

## ADVISORY BOARD ON VETERANS SERVICES MINUTES

Teams Audio  
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**Friday, May 6, 2022**  
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

### **ATTENDANCE**

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

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. Richard Kynion, Chief of Staff, VA Pacific Islands Health  
Care System  
Mr. Wade Ishii, Asst. Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii  
DOD Engineering  
Mr. Juan Babiak, Veterans Liaison, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans  
Ms. Katherine Korenaga, Community and Project Development Director,  
Department of Human Services  
Ms. Carol Kanayama, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations  
Ms. Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS  
Mr. Gene Maestas, Public Affairs Specialist, National Cemetery of  
the Pacific

Absent: Mr. Reyn Kaupiko  
Mr. Carlos Santana – Senator Mazie Hirono’s Office Representative  
Ms. Nicole Gray - Congressman Kaiali’I Kahele Office Representative  
Col. Pamela Ellison, Human Resources Officer, Hawaii Army National  
Guard

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

Donna Shimizu led the Pledge of Allegiance. After a moment of silence, Chair Bridget Komine called the meeting to order at 0902 hours

## II. **MINUTES**

The Board reviewed the April 1, 2022 minutes. Roxanne Bruhn motioned to accept the April 1, 2022 minutes and Mary Kay Hertog seconded.

## III. **COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

## IV. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

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

Briefed on: We will be bringing back the workforce on June 19<sup>th</sup>. This week is public service recognition week – Thank you for continuing to serve the public.

Outreach events:

- May 17<sup>th</sup> - Molokai Vet Center from 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM.
- May 24<sup>th</sup> - Lanai, Senior Center from 8:00 AM to 1:30 PM
- May 10<sup>th</sup> and May 24<sup>th</sup> - Kona Vet Center from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

### **Dr. Richard Kynion, Chief of Staff, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - Pacific Island Health Care System-Medical**

Briefed on: New audiology service was opened on Kauai last week. This month is Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month. We're involved in our 12th VA 2K, and part of that program is collecting donations for homeless veterans. Today starts the beginning of Nurses Week – Thank you to all the extraordinary nurses. Virtual Women's Summit – June 11, 2022.

### **Mr. Ron Han, OVS, Director**

Briefed on: State legislature has closed. Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home bill will be signed into law date forthcoming. Governor's Memorial Day ceremony will be held on Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Mr. Wade Ishii, Asst. Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii DOD Engineering**

Briefed on:

- The 442nd Veterans Club (GIA) – Legacy Center - Supplemental No. 2 submitted to extend for an additional (12-month) to lapse 6/30/2023 due to a 2-year process to acquire a building permit in March 2022.
- Hawaii State Veterans Home, Oahu - Construction 45% complete through Mar. 2022., April 28, 2022: SFCA Artist Portfolio Review Meeting and Conf. Committee Hearing-HB1893 HD1 SD2, May 4, 2022: Rep Yamane site visit / guided tour, May 5, 2022: F&E Review Meeting.

- Kauai Veterans Cemetery, Phase 2B - April 8, 2022: On-site pre-final inspection., April 21, 2022: Blessing, hosted by County of Kauai., May 17, 2022: VA construction inspection scheduled.
- Maui Veterans Cemetery Expansion and Improvements - May 18, 2022: VA construction inspection scheduled. Note: April 26, 2022: Meeting w/ DAGS. Maui District Office has hired a new Maui District Engineer, Jeff Pearson.

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

Briefed on: Received our test results from yesterday for COVID. No staff, no residents tested positive.

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

Briefed on: Nothing to add.

**Ms. Carol Kanayama, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations**

Briefed on: Nothing to add.

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

Briefed on: Job training program – Saturday, May 21st at 1:00 p.m.  
Saturday, June 4th – In-depth employment workshop. Flyers for both will be forthcoming.

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

Briefed on: Cemetery is fully opened; no restrictions. On May 20<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m., which is the West Lock commemoration ceremony. That's where all those that were killed during the West Lock disaster here at Pearl Harbor. The Mayor's Memorial Day ceremony will be held on Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m.

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

**Ms. Nicole Gray - Congressman Kaiuli'i Kahele 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.
  - I'm the latest member of the Maui Council on Aging. The Maui Mayor Victorino appointed me to the board.
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 – No report submitted. No additions.
6. Oahu - Ms. Roxanne Bruhn - Report submitted.
  - I accepted a tentative offer with the Defense POW MIA agency as their administrative officer. I'm awaiting their final offer.
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
  - No Report.
- B. By Laws and Procedures
  - No Report.
- C. Recognition and Awards
  - No Report.
- D. Women's Committee
  - Saturday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Women's Veterans Summit.
- 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 – 10:23am**

Roxanne Bruhn motioned; Michael Lilly seconded.

Yolanda Ehere – Recorder