**Monterey County**

MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Sid Williams, Chairperson

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**Meeting: 11/08/2023**

**Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Williams

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| **Roll Call by Chair Sid William, Quorum Established** | Voting members present:  District 2 – Lois Flint  District 3 – Mark Hartunian  District 5 – Phillip Butler  BoS – Louise Goetzelt  BoS – John Gay, Vice-chair  BoS – Dan Presser  BoS – Sid Williams, Chair  Representing County Supervisor  1st District Supervisor, Luis Alejo  In attendance:  Representative from 1st District Supervisor’s Office, Javier Gomez  Representative from 1st District Supervisor’s Office, Linda Gonzalez  Representative from Senator Caballero’s office, Marisa Hernandez  Representative from Senator Laird’s office, Justin Tran  Representative from Assemblymember Addis’ office, Alexis Garcia-Arrazola  Representative from Assemblymember Rivas’ office, Dominic Dursa  Military and Veterans Affairs Office, Staff Liaison, Adam Errahebi |
| **Pledge of Allegiance** | Led by Phillip Butler |
| **Public Comment** | None |

**Report from the Chair:**

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| **Chair Williams:** | * The Heroes Open Golf Tournament had a great turnout. $25,000 was donated to the United Veterans Council emergency fund as a result. * The Veteran of the Year dinner went well. We were able to honor all the award recipients. This event also provided additional funds to the United Veterans Council emergency fund. * The Central Coast Veterans Cemetery is holding an event on Veteran’s Day at 10:30am. There are several events around the County as well. The Salinas Veteran’s Day Parade starts at 2:00pm with guest speakers at 1:00pm. Please arrive accordingly. |

**Approval of the Minutes:**

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| **Approval of the Minutes** | * July 12th & September 12th,   + Motion by Mark Hartunian   + Second by Louise Goetzelt * Ayes, unanimous |

**Committee Reports**

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| **Veteran Home Update,**   * Jack Murphy: | * We intend to continue to have the Veteran Home initiative as one of the County Legislative priorities. * I have been in discussion with Speaker Rivas’ Representative, Dominic Dursa and Supervisor Alejo on underperforming rural hospitals as an additional option for the Veterans Home.   + Louise Goetzelt comment:     - Explained an article that she sent out regarding California Veterans Homes not being at full occupancy.     - Jack responded that there is a difference in occupancy numbers depending on which source you go to. * I do have a meeting with a Representative from Governor Newsom’s Office regarding Veteran Homelessness. I will bring up the Veterans Home as it is housing and healthcare. * I passed on my comments regarding the Veterans Home to the County Homeless Coordinator, Roxanne Wilson.   + Louise Goetzelt comment:     - Another option could be the old Carmel Hospital off of Valley Way that was going through a remodeling project that failed.   + Mary Estrada question:     - Has anyone considered the old Silas B. Hayes hospital.     - Jack responded that the hospital is a DoD facility that is potentially moving operations to the East Coast, but it is too soon to tell.     - Louise Goetzelt stated that the hospital does not meet the earthquake standards for a medical facility. |

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| **Veteran of the Year Program Report,**   * Vice-chair John Gay reported: | * Nothing to add. Start looking for next years potential submissions. |

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| **State Legislation Report**   * Dominic Dursa reported: | * The budget projection should come out soon as taxes will be due next week. |

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| **Federal Legislation Report**   * Jack Murphy reported: | * Congressman Panetta is in the process of completing interviews for a District Director and looking for candidates for the Military and Veterans Affairs Case Manager (Xochitl’s old position). |

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| **Military and Veterans Affairs Report,**   * Jack Murphy reported: | * We are currently recruiting for an Office Assistant II. We have requested an interoffice transfer or a temporary employee to expedite the process. * The Veterans Service Officers recruitment is still in process. * Jack explained MVAO’s data reports report, see attached: |

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| **Central Coast Veteran Cemetery Update,**   * Chair Williams reported | * The Veterans Day Ceremony is at 10:30am on Saturday. * They are currently hiring for the Cemetery Manager. * Jack Murphy stated: * The highway signs have been put up for contract on Highway 1 North and South. |

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| **VA Clinic Report,**   * Chair Williams reported: | * COVID restrictions have been relaxed. You do not have to wear a mask in the clinic anymore. * Appointments are available. * COVID and RSV vaccinations are available at the clinic. |

**Commission Member’s Comments:**

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| * Supervisor Alejo | * The Supervisors were able to recognize several Veterans at the last Board Meeting. * The Veteran of the Year Awards was very well attended and one of my favorite events. |
| * Lois Flint | * There are many businesses and restaurants providing free dinner for Veteran’s Day. |
| * Louise Goetzelt | * I will be out of town speaking at the Veteran’s Day Event at Bonita Springs, Florida. |
| * Joe Farotte | * Explained the County of Monterey Employee Resource Group’s mission. * The County of Monterey Veterans Employee Resource Group is going to pick up paint from John Gay to put a fresh coat on the Salinas Vietnam Veterans Memorial at a future date. * The Veterans Employee Resource Group will also be marching in the Veterans Day Parade. |
| * Vice-Chair, John Gay | * We have the POW and American Flags for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and Veterans Day event. |

**Adjournment:** Chair Williams

