked to follow up with Luis Monteagudo and invite him to the next VAC meeting to provide more details on the proposal made by the Board.

United Veterans Council (UVC)

Mary Beth will attend the next meeting and speak to Jack Harkins to see if anyone on their team would like to attend VAC meetings.

John Weaver added UVC is an informational organization only.

County Veteran Service Office (CVSO)

Wil spoke about the Coalition meeting where Nick Macchione was the guest speaker. Mr. Macchione outlined some of the County's initiatives.

- Spoke about the Veteran Resource Center opening sometime in June 2015. There are about 18 nonprofits already committed.

- The County is looking at South Bay for a smaller version of a Veteran Resource Center.
- Encouraged everyone to attend the State of the County address by Supervisor Bill Horn as the incoming Chairman who is expected to talk about veterans.
- The recruitment for the VSO position closes January 16, 2015. HR will review the applications. Going through the process to change the title from Veteran Service Officer to Veteran Service Officer/Director of Military and Veteran Affairs for the County and will report directly to Nick Macchione.

Ben Dillingham brought up changing the Veterans Advisory Council title to include Military Affairs. Ben feels it would bring more stature and may attract more interest in serving on the council. Mary Beth suggested waiting for the position to be filled, and then VAC can discuss it.

6. Community Reports

Mary Beth asked for input from members on how they can help revitalize interest in attending VAC meetings. Laurie Martell agreed with the idea for the members to get more involved with their respective districts. Ted Kagan suggested being in touch with their County Supervisor's office. Nancy will contact the Chula Vista Veterans Home and will try to get a representative to attend. John Weaver will reach out to his representatives and let them know about the need for their input. Michael Robledo also agreed.

Mary Beth added that representatives need to realize what they say becomes public record directly to the Board of Supervisors via the minutes.

Nancy mentioned the funeral for retired Vice Admiral Edward Martin, USN that day.

Veteran Services office has a webpage in the San Diego County website that has all past meeting minutes and agendas and advises the public of upcoming meeting dates.

Webpage address:

http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/hhsa/programs/ais/veterans_advisory_council.html

Mary Beth spoke about the bylaws regarding unexcused absences. A VAC vacancy occurs when a member has more than one third unexcused absences in a 12 month period of the regularly scheduled meetings or three consecutive unexcused absences. Procedure is to let Mary Beth or Susie, CVSO Secretary, know if you cannot attend via

email. Attendance impacts the ability to attain a quorum so it is important to see a commitment to attendance

7. Unfinished Business

No unfinished business

8. New Business

No new business

9. Closing Remarks

Mary Beth said she looking forward to 2015, the new VSO position being filled, and revitalizing the attendance at the VAC.

10. Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM