

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: 03/08/2023

Call Meeting to Order: Chair Williams

Roll Call by Chair Sid William, Quorum Established	<p><u>Voting members present:</u> 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 Representative from Assemblymember Rivas’ office, Dominic Dursa Military and Veterans Affairs Office, Staff Liaison, Jack Murphy Military and Veterans Affairs Office, Staff Liaison, Adam Errahebi</p>
Pledge of Allegiance	Led by Louise Goetzelt
Public Comment	None

Report from the Chair:

Chair Williams:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Heroes Open will be on October 28th. We will be entering fundraising mode for that.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VNA is looking for Veterans to volunteer to sit and interact with Veterans in hospice care. If you or someone you know wants to volunteer, please contact VNA Central Coast. • TREA 55 Memorial Foundation is a new source for potential Veterans Organization funding. The website is TREA55.org. You will go to the request support tab, and we accept donations as well. You can also request assistance via the VTC or the Military and Veterans Affairs Office. • The Community Foundation is providing funding for educational scholarships for homeless or at-risk women. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dan Presser question: ○ Does that include women who are abused at home? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair Williams replied: yes, if they are at-risk of homelessness.
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Approval of the Minutes:

<p>Approval of the Minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 8th, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion by Mark Hartunian • Second by Vice-Chair, John Gay • Ayes, unanimous
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Committee Reports

<p>Veteran Home Update,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack Murphy: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since our Last meeting we have received several additional Letters of Support for the Veterans Home from various municipalities: Morro Bay, Scotts Valley, City of San Mateo, and City of San Luis Obispo. • Asm. Addis was assigned to the Assembly Military and Veterans Affairs Committee.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Alejo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have been elected as the Chair of the Board of Supervisors this year. • We have been working on legislation with State elected officials. Unfortunately, we have not been able to have a State Representative introduce legislation for the Veterans Home yet. We are hoping to have one introduced in the future.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maria Tripler is the new County Federal Lobbyist. She worked at the Veterans Administration for many years in the past.
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<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"> • The Veteran of the Year ceremony is scheduled for November 3rd. Please send in any nominations if you haven't already. • Dan Presser question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I saw that we could submit Veteran of the year nominations on the MVAO website. I did not see a link for the Sam Farr and Jack Stewart Awards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair Williams responded that those are on the UVC-MC.com site.
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<p>State Legislation Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from Asm. Rivas' office, Dominic Dursa reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee hearings are being held on legislative bills that have been introduced this session. • AB 46, introduced by Assemblymember Ramos related to the taxation of pensions of veterans in California. The bill has significant co-authors, some 30 assembly members from a bipartisan coalition have signed on, as well as several Senators. • You may have heard reports of troubles with California's budget this year. The Governor's budget was introduced in January and projected a nearly \$22 billion deficit. • The legislative analyst's office is projecting that that deficit may look even worse, and probably even hit upwards of \$30 billion. • What this means is, if there are certain budget priorities or programs that you are passionate about and are worried that they may be on the chopping block, make sure to stay in touch with any of our offices to relay those concerns. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair Williams question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has a bill regarding the Veterans Home been introduced? ▪ Dominic Dursa responded: Not at this time. • Louise Goetzelt comment:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AB 46 is heading to the Committee on Revenue and Taxes on Monday.
<p>State Legislation Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from Sen. Lairds' office, Justin Tran reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the Senator's bills have been put forward including the one on battery storage in Moss Landing. • We are still accepting applications for community funding through the end of this month.
<p>State Legislation Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative from Asm. Addis' office, Alexis Garcia reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asm. Addis re-introduced AB 444, The Military Defense Infrastructure Bill. The bill would create a way for the State to pull down Federal dollars to benefit the California Military communities by investing in infrastructure around State Military bases. This would include transportation, schools, hospitals, police, and emergency response. This bill is supported by the Monterey Bay Defense Alliance.

<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"> • We currently have the Community Project Funding list to appropriate funds to specific items of interest within the community. If you have any questions or requests, please let me know and I will email you the requirements and forms. • We have begun the NDAA process which includes a review of the Gourley Clinic. • Congressman Panetta co-introduced a bill which would increase Veteran access to Congressional services. This bill would make VA workspaces available for Congressional case workers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise Goetzelt question: • Is the Richard Star Act on this upcoming NDAA? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Xochitl responded: I do not have that information today; I will follow up. • Supervisor Alejo comment: • Congressman Panetta introduced a bill that would give late honors of the Congressional Medal of Freedom to Commander Everett Alvarez who was born in Salinas. He was the first pilot shot down in Vietnam and was captivity for eight years.
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<p>Military and Veterans Affairs Report,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack Murphy reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack explained MVAO’s Annual report, see attached: • Jack explained MVAO’s Organizational Structure Chart and how the vacancies have affected appointment scheduling. See attached: • Jack explained that MVAO is facing a \$203,000 budget cut in the future and would appreciate any support from the Commission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Presser comment: • Dan praised Jack and the MVAO staff for maintaining high customer satisfaction and awards numbers. • Supervisor Alejo comment: • He encouraged all Veterans and members of the community to attend public comment for the Board of Supervisor Budget meeting on April 4th.
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<p>Central Coast Veteran Cemetery Update,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair Williams Reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eric Chaney is still on leave. • The cemetery is down personnel. If the phone is not picked up, leave them a message and they will call you back. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louise Goetzelt comment: • The issue of cell phone reception at the cemetery has been brought up to the Garrison. The Garrison and AAFES is looking at potentially adding a tower near the cemetery. • The Cemetery just hired a technician, Kharen Berg who started this week.
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<p>VA Clinic Report,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kintina Edouard reported: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided an updated regarding spouses getting vaccines or flu shots. The VA never provided vaccines to spouses outside of the pandemic. • The flu or COVID vaccine is still available for Veterans. • The VA is drawing down on COVID protocols. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack Murphy question: • Has there been any progress in the selection of a new Director for VA Palo Alto. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kintina responded that the recruitment was under way. She mentioned that Jean Gurga is
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	<p>the Interim-Director until the position is filled. She is coming from the VA Regional Medical Facility in Kansas City.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jack also mentioned wanting to set up a future meeting for community complaints: VA Staffing issues, wait times, pharmacy. • Louise Goetzelt comment: • She praised the Oculus who issues the prescribed glasses. She commented on the VA changing its policy to limit the choices of glasses. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dan Presser comment: ▪ You can only be prescribed glasses from the VA if you see their ophthalmologist. At any other office, you can take any prescription and get glasses.
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New Business:

Chair Williams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to AB 361 expiring at the end of February. All voting members must be present for the meetings if possible. Non-voting members may still attend via Zoom. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisor Alejo comment: • Monterey County advocated to the State to allow volunteer Commissioners the ability to continue using Zoom or any online platforms as it is much easier to attend meetings and open those meetings up to a broader volunteer base.
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Commission Member’s Comments:

Louise Goetzelt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Monterey County Chapter of MOAA is sponsoring two \$2000 scholarships for high school seniors. It is open to members of the JROTC, the Cadet Core, or children/grandchildren of military. They can contact me or their high school counselor. • The Santa Cruz Chapter of MOAA is now a Satellite of the Monterey County Chapter.
Representative from District 4 Supervisor Askew’s Office, Eric Mora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended an invitation to a Townhall with Mayor Ian Oglesby on Wednesday March 15th from 5:30pm to 7:00pm.

Dan Presser	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will be giving a presentation at the Carmel Foundation on March 24th regarding his adventure to the jungles of South America.
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Adjournment: Chair 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!

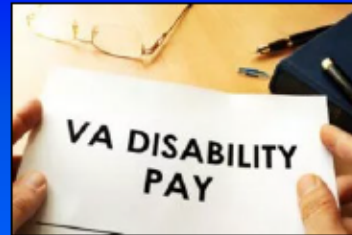
New Disability Compensation Awards

\$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