

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

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

September 8, 2018

Meeting held at Veterans Museum and Memorial Center in Balboa Park 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Helen Horvath, Chair, Member at Large; Ted Kagan (Co-chair), District 2; Tony Teravainen, District 3; John Weaver, District 4; Nancy Owen, Member at Large; Jesse W. Robinson Jr., Member at Large; Wil Quintong, OMVA Director, OMVA Ex-Officio

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jennie Reza, OMVA Office Secretary

EXCUSED MEMBERS:

Anthony “Tony” Stewart, District 1; Karolyn Smith, Member at Large

UNEXCUSED MEMBERS:

Oscar Gomez, District 5

1. Call to Order

The Veterans Advisory Council (VAC) meeting was called to Order by Helen Horvath, Chair at 9:34 am.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Led by Nancy Owen

3. Introductions

4. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

There was a motion by Ted Kagan to approve July meeting minutes. Motion seconded by John Weaver and passed by all. The motion passes.

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

Helen Horvath discussed updates regarding the Alzheimer's Project. Wil Quintong will coordinate a meeting with HHS. Helen Horvath has been in contact with Matt Parr, Supervisor Jacob's office. Matt is responsible to coordinate activities relating to the Alzheimer's Care Project. The chair discussed methods to approach the VA and other agencies to create solutions to care giver and patient issues along with facilities for Veterans with Alzheimer's disease. There was a discussion relating to the fact that the statistical data stating that 1327 veterans were being treated did not represent the entire Veteran Alzheimer population in the County. The statistics did not represent the community members with other health insurance and care providers. Discussion ensued on how to get a VA rater attend the VAC meeting to respond to key questions.

6. Reports

A: Legislative

Tony Stewart will present the updated Legislative Report next month.

B: One VA

Helen Horvath attended the One VA meeting. There was a discussion about Vocational Rehabilitation and rationales for denial such as age of the application, degrees, and other factors. Wil Quintong states that the primary reason for denial of Vocational Rehabilitation has been due to a veteran being employed. The status of the disability and benefits claims were discussed. The process is improving based upon number of claims. The VA is using a national claims model to process claims. This means that individual claims from San Diego may be processed in other regions. During the meeting, it was noted that Dr. Smith may return to the VA Hospital in La Jolla in November once his detail to the National Network is over.

C: Veterans Home

Next meeting September 13, 2018. There are questions regarding funding for the Holiday Party and Founder's Day. VFW and the Veteran Walk in November can possibly fund the Holiday Party or Founder's Day.

No update on Memory Care Unit. Wil Quintong has a meeting at the end of the month in LA with California Association of County Veteran Service Officers and he will ask about the Chula Vista Veteran Home.

Nancy Owen discussed staffing for a memory Unit would be an issue. The home currently has 400 beds but is only funded to staff 305 of those beds.

D: San Diego Veterans Coalition (SDVC)

Tony Teravainen discussed that there are 70-100 people who participate in SDVC meetings. Tony Teravainen has been asked to bring back updates to share/report with the VAC Board

committee. A tenant mission of SDVC is networking. They are veterans who are working in the organizations and supporting veterans.

E: Office of Military & Veterans Affairs (OMVA)

Wil Quintong shared that Vet Connect in Fallbrook and Borrego Springs is opening before Supervisor Horn's term is up, before December 2018. The Veterans Forum is November 8, 2018 at North Inland Live Well Center, recognizing Vietnam Veterans. Working on purchasing 20,000 Vietnam Books to distribute at the forum along with a coin and a hat. Flyer will be shared.

7. Procedure Manual and By-Laws

Wil will work with County Counsel Kyle Sand on changing the Ordinance and By-Laws. Goal of the VAC is to change the name to Military & Veterans Advisory Council and to remove Navy Region Southwest as an ex-officio member. Discussion held of the proposal to add to By-Laws a 180 day rule to fill a vacancy.

Nancy Owen has created a preliminary table of contents for the proposed Procedure manual. Discussion held and suggestions made to revise the draft. See attachment.

8. Unfinished Business

Helen Horvath shared document from Clerk of the Board that showed there are individuals on the Civil Service Commission whose terms expired but who were still listed as being on that advisory board. In some cases, their term had expired 8 years ago. Wil Quintong recommends a meeting with Taylor Dupont to address the 180 day rule along with Kyle Sand. Tony Teravainen suggests to get By-Laws finished first. Also to separate the By Laws and Ordinance.

Helen Horvath reviewed the Ordinance. The name should be "San Diego County Military and Veterans Advisory Council." Next, it will be "9 members" not 10 members. Remove "Commander, Navy Region Southwest." Lastly, adding "gender" after socio-economic. There are 3 changes requested in the Ordinance. Tony Teravainen made a motion to recommend changes to the current Ordinance. John Weaver seconded the motion. Motion passed by all voting members present.

John Weaver attended the quarterly conference of the Vietnam Veterans of America in Fresno and delivered a presentation. John Weaver delayed his report on Foster Homes for veterans. Foster homes provide room and board for the veteran. Unsure whether California is one of the states that provides this service. John Weaver to provide update next month.

9. New Business

Biocom Institute – free informational seminar for military on September 14, 2018 for job interviews.

Effective August 18, 2018, veterans with a 100% disability rating and a DoD Identification Card known as the DD 2765 are now eligible to travel Space A.

Veteran Homelessness. The Chair introduced the issues associated with Veteran Homelessness in the County. The Chair recommended that the Council meet with HHSA and the Homeless Advisory Council to discuss and present information about veteran homelessness in the community. The discussion ensued relating to what is the criteria for homelessness in the County. Tony Teravainen provided information on marginalized homeless population, e.g. those who have a place to stay by 'couch surfing' or staying in a hotel who do not quite fit the typical definition of homeless.

Tony Teravainen provided key information relating to the SSVF program along with the criteria for a veteran to qualify for homeless prevention benefits. SSVF often denies benefits to veterans who do not meet the criteria.

Tony Teravainen informed the Council that STEP has just stopped their 408th home eviction through their intervention. Referrals are being sent to STEP from 130 different agencies/organizations within the County. The funding for homelessness, especially the marginalized homeless population, is more difficult to obtain.

10. Closing Remarks

It was requested that a representative of the Homeless Advisory Council along with HHSA present information about veteran homelessness. It was also recommended that a meeting with the City's Homeless Task Force would be beneficial.

Meeting Adjourned @ 11:24 am