

ADVISORY BOARD ON VETERANS SERVICES MINUTES

Teams Audio
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Friday, April 1, 2022
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Board Members: Ms. Bridget Komine, Chair
Mr. Blair Suzuki, Vice Chair
Mr. Jim Traxler
Mr. Reyn Kaupiko
Ms. Mary Kay Hertog
Ms. Donna Shimizu
Ms. Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn

OVS Staff: Mr. Ron Han, OVS, Director
Ms. Yolanda Ehere, Secretary
Ms. Yam Yi Lee, Administrative Services Assistant

Guests: Mr. John Lombardo, Acting Director, VBA Benefits
Dr. Adam Robinson, Director, VA Pacific Islands Health
Care System
Capt. Shaoyu Lee, Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii
Department of Defense Engineering
Mr. Juan Babiak, Veterans Liaison, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home
Ms. Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS
Ms. Katherine Korenaga, Community and Project Development Director,
Department of Human Services
Mr. Gene Maestas, Public Affairs Specialist, National Cemetery of
the Pacific
Col. Pamela Ellison, Human Resources Officer, Hawaii Army National
Guard
Ms. Nicole Gray - Congressman Kaiali'i Kahele Office Representative

Absent: Mr. Michael Lilly
Ms. Carol Kanayama, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Department of Health
Mr. Carlos Santana - Senator Mazie Hirono's Office Representative

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

Reyn Kaupiko led the Pledge of Allegiance. After a moment of silence, Vice Chair Blair Suzuki called the meeting to order at 0900 hours.

II. MINUTES

The Board reviewed the March 4, 2022 minutes. Jim Traxler motioned to accept the March 4, 2022 minutes and Roxanne Bruhn seconded.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

An invitation from Obama Hawaiian Africana Museum to the board members.

IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Mr. John Lombardo, Acting Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - Benefits

Briefed on: John Introduced himself, On Tuesday, April 19th a VBA counselor will be going to the Molokai VET center for a face-to-face meeting with veterans from 9am – 1:30pm. On Thursday, April 28, there will be a virtual VBA workshop.

Dr. Adam Robinson, Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - Pacific Island Health Care System - Medical

Briefed on: ACL CCF Survey - We finished our weeklong survey yesterday and I wanted to say that congratulations to everyone there because we came through without any findings on the healthcare side, there are a couple of environment of care engineering type issues. New care model for Molokai - 30 to 35 new providers that are in our network.

Mr. Ron Han, OVS, Director

Briefed on: Welcome John Lombardo on board!! Fulfilling week for Vietnam veterans this week – Had a ceremony at Punchbowl and they recognized a lot of Gold Star families and had a parade in Waikiki. Wrap-up groundskeeper training – 30 staff in attendance from the entire state. The Governor's Memorial Day ceremony will be an in-person ceremony.

Capt. Shaoyu Lee, Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii Department of Defense Engineering

Briefed on:

- The 442nd Veterans Club (GIA) – Legacy Center - Requesting to submit Supplemental No. 2, and additional (12-month) extension to lapse 6/30/2023 due to a 2-year process to acquire a building permit March 2022.
- HSVC Expansion and Improvements, Oahu - March 15, 2022: Tri-party construction contract for T. Iida Contracting fully executed and Authorization to order approved materials issued. Separate Notice to Proceed to be issued once building permit has been approved.

- Hawaii State Veterans Home, Oahu (Daniel K. Akaka Veterans Home) - Construction 41% complete through Feb. 2022. HB 1893 SD1 related to the transfer of Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home to Oahu Regional Healthcare System passed HTH-PSM committees. Continue to monitor HB1893 SD1.
- Kauai Veterans Cemetery, Phase 2B - April 8, 2022: On-site pre-final inspection scheduled. April 21, 2022: Blessing, hosted by County of Kauai, scheduled for 9:30am – 10:00am. By invitation.
- Maui Veterans Cemetery Expansion and Improvements - DAGS to issue change orders for extending sidewalk in front of memorials and switching halyards to the outside of the flag poles. Project construction ~98% complete as of February 2022.

Mr. Juan Babiak, Veterans Liaison, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home

Briefed on: Mask mandate still in place.

Ms. Katherine Korenaga, Community and Project Development Director, Department of Human Services

Briefed on: Nothing to add.

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

Briefed on: Nothing to add.

Mr. Gene Maestas, Public Affairs Specialist, National Cemetery of the Pacific

Briefed on: Lots of construction for about the next four years. Preparing for the Mayor's Memorial Day ceremony.

Ms. Nicole Gray - Congressman Kaiali'i Kahele Office Representative

Briefed on: Congressman Kahele introduced the LGBTQ Veterans Act with Rep. Nancy Mace to ensure veterans who are LGBTQ received the recognition of benefits that they have earned.

Ms. Carol Kanayama, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations – Submitted report, but not present.

Mr. Carlos Santana - Senator Mazie Hirono's Office Representative – Not present. No submitted report.

Department of Health – Not present. No submitted report.

BOARD MEMBER'S REPORTS

1. Kauai - Ms. Mary Kay Hertog - Report submitted. No additions.
2. Maui - Mr. Michael Lilly - Report submitted. No additions.
3. Oahu - Mr. Blair Suzuki, Vice Chair - Report submitted. No additions.
4. Oahu - Ms. Bridget Komine, Chair - Report submitted. No additions.
5. Oahu - Ms. Reyn Kaupiko - Report submitted. No additions.
6. Oahu - Ms. Roxanne Bruhn - Report submitted.
7. Big Island - Mr. Jim Traxler - Report submitted. No additions.
8. Big Island - Ms. Donna Shimizu - Report submitted. No additions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Legislative Committee
 - Tracking status on all veteran related bills.
- B. By Laws and Procedures
 - No Report.
- C. Recognition and Awards
 - No Report.
- D. Women's Committee
 - Chair Ellison briefed on –
 - Saturday, June 11th, 2022, Virtual Women's Veterans Summit.
 - Working on the agenda and registration site.
- E. Project and Events Committee
 - Maui Veterans Cemetery Blessing/Dedication Event
 - No Report.

V. **NEW BUSINESS - None**

VI. **OLD BUSINESS – None**

VII. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

VIII. **WORKING SESSION - OVS / Advisory Board Issues / Ideas**

IX. **ADJOURN – 10:11am**

Mary Kay Hertog motioned; Roxanne Bruhn seconded.

Yolanda Ehere – Recorder