

Monterey County

MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Sid Williams, Chairperson
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Meeting: 05/11/2022

Call Meeting to Order: Chair Williams

<p>Roll Call by Jonathan Brown from MVAO, Quorum Established</p>	<p><u>Voting members present:</u> District 3 – Mark Hartunian District 4 - Gary Kreeger District 5 - Phillip Butler BoS – Louise Goetzelt BoS - Mary Estrada BoS - John Gay, Vice-chair BoS -Dan Presser BoS - Sid Williams, Chair</p> <p><u>Representing County Supervisor</u> 1st District Supervisor, Luis Alejo</p> <p><u>In attendance:</u> Representative from Congressman Panetta’s office, Xochitl Guerrero Representative from Senator Laird’s office, Justin Tran Representative from Senator Caballero’s office, Marisa Hernandez Representative from Assemblymember Stone’s office, Erica Parker Representative from 1st District Supervisor, Luis Alejo’s office: Javier Gomez Military and Veterans Affairs Office, VSO Jason Cameron Military and Veterans Affairs Office, Staff Liaison, Jonathan Brown</p>
<p>Pledge of Allegiance</p>	<p>Led by, Louise Goetzelt</p>
<p>Public Comment</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Approval of the Minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 9th <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Motion by, Mark Hartunian ○ Second by, Vice-chair, John Gay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ayes, unanimous ▪ Minutes approved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 31st and April 14th

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Motion by, Mark Hartunian ○ Second by, Vice-chair, John Gay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ayes, unanimous ▪ Minutes approved
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Report from the Chair:

Chair Williams Reported:	•
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Committee Reports

<p>Veteran Home Update,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jason Cameron: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminded the Commission that establishing a 9th Cal-Vet, Veteran Home was made a legislative priority for the County Board of Supervisors, heavily championed by Supervisor Alejo. • The city of Santa Cruz recently submitted a Letter of Support to establish the Home. • He recently attended and spoke at a California Veterans Board meeting regarding the effort. In response, the Board agreed they should ask the Deputy Secretary of Veteran Homes to attend their next meeting and speak to the extended wait times for the Homes. • He also received a report from Senate Laird’s district staff that the Senator’s Sacramento staff was discussing strategies with Assemblyman Ramos’ staff on ways to move forward. • He also spoke to Assemblyman Mathis’ office to inform them about efforts up to this point and they seemed engaged and willing to help.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senator Larid representative, Justin Tran reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jason Cameron, himself, the Legislative Director for Senator Laird, and the Secretary for Cal-Vet met to discuss the issue and the need for additional bed spaces was identified. The discussions as to where those bed spaces should be located throughout the State are ongoing.

<p>Veteran of the Year Program Report,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-chair John Gay reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To date there is only one submission for the Veteran of the Year Award.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Hartunian reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted there are two nominations in the works for District 3.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gary Kreeger reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He will be submitting a nomination in for District 4.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair, Sid Williams reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deposit to Bayonet Black Horse for the award dinner has been made.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He added, that there is also the Sam Farr Award and Jack Stewart Awards, and the deadline to submit nominations for those awards is September 27th.
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<p>State Legislation Report,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marisa Hernandez, representing Senator Caballero reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Senate Bill 949 ○ Senate Bill 1195 ○ Senate Bill 1311 ○ Assembly Bill 1606 ○ Assembly Bill 1623 ○ Assembly Bill 2119
<p>Federal Legislation Report,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xochitl Guerrero, representing Congressman Panetta reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congressman Panetta’s DC staff have been working on drafting legislative language for the NDAA to include items such as suicide prevention, military housing, GI Bill transferability, and hard power initiatives like improvements to AI and summaries. These have been submitted and are under review by the Armed Services Committee. • The Military Legislative Assistant, Taylor Fairless, is working to coordinate meeting between MVAO and the DoD regarding the need for a pharmacy at the Gourley Clinic.

<p>Military and Veterans Affairs Report,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jason Cameron reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March, and April combined monthly report attached. • He updated the Commission that planning for MVAO’s main office to move to the Coastal Building had resumed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Alejo: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanked the Commission members who gave their support to have the Coastal Building be the new main site for MVAO.

<p>Central Coast Veteran Cemetery Update,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair, Sid Williams reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cemetery is full staffed and attempting to create one additional position.
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<p>VA Clinic Report,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair, Sid Williams reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DAV is looking for volunteer van drivers. Please contact their office if interested.
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New Business:

<p>Creation of Ad-Hoc Committee for Proposed Veterans Home in Monterey County,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Brown reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced the letter of support for SB 949 and asked for a motion to consider.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the March meeting it was discussed that an Ad-Hoc Committee for the proposed Veteran Home should be considered. The item was then placed on this agenda so the Commission may act on that item, should they decide to do so.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair, Sid Williams: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further explained what the duties of the Ad-Hoc committee may entail.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Alejo: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added that it would be helpful to have a few direct veteran voices from the community so that during future meetings regarding the issue, the veteran voice could be heard.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jason Cameron: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Also added that his office would work to get testimonials from the veteran community that reflects the need for an additional Veterans Home and the real-life impact the current wait times have had on veterans and their families.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action was taken on the Ad-Hoc Committee. It was agreed there would be a group effort to gather testimonials and send them to Jonathan at MVAO to compile together.

Commission Member's Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Estrada: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminded the Commission that Memorial Day is coming up and to please let MVAO know of any events so they can share that with the greater veteran community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Hartunian: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applauded the efforts of Supervisor Alejo, Chair Williams, and Director Cameron on their memorandum that was submitted making sure that all parties involved remained truthful to the commitments to our veterans and the administrative office.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise Goetzelt: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported to the Commission she recently returned from the Pentagon where she spent two weeks as a member of the Chief of Staff Army, Retiree Council. During those two weeks the 12 member Council worked 14 issues that impact retirees.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair, Sid Williams: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported that there will be a Memorial Day event at the Cemetery starting at 10 am. • The Veteran of Year nomination period is ending soon.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Alejo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Told the Commission the Board of Supervisors Budget Hearing is scheduled for 6/1 and 6/2. If any veteran would like to speak during public comment in favor of items such the Stand Down

	or Military and Veterans Affairs Office, that he encouraged them to do so.
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Adjournment: Williams