

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY VETERAN ADVISORY COUNCIL
COUNCIL MINUTES**

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

October 14, 2017

Meeting Held at the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center in Balboa Park (VMMC) from 9:30 am to 11:25 am.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Helen Horvath, Chair, Member at Large; Ted Kagan, Vice Chair, District 2; Nancy Owen, Secretary, Member-at-Large; Anthony Stewart, District 1; John Weaver, District 4; Carl "Rick" Huenefeld II, District 5.

MEMBERS ABSENT

Laurie Martell, District 3 (E).

OTHERS PRESENT

Wilfred Quintong, Director of the Office of Military & Veterans Affairs, County of San Diego; Jesse Robinson, retired Navy, prospective member.

1. Call to Order

The Veterans Advisory Council (VAC) meeting was called to Order by Helen Horvath, Chair

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Jesse Robinson

3. Introductions/Public

Chair Helen Horvath introduced Jesse Robinson, prospective member of VAC. Jesse's career in the Navy included experience in nuclear power and, most recently, in Sexual Assault & Response. Chair has discussed his appointment with Supervisor Jacob's office. Jesse's appointment is pending based upon a meeting with Supervisor Jacob.

Chair also introduced new member retired Marine Colonel Carl "Rick" Huenefeld. Had been Chief of Staff at MCRD. He now working as Marine liaison in Community Outreach Programs at Camp Pendleton.

4. Approval of Minutes Previous Meeting

There was a motion by Tony Stewart to approve the minutes of September 9, 2017. Motion seconded by John Weaver. Motion passed by all except Rick Huenefeld abstaining as this was his first meeting.

5. Chair's Report

Chair commented on the Women Veterans Forum held Friday, October 13 at SDSU sponsored by the County of San Diego and SDSU. Forum was attended by over 400 active duty and women veterans. Keynote speakers: Major (retired) MJ Hegar, Lindsey Sin, CA Deputy Secretary for Women Veterans, and MG Angie Salinas (retired, USMC) were Keynote Speakers. Copies of the book "Shoot Like a Girl" by MJ Hegar were provided to forum attendees by the publisher.

6. Legislative

Anthony Stewart reviewed the Legislative Report (Attachment A) that he prepared and which was e-mailed to all members. Hard copies were also provided at the meeting. The County and OMVA already receive legislative reports and make recommendations to the County BOS on various issues. John Weaver suggested quarterly dissemination of legislative issues rather than monthly.

Wil Quintong stated that Assemblyman Rocky Chavez has been nominated as CA Legislator of the Year. He also stated that Pete Conaty is a lobbyist for CA VSOs in Sacramento.

Carl Huenefeld asked for clarification of the advisory role of the VAC to the BOS related to legislative issues. Suggests our focus should be on legislative issues which fall into the County BOS sphere of influence. Other entities and organizations follow military and veteran legislation.

7. One VA

During the month of September 2017, the One VA CAB meeting was not held. Minutes of August 16, 2017 meeting were distributed to members electronically. Next One VA meeting is Wednesday, October 18 at 0930 at VA Hospital. Nancy will attend.

Nancy reviewed a memo that was sent out to One VA members from Cindy Butler, Public Affairs Officer on behalf of Director Robert Smith, VA San Diego Healthcare System regarding a "small fall in our overall quality rating which was enough to move us from a 4-star to a 3-star rating". The memo included areas where the VA has improved and areas where they have declined and actions being taken to correct areas of deficiency. Copies of memo were distributed to members.

8. Chula Vista Veterans Home (CVVH)

Nancy reported that the Chula Vista Veterans Home Support Foundation (CVVHSF) met September 14. The Veterans Home recently received a five-star rating. Census is 305. Tony Stewart discussed the fund raising for the veterans at the home, particularly "The Veterans Walk" in memory of a CVVHSF President and VFW District Commander Bobby Price, which will take place on Saturday, November 4th. Flyers for the walk were distributed.

9. United Veterans Council (UVC)

No updates

UVC meets the fourth Saturday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the Veterans Museum & Memorial. Meeting is open to all.

10. Office of Military & Veterans Affairs (OMVA)

Wilfred Quintong gave the OMVA updates:

- **Women Veterans Forum** was held on Friday, October 13. Supervisor Bill Horn spoke at the forum. Resource tables were provided including OMVA, Veterans Coalition, and several veteran community resources. This was the inaugural forum. Unsure whether it will continue annually but it was very successful in bringing women veterans together. Wil stated that San Diego has the largest concentration of women veterans in the nation.
- **Vet Connect.** The County is continuing to work on Vet Connect services at the Fallbrook library.
- Oceanside Military & Veteran Resource Center should have Vet services in 2018.
- **Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (OMVA)** processed over 8000 Cal Vet fee tuition waivers for 2017-18 season, the highest in the state.
- **Annual Veterans Publication.** The OMVA will publish the second annual Veterans publication on November 11, 2017, Veterans Day. The publication will be included as an insert in the Union Tribune and other local San Diego County community newspapers.

11. San Diego Veterans Coalition (SDVC)

No representative attended the VAC meeting SDVC. In September 2017, Wil Quintong stated to Dr. Horvath in September that he would speak with Jude Litzenberger, President of the SDVC, regarding the representation to the VAC. Dr. Helen Horvath spoke to Jude Litzenberger, President for the SDVC, about sending representation to the VAC meetings. Dr. Helen Horvath spoke about the perception of conflict of interest and conflict of interest based upon positional authority during the meeting. The Council members were provided a copy of the California Conflicts of Interest (2010) regulation from the California Attorney General's Office in September 2017 prior to the previous meeting.

Chair questioned perception of "conflict of interest" relating to Ray Flores, County employee/contractor, representation of both the County and the SDVC during the monthly council meeting in the absence of Mr. Quintong. This issue stemmed from Mr. Flores representing both the County and the SDVC during the July 2017 meeting where he represented Wil Quintong at the VAC meeting and simultaneously the SDVC during discussions. No other members had any objection and did not think there was a "conflict of interest" because he was a county employee. As this is a regulatory matter that impacts recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, the Chair and Wil Quintong will work with SDVC on this issue. The discussion was tabled for the future relating to a resolution.

12. Community Reports

Tony Stewart reported on Food 4 Warriors which his non-profit Us4Warriors is involved in year-round. During the next few months, food will be distributed for the holidays to those families identified throughout the year as being in greatest need and/or larger families.

Nancy Owen announced the 28th Military Women's Luncheon will be held at Miramar on October 28, 2017.

Ted Kagan announced that El Cajon will have its Veterans Day celebration at 1 p.m. on November 11th.

Nancy Owen mentioned that Veterans Day is on our next scheduled meeting day. Motion made and passed to move our November meeting to Saturday, November 18th. Notification of change of date will need to go out 30 days prior to meeting date. Dr. Horvath to contact VAC administrative assistant to put info on website.

13. **Unfinished Business**

a. **Survey**- The Chair has postponed designing and distributing a survey regarding board activities and future planning until all council seats are filled. This is currently an ongoing process and will coincide with the by-laws review.

b. **By-Laws** need revision related to membership and other areas. Several versions exist. The Chair will speak with Clerk of the Board and will electronically disseminate current By-Laws. Members are to review and send suggested revisions to the Chair for compilation prior to next meeting.

c. **Council Terms and Attendance**-Chair asked that members make a concerted effort to attend all meetings. Suggested calling in if unable to make the meeting in person and discussed the Quorum within the Council. Use of technology in this and other methods need to be looked at in review of By-Laws. The Chair stated that since 2005 Navy Region Southwest has not had a representative to the VAC. Numerous attempts had been made in the past by previous chairs to get representation from the active duty side. Need to address this in the By-law revisions. Chair suggested that we have input from various active duty commands throughout the year.

14. **New Business**

a. **Resignation of Ben Dillingham**-Ben has resigned for medical reasons. Chair is working to fill this Member at Large seat with Jesse Robinson.

b. **Carl Huenefeld** has filled seat 6 on the Council.

c. **Development of primary focus area.** The Chair stated that similar to our work on legislation, we need to examine and seek other areas to collaborate and work within by the Council in support of our primary mission to support the Board of Supervisors in an advisory capacity.

d. **Marketing and community attendance.** Currently use HHSA website to advertise meetings. Need other methods of marketing to improve community involvement and attendance at Council meetings.

e. **Use of Technology.** Chair reiterated using technology to "call in" to maintain a quorum for the meetings. Procedure to be defined during review of the By-Laws.

f. **Invitations to military liaisons.** Chair stated that she has invited the military liaisons, for each County Supervisor, to attend our monthly meetings, possibly on a rotating basis. It is necessary to the work of the VAC to know what the Supervisors are working on related to veterans and how we can be of assistance.

g. **Community Issues.** Chair suggests having representative from veteran community organizations at the meeting, perhaps quarterly, to discuss issues related to their areas of expertise that impact the veteran community.

h. **Developing a Strategic Focus.** Rick Huenefeld discussed needing to know more about the scope of the County BOS and county programs affecting veterans. If other entities are involved

in working these issues, then the VAC can work to identify the issues that still need to be managed. He spoke of a “gap analysis”. What is being done already? What still needs to be managed? He also spoke of the FOCUS aspect.

The Chair discussed the planned steps for process improvement that begins with filling open Council seats, review/revision of the by-laws, implementation of the survey, and methods to include the Veteran Community in the VAC process. The Council discussed the factors associated with the focus upon the responsibilities of the VAC to the Board of Supervisors (BOS), methods to increase participation, and how the Council could modify the focus to be more inclusive of the Veteran Community. These factors need to be defined prior to creation of a modified strategic annual plan. Additionally, these factors will help the VAC design and create a survey to the board members, BOS, and other veteran organizations designated to receive the survey. Council Members agreed that this was a fresh and valuable perspective on our VAC role. More to discuss with review of By-Laws and revisions.

15. Closing Remarks

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and asked if there were any other issues. With no further discussion or issues, the meeting adjourned.

16. Adjourned at 11:25.