

SAN DIEGO MILITARY & VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Office of Military & Veterans Affairs
5560 Overland Avenue, Suite 310, San Diego, CA 92123

March 9, 2019

Meeting held at County Operations Center (COC) 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Helen Horvath, Chair, Member at Large; Ted Kagan, Co-chair, District 2; Tony Teravainen, District 3; Jack Harkins, District 4; Nancy Owen, Member at Large; Karolyn Smith, Member at Large.

EXCUSED MEMBERS:

Anthony “Tony” Stewart, District 1

OTHERS PRESENT:

Wil Quintong, OMVA Director and Ex Officio member; Jennie Reza, OMVA secretary

VISITOR: Lance Lunker, CalVet LINC

1. Call to Order

The Military and Veterans Advisory Council (VAC) meeting was called to Order by Helen Horvath, Chair at 9:33 am.

2. Pledge of Allegiance Led by visitor, Lance Lunker

3. Introductions:

Welcome Jack Harkins, appointed by Nathan Fletcher, District 4

4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

There was a motion by Ted Kagan to approve February’s meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Karolyn Smith and passed by all.

5. Chair’s Report/Remarks Alzheimer’s Care Project

Helen Horvath requested all Council members to prepare a one page outline for project. The BOS will receive the informational outline and decide what project is approved for the Council to complete.

Helen Horvath provided the Fishbone Diagram, as a possible technique to use for a foundation to evolve the project.

Project topics and status are as follows:

1. Military and Veterans Behavioral Health & Suicide.
 - Ted Kagan has not been able to coordinate with Tony Stewart. Ted Kagan has started research. Ted Kagan is aware San Diego Community College District has recently had a workshop on subject. Helen Horvath will follow up with Tony Stewart to ensure that collaboration occurs. Karolyn Smith stated she will join Tony Stewart and Ted Kagan on the Military and Veterans Behavioral Health and Suicide project and include the bio-tech information/data as appropriate.

2. Alzheimer's Care & Other Memory Care - Helen Horvath and Nancy Owen met with Assemblywoman Shirley Weber's staff. The meeting with Lee Hernandez was productive and discussed memory care services in the County. The discussion progressed to factors surrounding a memory care center at the Veteran's Home in Chula Vista. Mr. Hernandez, Nancy Owen, and Helen Horvath had a fruitful meeting relating to overall issue of the importance of having a veteran's memory care center in the County, potentially at the Chula Vista Veteran's Home.

According to the VA database 1327 veterans in San Diego are suffering from Alzheimer's. HHS in 2018, updated a study and estimate by the year 2030, 115,000 San Diego County residents will develop Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's organizations in San Diego has resources available which are respite care, day care, and long term care. Two California Veteran's Home have memory care centers one in Yountville and another in Los Angeles. Leslie Ray, Senior Epidemiologist County of San Diego, will provide updated statistics relating to veterans with Alzheimer's and other dementia in the County. Helen Horvath has a meeting with Dr. Smith, Director of the San Diego Regional Medical Healthcare System to discuss the care available for veterans diagnosed with ADOD in the county.

3. Military Spousal Employment - Tony Teravainen was working with John Weaver. Jack Harkins, as the newly appointed representative for District 4, stated he would be interested in working on project. Tony Teravainen would like to collect further data on subject. In San Diego County there are 60,000 military spouses, 42% of military spouses are employed and half are underemployed. 25,000 spouses have left the work force or quit looking for employment. There is lot of activities in the Community, State and Federal level attempting to engage employment for spouses.

Federal Jobs transfer rules and practices will be a topic discussed. Tony Teravainen stated his project will be a snap shot and a starting point for the community to be aware of the complexity of the issue. As well as share the knowledge of the agencies and efforts that are trying to affect change. Tony Teravainen would like to take it as an opportunity to do an environmental scan.

- Helen Horvath continues to discuss the use of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Queue as an example of how military spouses could potentially maintain employment during a military career. The VA's Veteran Benefits Administration (VBA) operates utilizing a method of national claims filing where employees from multiple regions work are assigned claims outside their region to complete. The majority of the employees are telework employees under the Teleworks Act of 2010. When assigned to one region and a spouse is transferred to another region, the military spouse is required to quit their job or use leave without pay, until they are selected by priority processes to fill the next available open position. The question becomes why should a military spouse have to quit their job and reapply for the same job in a different region when it's the exact same type of job doing the same work through the National Queue? Telecommuting advantages is a topic to continue to discuss with the Veterans Administration.
- Helen Horvath has previously conducted research relating to military spouse employment and discussed the 2017 BlueStar Families research results. According to the research, there is \$500M+ to \$1.6B in unrealized annual income taxes as a result of military unemployment or underemployment. This has fiscal impact not only upon the Federal government; it filters down to the County level as well as the County of San Diego economy.
- Lance Lunker mentioned childcare is also an issue that is linked to spousal employment. The cost and availability of affordable childcare in the county and state has impacted military and veteran families.

During the project topics discussion, Tony Teravainen stressed the fact that veterans' homelessness was not selected as a key topic during the February vote for key topics. Tony Teravainen believes it is currently one of the most discussed items among veterans.

Tony Teravainen suggested that completing a white paper was not enough for the research process. There was no disagreement within the Council on the comment as the discussion moved towards the content of the actual product output. He suggested assessing the social or environment the issue resided within and then begin the process of further assessment to develop a quality product for the BOS as our research process. The Council agreed with the overall statements and method described by Tony Teravainen.

During the homelessness discussion, Helen Horvath discussed the work of the County of San Diego Integrative Services (Mr. Omar Passons, Director) and the pending meeting with David Estrella, Director at Housing and Community Development Services. The meetings related to how the County is managing the homelessness issue and plans for the future community engagement.

Tony Teravainen believed the Council would be doing a disservice to the Board of Supervisors by not having this topic on the research list and not keeping the BOS informed of the issue. The Chair, Helen Horvath, again reiterated that the topic was discussed during the HHSA Chair meeting on February 25, 2018 and is a part of HHSA's reports back to the Board of Supervisors from Integrative Services and also the Housing and Community Development Services directorates.

It was accepted by the council that the topic is a "hot topic", brings a lot of funding, and more than average activity attempting to repair the homelessness issue. The Chair stated, based upon the HHSA Chair meeting on February 25th, that the County is working diligently to address the homelessness factors. During the February 25th meeting, Mr. Omar Passons, Director of Integrative Services spoke about the Live Well and holistic view of a social service system in relationship to community concerns such as homelessness. Based upon the previous information provided by Mr. Passons and also the VA regarding homelessness, there is a causal link for many between the behavioral health and suicide project and also the military spouse project as these factors are subcategories of the homelessness issues. Helen Horvath suggested that Mr. Passons be invited to the April 2019 MVAC meeting to discuss how homelessness is being addressed in the County from a holistic and integrative point of view.

Jack Harkins states that anyone who is serving on the Council has interest in the benefit and welfare of military and veterans in San Diego County especially a high interest in homelessness. With that said there is not a lot of information that the Council can provide to the BOS that is not already being received from many other sources.

During the discussion it was pointed out that the Aging and Independent Services along with the County's Integrative Services is continually working to address these issues within the community. Thus, the request for a presentation from Integrative Services Director, Omar Passons.

The Chair requested that the homelessness discussion be tabled until the Council meets with Mr. Passons, Director of Integrative Services, to provided needed information relating to the County's current and future plans to address the homelessness issue in San Diego County.

6. Reports

A: Legislative

Tony Stewart had an excused absence. No update on report.

B: One VA

Helen Horvath attended the meeting. The Governor appointed Maria Shriver as the representative for the Alzheimer's Care for the State. The VA is looking for a different word for "disability".

Three areas that were discussed:

1. Benefits and the number of claims processed
2. Healthcare issues within the VA
3. The Rosecrans and Miramar Cemetery

During the Chair's discussion of the OneVA, a discussion ensued by Council members relating to who can attend the OneVA meeting. Jack Harkins offered to use his status as the UVC President to have members from the Council attend the OneVA meeting. The Chair reiterated that only the Chair attends meetings for the Council unless she is not available and that the Council members cannot utilize other community positions to circumvent the Council's by-law requirements.

C. Veterans Home

Nancy Owen discussed the quarterly meeting will be held on March 14, 2019. The Veterans Golf Tournament will be held in Eastlake on May 9, 2019 at 12:00PM.

D. San Diego Veterans Coalition (SDVC)

Tony Teravainen attended meeting and the main presentation was given by Military One Source. Military One Source discussed resources available to active duty and military transition members.

E. San Diego Military Family and Collaborative. The Collaborative met and discussed data and local programs for the community. Presentation provided by the BlueStar Families organization.

F. Coast Guard City Committee. Met and discussed awareness programs and projects between the Midway and the Airport. Several letters of appreciation were distributed from the Coast Guard to the community for their support during the Government shut down. As well as from the Mayor's office to the community for the support.

G. San Diego Regional Chambers of Commerce Defense, Veterans & Military Affairs Committee. There are new commanding officers from Miramar who were present.

H. Citizens Equal Opportunity Commissions for San Diego discussed what a disabled veteran owned businesses will look like in the County.

I. Veterans Association of North County Dr. Smith presented. The San Diego Veterans Magazine discussed how there has been a growth of magazine subscriptions.

J. Office of Military & Veterans Affairs (OMVA)

- Wil Quintong attended NACO Legislative Conference in Washington DC. Ray Flores discussed the collaboration in San Diego County during the conference.
- CalVet is holding Leadership Conference in San Diego. April 7-9 all Council Members are invited at the Hilton. Helen Horvath will send the link to all.
- Wil Quintong is working with Supervisor Desmond and he will support the veteran's forum.
- Wil Quintong anticipates hiring new staff for new MVRC in Southeast San Diego

7. Unfinished Business

A: By-Laws. Jennie Reza, Administrative Support for the Council worked with the Chair and Secretary to complete the required modified method for presentation to the Board of Supervisor staff. She did a superlative job is providing support and was key to the completion of the required format. Her work is very much appreciated by the Council. The correct format will be presented to the BOS for approval. The County Counsel, Mr. Sand, was provided the by-laws for a final review and approval prior to submission to the BOS. The Ordinance was approved. Wil Quintong recommends monthly meetings until Final By-Laws are approved.

Tony Teravainen requested Brown Act Training for all Council Members. Helen Horvath requested Brown Act Training in August 2019. Helen Horvath reminded all members to update Ethnics Training every two years. Jennie Reza has provided the dates to all members of when their Ethnics Training is due.

B: Procedural Manual. No updates. Nancy Owen is awaiting final copy of By-Laws and the New Ordinance. For the next meeting, Nancy Owen will send an updated table of contents of the Procedural Manual.

8. New Business.

Helen Horvath shares Women's Health Transition event on that will take place on March 22, 2019.

Helen Horvath attended the San Diego Women's Veterans Network meeting. The meeting provided information about the new organization and is seeking veterans to participate in the organization. It was noted at the meeting that Tony Teravainen helped Billiekai Boughton, President, to set up and invigorate the San Diego Women's Veterans Network organization. The Chair thanked Tony Teravainen for his work in support of women veterans.

Ted Kagan made a motion to present John Weaver an award/certificate of appreciation. Jack Harkins seconded.

Tony Teravainen moved to include UVC in the agenda for Jack Harkins to discuss at every meeting.

Jack Harkins invited all members to join the UVC meeting every 4th Saturday of each month.

The Chair reminded members to review their by-laws.

As there were no other matters to discuss, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

9. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am