ADVISORY BOARD ON VETERANS SERVICES MINUTES

Teams Audio
+1 808-829-4853, 181671097# (Dial-in Number)
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 19th. This week is public service recognition week – Thank you for continuing to serve the public.

Outreach events:
- May 17th - Molokai Vet Center from 9:00 AM to 1:30 PM.
- May 24th - Lanai, Senior Center from 8:00 AM to 1:30 PM
- May 10th and May 24th - 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 30th.

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.
• 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 20th 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 30th at 8:30 a.m.

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

   • I'm the latest member of the Maui Council on Aging. The Maui Mayor Victorino appointed me to the board.
   • I accepted a tentative offer with the Defense POW MIA agency as their administrative officer. I'm awaiting their final offer.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Legislative Committee
   • No Report.
B. By Laws and Procedures
   • No Report.
C. Recognition and Awards
   • No Report.
D. Women’s Committee
   o Saturday, June 11th, 2022, Women’s Veterans Summit.
E. Project and Events Committee
   • Maui Veterans Cemetery Blessing/Dedication Event
     o 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