



County of Monterey Military & Veterans Affairs Office



Meeting Minutes Military & Veterans Affairs Office (MVAO) VETERANS ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (VIAC) February 23rd, 2023, Thursday, at 3:00 p.m.

<p>1. CALL TO ORDER/ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call to Order: Vice-Chair, Dan Presser • Roll Call to Establish Quorum: Vice-Chair, Dan Presser 	<p><u>Committee Members Present:</u></p> <p>MVAAC – Vice-Chair, Dan Presser UVC – Mary Estrada UVC – John Gay UVC – Shane Strong MVAAC – Sid Williams City of Del Rey Oaks – Rick Johnson City of Marina – Wesley Haye City of Monterey – Nat Rojanasathira Ft. Ord Retiree Council – Louise Goetzelt</p>
<p>2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE</p>	<p>Led by: Vice-Chair, Dan Presser</p>
<p>3. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received
<p>4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (From January 26th)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion: Sid Williams • Second: Rick Johnson <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll Call: Vote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ayes – Unanimous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion Carried

5. BUSINESS ITEMS INFORMATION/ACTION

a. Affordable Housing

<p>i. VTC – General Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erica Parker Reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She introduced herself as the new Director of Strategic Initiatives for the Veterans Transition Center. She will be focusing on grants, donors, outreach, and social media. • The VTC is continuing to move forward with Lightfighter Village and the Extended Use Lease Agreement.
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b. Central Coast Veterans Cemetery Status Report

<p>i. CCCVC Status Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam Errahebi, MVAO Reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He gave an update on behalf of Christine Odson. The Cemetery has hired a new office technician, Kharen Berg who starts on March 2nd, 2023.
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c. Cemetery Foundation

<p>i. General Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Candy Ingram reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thanked the City of Seaside for providing clarity on the Donor Wall process.• Donor Wall<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Foundation has contracted with Westin, the company that cleared the land of unexploded ordinance (UXO). The regulations require that clearance be obtained before moving more than 10 cubic feet of dirt. We need to have a construction support plan and process in place for if we find any UXO's. The plan has been circulated to EPA, DTSC, The Army, The City of Seaside, and to Cal Vet. Comments are due by March 15th.• We are a day away from submitting a transmittal letter to Cal Vet which outlines the entire plan and processes for the Donor Wall. Cal Vet will have 30 days to review this letter.• We had to extend the wall by 10 feet due to the number of names of people who contributed.• Vice-Chair Dan Presser asked Candy to add the cell tower discussion to the next Foundation meeting.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Candy responded that she has had a previous discussion with Erica Chaney at Cal Vet. Cal Vet stated that the cost would be roughly \$100,000. They were not anticipating an expenditure for that purpose.• Adam Errahebi comment:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jack Murphy will be at the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers conference in Sacramento. If Candy has any questions that need to be communicated directly to Cal Vet leadership, please let me know.
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d. Ord Military Community

<p>i. Active-Duty General Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CSM Traylor reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retiree Appreciation Day is going to be held in July. We are trying to decide on guest speakers and vendors.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-Chair, Dan Presser question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the Garrison still looking to improve cell reception in the community near the cemetery? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We are close to having approval for a new cell tower on Ord Military Community. There have been talks of a second one. We need the first one to come online before we know which gaps to cover. The towers must be on a specific portion of Federal land. ▪ Vice-Chair, Dan Presser responded that the Cemetery is on State land. ▪ CSM Traylor responded that it would be a different process.
<p>ii. Ft. Ord Retiree Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise Goetzelt reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am working on the Department of the Army National Retiree Council. The annual meeting is the week of April 23rd at the Pentagon. We work on issues that are submitted from all over. These issues are primarily Retiree issues that the Army can fix or have input on to the DOD. If you have any suggestions or concerns, please submit them through the Retiree Council to the Garrison. Once those suggestions are given to the Retiree Council, they will be distributed to a responsible party for feedback. • Rick Johnson question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What date is Retiree Appreciation Day? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Louise responded with July 15th from 8:00AM to 2:00PM at the Stillwell Community Center.

f. VA-DoD Clinic

<p>i. General Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received. • Adam Errahebi provided an update from public comment from the previous meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VA does have a bus that transports passengers to Palo Alto. It leaves the VA DoD Clinic at 8:15AM.
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	<p>The Bus leaves Palo Alto at 1:30PM to make its way back to Marina.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-Chair Dan Presser question: • Does the bus actually fill up? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adam responded that it fills up quite quickly and passengers should be there before 8:15AM.
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g. Municipalities

<p>i. City of Del Rey Oaks, General Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rick Johnson reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is currently an opening on the City Council.
<p>ii. City of Monterey, General Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nat Rojasathira 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of Monterey is currently going through an engagement process called the Wildfire Protection Plan with Pacific Grove and Carmel-by-the-Sea. This is because the City of Monterey provides Fire Services to Pacific Grove and Carmel-by-the-Sea. This program is requesting feedback for how we can best prepare for wildfires. We encourage participation at “haveyoursaymonterey.org”. • On Tuesday night we held a joint meeting between the City Council and Planning Commission to discuss the Monterey 2031 General Plan update. This affects Veterans as it is focused on land-use, housing affordability, and emergency preparedness as well as the impact of new growth in Monterey as it relates to Military readiness. The State requires the City of Monterey to plan for 3,654 new homes over the next eight years. We are looking for feedback on this challenge as we have a limited area for growth. • We are looking to update ADA accommodations. We are holding a townhall meeting on March 15th at 10:00AM at the City Council Chamber and at 6:00PM on Zoom.
<p>iii. City of Marina, General Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wesley Haye 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No updates at this time. • Asked a question about the VA DoD clinic sending Veterans to the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (CHOMP) and the clinic not communicating with Veterans that they need a voucher to be covered for medications from their hospital visit. Is there

	<p>any way for the VA Clinic to cover the prescription from the referral?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam responded that the prescriptions should be covered by the VA if it was in the same visit that was originally authorized. Adam stated he would follow up with Wesley. • Vice-Chair Dan Presser commented that there can be delays in prescriptions being approved due to the amount of VA personnel needing to approve the order. • He was selected to be on the General Plan Advisory Committee. • Vice-Chair Dan Presser question: • Any updates on the Art program? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wesley responded that they are having a problem coordinating participants. We are working with several agencies to have a better showing of participants. We are having issues coordinating our guitar program with probation and parole. The issue is to allow the participant to take the guitar home for practice. • John Gay question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do you have any other programs besides music? ▪ Wesley responded that they have all different types of art programs. ▪ John asked if there were any photography lessons available. ▪ Wesley responded that hopefully there would be in the future.
<p>iv. City of Seaside, General Updates:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received.

h. Military & Veterans Affairs Office

<p>i. General Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam Errahebi reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam gave MVAO’s Annual report, see attached. • Rick Johnson question: • Are the two vacant Veteran Services Representative positions funded?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Adam responded yes; those are positions that are funded. Due to a new State/County hiring process, it has taken longer than expected.▪ Wesley asked if is there specific training required to be a Veterans Services Representative?▪ Adam responded that you must attend and pass an Accreditation academy/process and on-the-job training.• Louise Goetzelt question:• Are these compensation awards and dollar figures only those reported from your office? If so, is there any way to find out how much money comes into the County as a whole? This combined figure would really get the politician’s attention as to how much money flows into the area because of Veterans.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Adam responded, yes, it is only from our office. There are other organizations in the area and the Veteran could do the claim themselves. There are point of contacts like the Veterans Benefits Administration that we could reach out to obtain the total number.▪ Rick Johnson stated it would be a very good idea to get the numbers as it would be important for any future legislation and our elected officials.• Adam also explained the Lotus Day Event for homeless and at-risk women taking place on April 21st at the Monterey County Fairgrounds.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He also explained that Swords to Plowshares has expanded its Military Discharge Upgrade Services to Monterey County. • He explained there is a Manufacturing Job Fair taking place on March 15th. You can sign up at AMBayArea.org. • Lastly, the Military and Veterans Affairs Office is trying to establish a grab-and-go food pantry at the Peninsula Office. Further updates will be provided as progress is being made. • Nat Rojanasathira question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has your office looked in to participating in the DOD Skill bridge program to try and fill staff vacancies? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adam responded that it is something the Military and Veterans Affairs Office and the County as a whole is looking to make progress on in the near future.
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6. ESTABLISH BY-LAWS REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-Chair, Dan Presser 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announced the establishment of the by-laws review Subcommittee. Chair, Oglesby. Sid Williams, Louise Goetzelt, and Shane Strong were selected to review the current by-laws prior to a vote for any changes. • Vice-Chair, Dan Presser asked the Committee if anyone else would like to volunteer for the subcommittee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None received
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6. ITEMS FROM MEMBERS

Receive Communication from Committee members as it pertains to future agenda items

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adam Errahebi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stated that he would communicate with the Chair about the future of hybrid meeting sessions.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nat Rojanasathira comment:• There is no more action that needs to be taken to allow for remote participation, like a recertification every 30 days. There are limits starting on March 1st on how often the Committee members can participate virtually. It must be due to a just cause, reason or an emergency that has to be announced at the beginning of the meeting.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Louise Goetzelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) luncheon is on March 20th with Supervisor Mary Adams as the guest speaker. I can bring some guests. If you are interested, please let me know.

7. ADJOURNMENT: Vice-Chair, Dan Presser

MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE



MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

January 2023



7

Outreach Events

124

New Contacts



915

Phone Calls

392

Vet Rep Appointments

599 Claims Actions



290 Unique Veterans

184 Compensation Awards

7 College Fee
Waivers valued
at nearly

\$37,000

New Disability Compensation Awards



THE 2022

**PACT
ACT**

\$411,074

Retroactive Payments

\$74,394

Recurring Monthly Payments



Customer Satisfaction Survey

93% Very Satisfied!

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