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**Phone Conference ID: 360 453 336#**  
Office of Veterans' Services (Tripler Army Medical Center)  
459 Patterson Rd. E Wing, Rm 1-A103 Honolulu, HI 96819  
**Friday, October 3, 2025**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Board Members:**

Mr. Blair Suzuki, Chair  
Ms. Bridget Komine  
Mr. James Hussey  
Ms. Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn  
Mr. Aris Banaag

**OVS Staff:**

Ms. Yolanda Ehere Secretary

**Guests:**

Mr. Wade Ishii, Asst. Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii DOD Engineering  
Ms. Kauai Chartrand, Long Term Care Administrator, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home  
Mr. Kenneth Fink, Director, Department of Health  
Ms. Katherine Korenaga, Family Resource Center Coordinator,  
Department of Human Services  
Ms. Nicole Gray - Congresswoman Jill Tokuda Office Representative

**Absent:**

Ms. Mary Kay Hertog, Vice Chair  
Mr. John Alamodin, Director  
Ms. Yam Yi Lee, Administrative Services Assistant  
Ms. Stacey Bonnett, Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Mr. Maurice Martin, Community Outreach Coordinator/Interim Public Affairs Officer,  
VA Pacific Islands Health Care System – Medical  
Maj. Shaoyu Lee, Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii DOD Engineering  
Ms. Libby Pyo, Liaison Officer, Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home  
Ms. Carol Kanayama, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations  
Ms. Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS  
Mr. James Horton, Assistant Cemetery Director, National Cemetery of the Pacific  
Senator Mazie Hirono's Office Representative

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

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

**II. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

**III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA OF OCTOBER 3, 2025**

The Board reviewed October 3, 2025 agenda. Chair Blair Suzuki motion to approve the agenda. Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn seconded.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2025**

The Board reviewed September 5, 2025 minutes. Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn motion to approve the Minutes as amended. James Hussey seconded.



**V. COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**VI. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Ms. Stacey Bonnett, Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Benefits – Not present, but submitted report.**

**Mr. Maurice Martin, Community Outreach Coordinator /Interim Public Affairs Officer, VA Pacific Islands Health Care System – Medical - Not present but submitted report.**

**Mr. John Alamodin, Director, OVS - Not present, but submitted report.**

Briefed on: Yolanda spoke on John's behalf. Announced Veterans Day Concert featuring the 111<sup>th</sup> Army Band. Invites are forthcoming.

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

Briefed on: On September 15<sup>th</sup>, the Hawaii State Veterans Home on Maui the allotment request for \$10 million for the planning and design funds that was approved by the governor and then DAGS actually issued the award letter to the contractor on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The consultant is Grace Herbert Curtis Architect.

**Ms. Kaui Chartrand, Long Term Care Administrator, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home Relations**

Briefed on: Received notice that annual CMS surveyors surveys are currently on hold. We are normally surveyed between October through December, but we did receive a notice due to the shutdown. We did have our VA survey in July with no clinical findings. Staff did really well, and we had four total findings, 2 with administration having to do with certifications and licensing and 2 for life safety.

**Ms. Libby Pyo, Liaison Officer, Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home - Not present, but submitted report.**

**Mr. Kenneth Fink, Director, Department of Health – Present, but no submitted report.**

**Ms. Katherine Korenaga, Family Resource Center Coordinator, Department of Human Services - Present and no additions to the report.**

**Ms. Carol Kanayama, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations - Not present. No submitted report.**

**Ms. Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS - Not present, but no submitted report.**

**Mr. James Horton, Cemetery Director, National Cemetery of the Pacific – Not present, but no submitted report.**

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

Briefed on: Our office is operational. We're considered essential and working through the shutdown. If veterans have issues, they can come to our office.

**Senator Mazie Hirono's Office Representative - Not present. No submitted report.**



## **VII. BOARD MEMBER'S REPORTS**

1. Kauai - Ms. Mary Kay Hertog, Vice Chair – Not present, but report submitted.
2. West Hawaii - James Hussey - Report submitted. No additions.
3. Oahu - Mr. Blair Suzuki, Chair - No report submitted. No additions.
4. Oahu - Ms. Bridget Komine - No report submitted. No additions.
5. Oahu - Ms. Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn - No report submitted. No additions.
6. Maui - Mr. Aris Banaag - Report submitted. No additions.
  - The Maui Veterans Council had our first gala that went really well. We had about 115 participants. It was World War 2 theme.

## **VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

1. SAB 2025-1. Continuation of the Discussion and decision making to establish goals and objectives for the SAB in 2025. Board members will convene immediately following the regular Advisory Board meeting.

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

Hawaii State Advisory Board on Veterans' Services – Strategic Goals

1. Ensure Hawaii's veteran memorials are properly maintained as dignified, respectful spaces that honor the service and sacrifice of veterans.  
Objective: Determine agency/entity responsible and encourage accountability to conduct oversight and maintenance of memorials.
2. Fully Staff the State Advisory Board  
Objective: Recruit and confirm 4 of 9 board members to effectively represent and advocate for veterans statewide (ensuring geographic and female quotas are met).
3. Support Priority Veteran Legislation  
Objective: Identify and advocate for legislation that reflects the pressing needs, rights, and interests of Hawaii's veteran community.
4. Strengthening the Hawaii Veteran Network  
Objective: Engage, connect, and empower veterans through outreach to VSOs and veteran networks across all islands

ACTION: Approval of Strategic Goals

- Bridget Komine motioned to accept the strategic goals, and Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn seconded.
- All voted in favor; no one opposed.

## **X. 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
  - Chair Blair Suzuki asked Yolanda to remove from agenda next meeting.
- E. Projects and Events Committee - No Report or Update

## **XI. ADJOURN – 9:28 am**

Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn motioned, and Aris Banaag seconded.  
Yolanda Ehere – Recorder