

**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 Kekuaaoa 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, March 1, 2019
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Ms. Ann Greenlee, Chair
Ms. Bridget Komine, Vice Chair,
Mr. Clay Park
Mr. Michael Lilly
Mr. Harold Bugado
Mr. Jim Traxler

OVS Staff: Mr. Ron Han, Director, OVS

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

Guests: 1LT Shao Lee, State of Hawaii DOD Engineering
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: Mr. Wilbert Periera, Board Member
Ms. Chelsea Fernandez, Board Member
Department of Health
Department of Human Services
Oahu Veterans Center

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

Chair Ann Greenlee chaired the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance. After a moment of silence, called the meeting to order at 0905 hours.

II. MINUTES

The Board reviewed the February 1, 2019 minutes. Clay Park motioned to accept seconded by Michael Lilly. Minutes were unanimously accepted by the Board Members.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Board received no outside communications.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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

Briefed on: Upcoming Town Hall Meetings on Oahu and in Hilo, the upcoming VA Job Fair at the Oahu Veterans Center (over 24% of VAPIHCS employees are Veterans) 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: Final day on the job (1 Mar 19) before heading back to Arizona...Ms. Nessie Shores will be the interim VBA Director. Discussed updates on the Blue Water Navy legislation going through Congress and reported on the support provided to “Mango Man,” a Vietnam Veteran on the Windward side of Oahu who was on the front-page news who received disability compensation and healthcare services from VBA and VAPIHCS.

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 and time of need in-ground burial availability at Punchbowl. Also highlighted upcoming ceremonies (ANZAC Day and Memorial Day) planned at Punchbowl in the next several months.

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).

1Lt Shao Lee and 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. Juan was highlighted and thanked for his planning efforts working on the 2nd State Veterans Home.

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 call for agenda items and guest speakers.

Director Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS

Briefed on: Current unemployment rate of 3.7%...and that Hawaii has one of the lowest unemployment rates for residents and Veterans in the Nation.

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

Michael Lilly provided an update on bills and that the State Legislature is still in session until the first week of 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 (National Association of Letter Carriers) opportunity for sponsorship. Request letter for \$3500 has been drafted and possible re-dedication to align with their convention in 2020...motion to accept by Clay Park...seconded by Michael Lilly... unanimously accepted by the Board Members.
- b. Maui Veterans Cemetery Blessing/Dedication Event in 2018 – Fernandez Liaison. No update.
- c. Dedication of the East Hawaii Korean War Memorial – Bugado Liaison. Construction is just underway...possible June/July 2019 dedication
- d. WWI Centennial Commemoration 2018 – Han Liaison

Final tribute to State Planning Committee in June 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 previously approved by the board.

Clay Park suggested that State Advisory Board Members are available to meet with Veterans and their loved ones at the upcoming State Veterans Summit. Possible State Advisory Board proceedings could occur on at the Summit...motion to accept by Michael Lilly...seconded by Bridget Komine... unanimously accepted by the Board Members

XI. ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn by Clay Park and seconded by Harold Bugado. Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 0956 hours.

RPH2 - Recorder
Attachments