

**STATE OF HAWAII OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES ADVISORY  
BOARD ON VETERANS SERVICES MINUTES**

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Office of Veterans' Services (Tripler Army Medical Center)

459 Patterson Rd. E Wing, Rm 1-A103 Honolulu, HI 96819 **Friday,**

**January 6, 2023**

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

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

OVS Staff: Ms. Yolanda Ehere, Secretary  
Ms. Yam Yi Lee, Administrative Services Assistant

Guests: Mr. Chris McNair, Veterans Service Center Manager,  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Benefits  
Ms. Amy Rohlf, Public Affairs Officer, VA Pacific Islands Health  
Care System – Medical  
Mr. Wade Ishii, Asst. Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii  
DOD Engineering  
Mr. Juan Babiak, Veterans Liaison, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home  
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 Matias, Public Affairs Specialist, National Cemetery of the Pacific  
Ms. Nicole Gray - Congressman Kaiali'i Kahele Office Representative  
Mr. Carlos Santana – Senator Mazie Hirono's Office Representative

Absent: Mr. Ron Han, OVS, Director  
Mr. Juan Babiak, Veterans Liaison, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home  
Col. Pamela Ellison, Human Resources Officer,  
Hawaii Army National Guard

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

Chair Bridget Komine led the Pledge of Allegiance. After a moment of silence, Chair Bridget Komine called the meeting to order at 0900 hours.

**II. MINUTES**

The Board reviewed the January 6, 2023 minutes. Donna Shimizu motioned to accept the January 6, 2023 minutes and Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn seconded.

**III. COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Mr. Chris McNair, Veterans Service Center Manager, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - Benefits**

Briefed on: Upcoming outreach event: PACT Act & Benefits Workshop held on Saturday, January 14, 2023, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. at Oahu Veterans Center.

**Ms. Amy Rohlfs, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - Pacific Island Health Care System – Medical**

Briefed on: Will be attending the PACT Act & Benefits Workshop on Saturday, January 14<sup>th</sup>. The healthy living team, pharmacy and other departments will be in attendance for your health needs. The Rick Hamada show has been reformatted and there will no longer be a VA update on Tuesdays; working on our VA Pacific Islands Talk Story podcast.

**Ms. Yam Yi Lee, Administrative Services Assistant, OVS**

Briefed on: We are recruiting. Please let us know if you know anyone looking for an opportunity. Next VA/NCA CRP Inspection: East HI II-23-24 Jan 23, East HI I-25 Jan 23, West HI-26 Jan 23

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

Briefed on: One change to the submitted report -The Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery expansion and Improvements project is only 70% completed, not 80% complete

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

Briefed on: No changes on submitted report

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

Briefed on: No submitted report

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

Briefed on: No submitted report but updated the construction projects on Columbarium Court 13. It is expected to be done within the next couple of months. There will be a new construction project that will be occurring containing roads, curves, utility upgrades and it will be in various locations throughout the cemetery. We will reroute traffic when those projects begin, and it will last probably for a few months.

**Ms. Nicole Gray - Congressman Kaiali'I Kahele Office Representative – Present.**  
No submitted report.

**Mr. Carlos Santana, Senator Mazie Hirono's Office Representative – Present.** No submitted report.

**Mr. Juan Babiak, Veterans Liaison, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans - Not present.** No submitted report.

**Ms. Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS - 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 - No report submitted. No additions.
4. Oahu - Ms. Bridget Komine, Chair - No report submitted. No additions.
5. Oahu - Ms. Reyn Kaupiko – No report submitted. No additions.
6. Oahu - Ms. Roxanne Bruhn - Report submitted. No additions.
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 or Update
- B. By Laws and Procedures -- No Report or Update
- C. Recognition and Awards –No Report or Update
- D. Women's Committee -- No Report or Update
- E. Projects and Events Committee-
  - Maui Veterans Cemetery Blessing/Dedication Event Update- Michael Lilly - No Report or Update

**V. ADJOURN – 9:23am**

Mary Kay Hertog motioned, and Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn seconded.  
Yolanda Ehere – Recorder