

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
SAN DIEGO MILITARY AND VETERANS  
ADVISORY COUNCIL (SDMVAC)**

**Held In Person  
North Central Live Well Center  
5055 Ruffin Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, San Diego CA 92123  
Phone (858) 694-3222**

**Public Video Viewing/Comment Option:**

<https://sdcounty-ca-gov.zoom.us/j/87287664632>

**SDMVAC Meeting Minutes  
February 20, 2025**

**Members Present**

Danny Jackson  
Jude Litzenberger  
Philip Kendro  
Mark Gracyk  
Jaime Yslas  
Paula Jansen

**Members Absent**

Tony Teravainen

**Staff Present**

Alberto Banuelos, Asst. Director, Self-Sufficiency Services  
Amy Klock, OMVA  
Ray Flores, OMVA

**Guests**

Sean Johnson – Assistant Deputy Secretary CalVet  
Guy McDermott – Commander of VFW, Solana Beach  
Stuart Gaiber – Behavioral Health Advisory Board  
James Deloera  
Matthew Gordon  
Samantha Jenkins

1. Meeting called to order at 1:00 pm by Jude Litzenberger, Chair
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Roll Call
  - SDMVAC present members noted above.
4. The December 19, 2024, meeting minutes were approved by all Council Members present.
5. Public Comments:
  - Stuart Gaiber, a member of the San Diego Behavioral Health Advisory Board, made a public comment addressing concerns about the VA. He emphasized issues with transparency, particularly regarding the comparison between the CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) performance averages and the VA's internal strategic analysis and performance measurement methods. Mr. Gaiber recommended clearer communication to distinguish between CMS averages and the VA's internal metrics for performance improvement and learning.

6. **Discussion Item:** New Community Connections: SDMVAC Council members share community events they had recently attended. SDMVAC Council members share community events they had recently attended. The Council members share insights from their engagement at a recent Veteran's tribute event.
7. **Presentation Item:** California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet). San Diego District Office, Sean Johnson, Assistant Deputy Secretary of California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet). Sean Johnson, Assistant Deputy Secretary of CalVet, discussed programs supporting Veterans, including help with accessing benefits, mental health support, and homelessness. Key initiatives include the Veterans Support to Self-Reliance Pilot, the CVHI Mental Health Support Grant Program, and Permanent Supportive Housing for Veterans, all aimed at improving Veterans' independence and stability.

A public comment was made by Stuart Gaiber of the San Diego Behavioral Health Advisory Board, he highlighted differences between state and federal VA services and praised the Oceanside VSO.
8. **Presentation Item:** Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Solana Beach, Guy McDermott, Commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Solana Beach. Guy McDermott, Commander of VFW Solana Beach, introduced Next Peak project, an initiative to turn Solana Beach VFW Post 5431 into a healing center for Veterans. The project aims to address the emotional and social challenges Veterans face post-service by offering holistic healing through fitness, alternative medicine, and social connection. It focuses on Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans while also supporting Vietnam-era Veterans and all service members. The program fosters community-based healing, engaging both Veterans and civilians in the process.
9. **Discussion Item:** Establishing and Organizing Ad Hoc Subcommittee to Address Key Issues Facing Veterans: Food Security, Housing, Education, Employment, Healthcare and Legislation. All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council. Chair Jude Litzenberger requested that the Council create charters for the committees, allowing each member to choose which committee they would like to serve on. The goal is to present the Board of Supervisors with specific actions, based on current community activities, with the end goal of either resolving issues or reducing certain negative statistics in the community. The committees will also focus on identifying reliable data sources to support this effort.
10. **Discussion Item:** Suggested topic for future meetings: All San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council. OMVA Officer Ray Flores confirmed that the Chula Vista Veterans Home is interested in presenting at a future SDMVAC meeting. Chair Jude encouraged members to submit their preferred organizations to be featured in the presentation.

**ADJOURNMENT/SET NEXT MEETING:**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held on April 17, 2025.