

**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, March 3, 2023**

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

**ATTENDANCE**

**Board Members:**

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

**OVS Staff:**

Mr. Ron Han, OVS, Director  
Ms. Yam Yi Lee, Administrative Services Assistant

**Guests:**

Ms. Stacey Bonnett, Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs -  
Benefits  
Ms. Amy Rohlfs, 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. Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS  
Mr. Gene Matias, Public Affairs Specialist, National Cemetery of the  
Pacific  
Ms. Nicole Gray - Congresswoman Jill Tokuda Office Representative

**Absent:**

Mr. Michael Lilly  
Ms. Yolanda Ehere, Secretary  
Ms. Carol Kanayama, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations  
Mr. Carlos Santana – Senator Mazie Hirono's Office Representative  
Col. Pamela Ellison, Human Resources Officer,  
Hawaii Army National Guard

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

Reyn Kaupiko 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 February 3, 2023 minutes. Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn motioned to accept the February 3, 2023 minutes and Mary Kay Hertog seconded.

**III. COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Ms. Stacey Bonnett, Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Benefits**

Briefed on: Pact Act FAQs

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

Briefed on: No submitted report.

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

Briefed on: Compliance review results will be sent to the board members. Tremendous process is being made at the Daniel K Akaka veteran's home.

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

Briefed on: HSVC Expansion and Improvements and Hawaii State Veterans Home are 84% completed.

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

Briefed on: No changes on submitted report.

**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 changes on submitted report.

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

Briefed on: FOA was published on grants.gov. It's funding opportunity for homeless veteran's program grants. The grants are up to \$500K and any organization can apply for it. It is designed to help homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness find employment.

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

Briefed on: May 1st, we're going to be repaving post Rd, main road that goes in and out of the cemetery. We're asking all Public Utility Commission vehicles not to come into the cemetery for three weeks. Easter Sunrise service is going to happen this year. We participated in the Veteran's Experience Action Center outreach to Guam, Saipan, and the Hawaii Islands. We served 42 veterans over those three days.

**Ms. Nicole Gray - Congresswoman Jill Tokuda Office Representative**

Briefed on: Working on Talk Story sessions on each island

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

**Department of Health** – Not present. No submitted report.

**V. 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 - No report submitted.

**VI. 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
    1. Not yet completed

**VII. ADJOURN – 9:50am**

Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn motioned, and Donna Shimizu seconded.  
Yam Yi Lee – Recorder