

**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, November 3, 2023

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

ATTENDANCE

Board Members:

Ms. Bridget Komine, Chair
Mr. Blair Suzuki, Vice Chair
Ms. Mary Kay Hertog
Ms. Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn

OVS Staff:

BG Bruce Oliveira, Interim Director
Ms. Yolanda Ehere, Secretary

Guests:

Mr. Chris McNair, Veterans Service Center Manager, 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
Mr. Lance Pridemore, Assistant Cemetery Director,
National Cemetery of the Pacific
Ms. Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS
Mr. David Liao, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

Absent:

Mr. Reyn Kaupiko
Mr. Michael Lilly
Ms. Yam Yi Lee, Administrative Services Assistant
Ms. Carol Kanayama, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Col. Pamela Ellison, Human Resources Officer, Hawaii Army National Guard
Ms. Nicole Gray - Congresswoman Jill Tokuda Office Representative
Mr. Carlos Santana – Senator Mazie Hirono's Office Representative

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

Vice Chair Blair Suzuki led the Pledge of Allegiance. After a moment of silence, Chair Bridget Komine called the meeting to order at 0908 hours.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Representative Case sent the board members his newsletter. It contained information about a Veteran's townhall meeting that will be held on Saturday.

III. MINUTES

The Board reviewed the October 6, 2023 minutes. Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn motioned to accept the October 6, 2023 minutes and Mary Kay Hertog seconded.

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

None

V. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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

Briefed on: Outreach events in Kailua-Kona on November 14th and 28th. The Hilo counselor goes to Kona twice a month to assist the veterans at the Vet Center.

Question from Mary Kay Hertog: Do you have the dates for when you will be coming to Kauai?

Answer: I do not as we are still awaiting the travel budget.

Ms. Amy Rohlf, Public Affairs Officer, VA Pacific Islands Health Care System - Medical

Briefed on: Friday, November the 10th and Saturday, November 11th, the clinics will be closed in observance for Veterans Day. KOA Challenge - We are hosting our veterans who are registered for care and cleared by their doctors to participate in this three-day sporting event.

BG Bruce Oliveira, Interim Director, OVS

Briefed on: No additions or changes to submitted report.

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

Briefed on: No additions or changes to submitted report.

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

Briefed on: 24 of our residents to attend our Hilo Veterans parade tomorrow morning.

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

Briefed on: PU'UHONUA O NĒNĒ (temporary shelter) - I was able to find out that as of October 30th, there were fourteen individuals who self-identified as veterans.

Mr. David Liao, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations - Present. No submitted report.

Briefed on: Looking forward to us working with Hiring Our Heroes (Chamber of Commerce Foundation)

Ms. Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS - Present, No submitted report.

Briefed on: Add-on to Katherine's report - Homeless veterans, whether they're in shelter or in other housing opportunities because of the wildfire, they all would qualify for employment services.

Mr. Lance Pridemore, Assistant Cemetery Director, National Cemetery of the Pacific

Briefed on: Veteran's Day Ceremony on November 11th at 10:00am

Ms. Nicole Gray - Congresswoman Jill Tokuda Office Representative - Not present. No submitted report.

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

Department of Health – Not present. No submitted report.

VI. BOARD MEMBER'S REPORTS

1. Kauai - Ms. Mary Kay Hertog - Report submitted.
2. Maui - Mr. Michael Lilly - Not present. No submitted report.
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 – Not present. No submitted report.
6. Oahu - Ms. Roxanne Bruhn - No report submitted. No additions.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Legislative Committee –No Report or Update
- B. By Laws and Procedures -- No Report
 - Reyn Kaupiko and Mary Kay Hertog have been reviewing the bylaws to see what kind of upgrades are needed based on the recommendation from October.
 - Reyn Kaupiko will have an update at the next meeting.
- C. Recognition and Awards
 - Mary Kay Hertog motioned to form a permitted interaction group to draft some recommendations as to how memorialize Colonel Han.
 - Mary Kay Hertog nominated Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn to be head of the permitted interaction group.
 - Blair Suzuki seconded the motion.
 - Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn nominated Mary Kay Hertog and Blair Suzuki as volunteers to assist on that permitted interaction group.
 - Chair Bridget Komine seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried.
- D. Women's Committee -- No Report or Update
- E. Projects and Events Committee-
 - Maui Veterans Cemetery Blessing/Dedication Event Update- Michael Lilly
 1. No Report or Update

VIII. ADJOURN – 9:31 am

Mary Kay Hertog motioned, and Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn seconded.

Yolanda Ehere – Recorder