

**ADVISORY BOARD ON VETERANS SERVICES
MINUTES**

A/V Conference Meeting at
Oahu – Tripler Hospital, VBA E-Wing, Honor Conference Room, 1st Floor
Big Island (Hilo) – 1304 Kekuanaoa Street, Hilo, HI 96720
Kauai – 1-3460 Kaunualii Highway, Hanapepe, HI 96716
Maui – PFC Kaho’ohanohano Armory, 2701 Maui Veterans Hwy, Kihei, HI 96753
Friday, February 1, 2019
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Ms. Bridget Komine, Vice Chair,
Mr. Clay Park
Mr. Harold Bugado
Mr. Jim Traxler
Ms. Chelsea Fernandez

OVS Staff: Mr. Ron Han, Director, OVS

Ex-Officios: Mr. Sergio Chao, Acting Director, VBA
Ms. Jennifer Gutowski, Director VAPIHCS

Guests: Mr. Wade Ishii, State of Hawaii DOD Engineering
Mr. Carlos Santana – Senator Mazie Hirono’s Office
Mr. Gene Maestas, Public Affairs Officer, National Cemetery of
the Pacific
Mr. Juan Babiak, Veterans Liaison, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans
Home

Absent: Ms. Ann Greenlee, Chair
Mr. Michael Lilly, Board Member
Mr. Wilbert Periera, Board Member
Department of Health
Department of Human Services
Oahu Veterans Center

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE & CALL TO ORDER – A Moment of Silence

Clay Park chaired the meeting on behalf of Vice Chair Bridget Komine who participated via telecon. Carlos Santana led the Pledge of Allegiance and after a moment of silence, called the meeting to order at 0905 hours.

II. MINUTES

The Board reviewed the January 4, 2019 minutes. Harold Bugado motioned to accept seconded by Jim Traxler. Minutes were unanimously accepted by the Board Members.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Board received a proposed measure from Congressman Ed Case's office concerning child care services for Veterans receiving mental health care and intensive healthcare services by the VA. Inputs from the Board were submitted to Congressman's Case's Washington D.C. office.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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Director Jennifer Gutowski, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Medical –

Briefed on: The new VA Welcome Kit, the VA Mission Act, the VA Community of Care Program, the upcoming Oahu VA Townhall scheduled for 19 Feb 19 at the DAV Hall, Keehi Lagoon, Mental Healthcare transitioning issues and major changes forthcoming with the Choice Program slated for June 2019.

Acting Director Sergio Chao, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Benefits -

Briefed on: His background: 20 years with the VA, US Army Veteran, currently with the VBA in Arizona and will be here in Hawaii through 8 Mar 19. Also addressed Blue Water Navy decisions, that he participated in the Hawaii Point in Time Count assessing Homeless Veterans and their families on island and highlighted recent new accessions and recruiting status.

Public Affairs Officer, Gene Maestas, National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, Punchbowl-

Briefed on: Continued dis-internment efforts with identifying Korean War Veterans who were previously listed as unknowns, appreciation to the public for providing inputs to the ABCM interpretive certification process and the upcoming repatriation ceremony of two USS Oklahoma Sailors at Punchbowl.

Mr. Ron Han, Director, OVS - No change to submitted report.

Briefed on: OVS new accessions and job vacancies, the progress on the 2nd State Veterans Home, the upcoming first State Veterans Summit and the upcoming State Legislative Session (Jan-May 2019).

Mr Wade Ishii, Department of Defense, Engineering Office, Interim Chief Engineering Officer – No change to submitted report

Briefed on: and provided an update on CIP and expansion projects throughout the State involving our eight State Veterans Cemeteries and special projects like the 2nd State Veterans Home.

Mr. Juan Babiak, Veterans Liaison, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home- No change to submitted report.

Briefed on: A few highlights of his monthly report, that Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home is still 5 star-rated and that there may be a possibility it could go to a 4 star rating dependent on some of the latest assessments.

Mr. Carlos Santana, Military and Veterans Affairs Liaison, Senator Mazie Hirono's Office

Briefed on: The upcoming and inaugural State Veterans Summit, slated for 21-22 June 19 at the Hawaii Convention Center and the next meeting that was forthcoming on 13 Feb 19 at the Oahu Veterans Center.

Deputy Director Bridget Komine, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS

Briefed on: Continued improvements in the Veteran unemployment rate....2018: 3.7% and 2017: 4.0%

Department of Health – Not present. No submitted report.

Department of Human Service - Not present. No submitted report.

Department of Labor and Industrial Relations - Not present. No submitted report.

U.S. Department of Labor, VETS – Present. No change to report submitted.

V. BOARD MEMBER'S REPORTS

1. Hilo – Mr. Harold Bugado - No change to submitted report.
2. Kona – Mr. Jim Traxler - No change to submitted report.
3. Kauai – Mr. Wilbert Pereira - Report submitted. No additions.

4. Maui – Ms. Chelsea Fernandez - Report submitted. No additions.
5. Oahu – Mr. Michael Lilly -Report submitted. No additions.
6. Oahu – Mr. Clay Park - Report submitted. No additions.
7. Oahu – Ms. Bridget Komine, Acting Chair - No change to submitted report.
8. Oahu – Ms. Ann Greenlee, Chair - No change to submitted report.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Legislative Committee

The State Legislature is in session from Jan 2019- May 2019

B. By Laws and Procedures

No report.

C. Recognition and Awards

No report.

D. Women’s Committee

No Report.

E. Project and Events Committee

- a. Rededication of the WWII Memorial in 2018 – Komine Liaison
Requesting plaque script info from OVS. Postal Group opportunity for sponsorship.
- b. Maui Veterans Cemetery Blessing/Dedication Event in 2018 – Fernandez Liaison. No update.
- c. Dedication of the East Hawaii Korean War Memorial – Bugado Liaison. No report.
- d. WWI Centennial Commemoration 2018 – Han Liaison
AAR Meeting planned for 31 Jan 2019.
- e. State Veterans Summit – Han Liaison
Tentative date and venue: 21-22 Jun 2019 at the Hawaii Convention Center

VI.

Veterans' Centers – Not present. No written report submitted.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Neighbor island board members work with Kim Magday to travel for the State Veterans Summit and possibly conduct monthly meeting

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

None

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

X. WORKING SESSION – OVS / Advisory Board Issues / Ideas

Recommend change of board meeting in June 2019 to coincide with State Veterans Summit, 21-22 Jun 19 at the Hawaii Convention Center and to bring all neighbor island reps in for this session...Motion by Jim Traxler...seconded by Harold Bugado...motion carried.

XI. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn by Bridget Komine and seconded by Harold Bugado. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 1010 hours.

RPH2 - Recorder

Attachments