

County of San Diego
Health and Human Services Agency
SAN DIEGO MILITARY & VETERANS ADVISORY COUNCIL (SDMVAC)
Phone (858) 694-3222 * Fax (858) 573-7381

MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday – December 14, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.
North Central 5055 Ruffin Rd. San Diego, CA 92123

AGENDA

1. Call to Order by Chair Jack Harkins at 1:13 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance led by Chair Jack Harkins
3. Roll Call.

Present: Paula Jansen, District 2.
Jack Harkins, District 4.
Mark Balmert, Member at Large Seat 6.
Tony Teravainen, Member at Large Seat 8.
Jude Litzenberger, Member-at-Large Seat 9.
Wilfred Quintong, OMVA Director, Ex - Officio

Excused Absence: Griselda Delgado, District 1.
Danny Jackson, District 3.
Mia Roseberry, District 5
Philip Kendro, Member at Large Seat 7.

ACTION ITEMS

4. Action Item: **Approve Minutes of August 31,2022 meeting.**

Motion moved by Member Jude Litzenberger
Seconded by Tony Teravainen
No discussion
In favor: All present.
Opposed: None.
Motion passed.

5. **Non- Agenda Public Comments.**

Nicky Riordan – Special Agent from Defense Criminal Investigative Service, San Diego Resident Agency joined the meeting.

6. **Chair Comment: SDMVAC Meeting Date Preferences**

- Chair Jack Harkins stated that it is a priority to set the council meeting on a recurring day of the month and that it occurs on a weekday; and also asked Ex-officio Wilfred Quintong about what options the council meeting could have on County facilities on a weekend.
- Ex-officio Wilfred Quintong confirms that all MVRCs (North Central, Southern Region, Escondido, and Oceanside) would be available for a weekend meeting however they would only need staff to open the facilities.
- Jude Litzenberger raised her issue about having a conflict on meeting every second Saturday of the month due to her prior commitment to Guide Dog in Escondido and Oceanside area.
- Chair Jack Harkins suggested having the resolution set for another agreed-upon day to vote and make changes to the bylaw if they want to or just keep doing what they have done. In his interpretation of bylaws changes are permissible. He said if a special meeting is called before the next recurring council meeting, then that can be called in LIEU of that recurring meeting. All council members that are present at the meeting agreed to have a special meeting if it would be advantageous.
- Chair Jack Harkins seeks to integrate a new recurring meeting schedule with the option to enhance public participation. Ex-officio Wilfred Quintong suggested placing the meeting in public places such as County Libraries.

7. **Discussion Item: County Code of Conduct for Boards, Commissions, and Committees.**

- Ex-officio Wilfred Quintong cited that **The Code of Conduct for County of San Diego Boards, Commissions, Committees, Planning, and Sponsor Groups** was sent to all Council members, with emphasis on the last paragraph: Each individual board, commission, committee or planning, and sponsor group may adopt additional standards of conduct based on specific needs. Any code of conduct violations should be addressed according to the bylaws adopted by that board, commission, committee, or planning and sponsor group.

8. **Discussion Item: Community-based drug and alcohol programs availabilities.**

- Jude raised awareness about the Fentanyl or Narcan shortage crisis. She mentions Mr. Dennis Whitmyer a Navy Veteran who happens to be a Drug and Alcohol Counselor of the year when he was on active duty in the Navy. He currently works at UCSD Emergency Department in the Bridge program helping with overdose patients and organizing community events to raise public awareness about the fentanyl crisis, and cited a lack of treatment beds in the county and that he is working to help get NARCAN distribution sites to help save lives. She wants to have awareness on the condition and to urge help, especially for those Veterans who need this medicine for health issues.

9. **Information Item: SD County Office of Military and Veterans Affairs Update**

Reported by Wilfred Quintong, Director Office of Military and Veterans Affairs

- Wil provided the council with a copy of the OMVA Activity Report, this monthly report shows how many Veterans have been served regarding Compensation and Pension Award, College Fee Waiver, VSR Appointments, Claims, Veteran's Driver's Licenses, and Disabled Veterans Plates.Etc. They have one week wait time to schedule an appointment for the VSR and they do hybrid and walk-in appointments.

- Vetconnect expansion to Lakeside Library will soon be opening. Planning of expanding to National City and Fallbrook Senior Center as well. Accredited VSR rotates through different libraries in the County to conduct benefits counseling for the Veterans.
- Hiring Veterans, they are aiming to double the number of Veterans working at the County in the next six years. They work together with County HR by participating in their Job Fairs.
- Post-pandemic nonprofit organizations are utilizing space for some OMVA MVRC's locations and encouraging more non-profit organizations that will help the Veterans.

10. Discussion Item: Priorities for Council attention and initiative

- Chair Jack Harkins specifies to the council the need to exert effort toward improvements and he believes to be able to achieve that through the formation of the committees. Tony Teravainen agreed that is a good objective to identify which area needs to focus on for their general objectives. Mark Balmert add that they need to be more visible on public engagements and to have a chance to communicate with the Board of Supervisors. Tony informed the council that the Veterans Justice Commission will be having a meeting here in San Diego with the help of Mr. Ron Stark. The objective of this commission is to determine why Veterans engage with civilian criminal justice at a high rate. He also addresses the people who need the VA services the most are the people who get a denial for the service. He wants to look at the process with the intent to increase access to VA services.

11. Adjournment:

- **Meeting adjourned at 14:34H**

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