

Monterey County

MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Sid Williams, Chairperson
 1200 AGUAJITO ROAD, SUITE 003
 MONTEREY, CA 93940
 TEL: (831) 647-7613
 FAX: (831) 647-7618



Meeting: 01/11/2023

Call Meeting to Order: Chair Williams

<p>Roll Call by Chair Sid William, Quorum Established</p>	<p><u>Voting members present:</u> District 2 – Rich Garza District 3 – Mark Hartunian District 4 – Gary Kreeger District 5 – Phillip Butler BoS – Mary Estrada BoS – John Gay, Vice-chair BoS – Dan Presser BoS – Sid Williams, Chair BoS – Louise Goetzelt</p> <p><u>Representing County Supervisor</u> 1st District Supervisor, Luis Alejo</p> <p><u>In attendance:</u> Representative from 1st District Supervisor’s Office, Javier Gomez Representative from Representative Panetta’s Office, Xochitl Guerrero Representative from Senator Caballero’s office, Marisa Hernandez Representative from Senator Laird’s office, Justin Tran Military and Veterans Affairs Office, Staff Liaison, Jack Murphy Military and Veterans Affairs Office, Staff Liaison, Adam Errahebi</p>
<p>Pledge of Allegiance</p>	<p>Led by Phillip Butler</p>
<p>Public Comment</p>	<p>None</p>

Report from the Chair:

<p>Chair Williams:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several Commission members are coming up for renewal. Please ensure you respond to Adam and the Clerk of the Board in a timely fashion.
-------------------------------	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Heroes Open will be held on October 28th at Bayonet Black Horse. Shane Strong will be the primary point of contact for the Heroes Open this year and hopefully moving forward.
--	--

Approval of the Minutes:

Approval of the Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 9th, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion by Mark Hartunian Second by Mary Estrada Ayes, unanimous
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 1st, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion by Mark Hartunian Second by Mary Estrada Ayes, unanimous
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 27th, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion by Mark Hartunian Second by Mary Estrada Ayes, unanimous

Approval of AB-361:

Approval of AB-361	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion by Dan Presser Second by Louise Goetzelt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ayes, unanimous
---------------------------	---

Committee Reports

<p>Veteran Home Update,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jack Murphy: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jack explained the Veterans Home Press Rally which took place on November 9th and the need for a 9th CAL VET Veterans Home here in Monterey County. Jack explained the identified next step for the Veterans Home initiative is to ideally have an Assemblymember author, coauthor, or introduce a piece of legislation this upcoming spring. Jack stated he met with Asm. Addis yesterday to discuss various Veteran related issues. He stated he brought up authoring legislation for the Veterans Home. The spoke about what type of language should be used to address every possible question/response CAL VET could come up with.
---	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County Legislative Council is meeting next week to put together the top legislative priorities for the County. This will be in front of the Supervisors. Jack stated that the Veterans Home will continue to be MVAO’s legislative priority. • We have also received Letters of Support from the City of Marina and Kings County. • Jack also stated a piece of legislation that we are keeping an eye on is AB 46 for tax relief for Military Retired Pay. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Presser Question: • Is Asm. Addis the only State elected official you are going to for this initiative? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jack responded that most if not all of the local elected officials are aware of the initiative. Jack stated Asm. Addis’ staff may have the capacity for writing this legislation due to recently being elected to office. ▪ Justin Tran stated that Senator Laird is aware of the initiative and has flagged it for response from the State. The recent severe storms have set this process back. • Jack expressed tempering expectations of a timeline for the Veterans Home.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Alejo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requested if the Commissioners would author an Action Letter for the Veterans Home Bill since there has been push back from CAL VET. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair Williams responded with his willingness to author the letter.

Veteran of the Year Program Report, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-chair John Gay reported: 	No updates at this time.
--	--------------------------

State Legislation Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from Senator Laird’s office, Justin Tran reported: 	AB 2949 (Lee) - Relief for Disabled Veterans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bill exempts vehicles registered to US military veterans (including disabled veterans and purple heart recipients) from paying tolls on toll bridges and toll highways
---	--

in order to provide financial relief to those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty in their service to our nation.

- Provide financial relief to veterans who display one of the following license plates:
 - Disabled veteran
 - Pearl Harbor survivor
 - Former Prisoner of War
 - Congressional Medal of Honor
 - Purple Heart recipient
 - Army Medal of Honor, Naval Medal of Honor, Air Force Medal of Honor, Army Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross

AB 325 (Irwin) - Veterans Military Discharge Update Grant Program

- Though LGBTQ service members could serve openly following the repeal of DADT, veterans discharged less than honorably under the policy face a burdensome process that can require legal counsel and other assistance to obtain an upgrade to their discharge classification.
- Establishes the Veteran’s Military Discharge Upgrade Grant program to help fund service providers that will educate veterans about the discharge upgrade process and assist eligible veterans to apply.

SB 58 (Wiener) - Decriminalize psychedelics

- The following substances are included in SB 58: psilocybin, psilocyn, Dimethyltryptamine (“DMT”), mescaline (excluding peyote), and ibogaine. In 2021, Senator Wiener’s psychedelics decriminalization legislation, SB 519, passed the Senate. It passed two Assembly Committees but then stalled in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.
- SB 58 is sponsored by Heroic Hearts Project, a veteran service organization. Heroic Hearts connects veterans to psychedelic therapy for treating complex trauma.

SB 38 (Laird) - Enhanced Safety Battery Storage

- Introduced SB 38 after a fire broke out in September of 2022 at the Elkhorn Battery

	<p>Storage Facility in Moss Landing, triggering a 12-hour shelter in place for local residents over fear that the lithium-ion battery fire released dangerous fumes into the air.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As CA transitions to increased reliance on renewable energy, industrial sized battery facilities are becoming a fast-growing part of the energy system. The fire at Moss Landing other similar facilities, including the 2020 explosion at an Arizona facility, demonstrate the need for enhanced safety procedures for these vital facilities. <p>Legislative Update relating to Veteran Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget proposal was released by the Governor yesterday. Projected \$22.5 billion shortfall. Assemblymember Esmerelda Soria is now Chair of the Committee on M & V.A. Senator Archuleta is still Chair on the Senate side. Jack Murphy Comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Governor is holding the \$11 million subvention which is distributed to each County Veterans Service Office. We are hopeful that he will distribute these funds as he did last year. Dan Presser Question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In reference to AB 2949. Does that law work for the HOV/FAST PASS lane? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justin Tran responded that it does not cover HOV/FAST PASS lanes. He will double check. Jack Murphy responded that there is number to call to check. An email was sent out to the Commission.
--	---

<p>Federal Legislation Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative from Representative Panetta’s Office, Xochitl Guerrero reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No update. Xochitl stated that if there was any input for legislation, please let her know.
--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congressman Panetta’s Office has relocated to 1200 Aguajito Rd Suite 003 Monterey, CA.
--	--

<p>Military and Veterans Affairs Report,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack Murphy reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack explained the VA’s increased outreach towards Veterans who may qualify for benefits under the PACT ACT. Also explained the PACT ACT open house at the VA Clinic on 01/28/2023. • Informed the Commission of the recent staffing changed within the Military and Veterans Affairs Office. • November and December Report attached below. • Jack thanked Supervisor Alejo for his support for the Military and Veterans Affairs Office. He also congratulated him on becoming Chair of the Board of Supervisors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Alejo responded reaffirming his support!
---	---

<p>Central Coast Veteran Cemetery Update,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair Williams Reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been no significant damage due to the storms and they are still trying to fill the vacant positions.
--	--

<p>VA Clinic Report,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair Williams reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID protocols are still in place but are winding down. • You can also get the Moderna & Johnson and Johnson COVID Vaccines at the clinic. You can also get flu shots at the clinic on a walk-in basis. • Jack Murphy Comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) has a representative in the clinic now.
--	---

New Business:

<p>Vote to author an Action Letter for the Veterans Home initiative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion by Louise Goetzelt • Second by Rich Garza <p>Ayes, unanimous</p>
<p>Chair Williams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opened nominations for Chair for the ensuing year, 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Presser nominates Sid Williams • Second by Mark Hartunian • No other nominates are received <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roll Call Vote: • Unanimous Ayes – Sid Williams is elected Chair for 2023

<p>Chair Williams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opened nominations for Vice-chair for the ensuing year, 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise Goetzelt nominates John Gay • Second by Dan Presser • No other nominates are received <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Roll Call Vote: <p>Unanimous Ayes – John Gay is elected Vice-chair for 2023</p>
<p>Chair Williams</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed elections.

Commission Member’s Comments:

<p>Louise Goetzelt</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requested the handouts from today’s meeting for distribution. • Congratulated Jack Murphy on being elected to the MOAA Board of Directors.
<p>Supervisor Alejo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congratulated Chair Williams and Vice-Chair John Gay on their continued leadership positions and dedication. • Provided an updated on the damage the recent storms have caused. He also thanked the County Workers and First Responders for their dedication.

Adjournment: Williams

MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICE



MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

November - December 2022



14

Outreach
Events

285



1308

Phone Calls

570

Vet Rep Appointments

806 Claims Actions



408 Unique Veterans

264 Compensation Awards

Customer Satisfaction
Survey

89%

Very Satisfied!

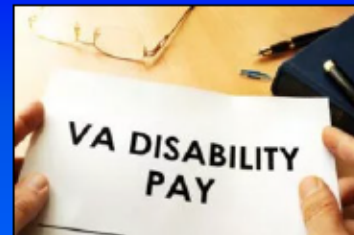
New Disability Compensation Awards

\$725,793

Retroactive Payments

\$128,194

Recurring Monthly Payments



The MVAO Main Office Moved!
2620 1st Ave, Marina (near VA Clinic)

www.mvao.org

Serving those who served

(831) 647-7613