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Office of Veterans' Services (Tripler Army Medical Center)
459 Patterson Rd. E Wing, Rm 1-A103 Honolulu, HI 96819
Friday, December 5, 2025

ATTENDANCE

Board Members:

Mr. Blair Suzuki, Chair
Ms. Mary Kay Hertog, Vice Chair
Mr. James Hussey
Ms. Bridget Komine

OVS Staff:

Ms. Yolanda Ehere Secretary

Guests:

Mr. William Kyereme, Acting Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Benefits
Mr. Maurice Martin, Community Outreach Coordinator/Interim Public Affairs Officer,
VA Pacific Islands Health Care System – Medical
Mr. Wade Ishii, Asst. Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii DOD Engineering
Ms. Libby Pyo, Liaison Officer, Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home
Mr. Kenneth Fink, Director, Department of Health
Ms. Katherine Korenaga, Family Resource Center Coordinator,
Department of Human Services

Absent:

Mr. Aris Banaag
Ms. Roxanne (Rocky) Bruhn
Mr. John Alamodin, Director
Ms. Yam Yi Lee, Administrative Services Assistant
Maj. Shaoyu Lee, Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii DOD Engineering
Ms. Kauai Chartrand, Long Term Care Administrator, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home
Mr. James Horton, Assistant Cemetery Director, National Cemetery of the Pacific
Ms. Carol Kanayama, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations
Ms. Ann Greenlee, U.S. Department of Labor, VETS
Ms. Nicole Gray - Congresswoman Jill Tokuda Office Representative
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

OVS received an email from public First Law Center regarding our disability notice is too short. John and Yolanda will be contacting the AG's office to get their opinion on what we should change. More details to following in the coming meetings.

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA OF DECEMBER 5, 2025

The Board reviewed December 5, 2025 agenda. Mary Kay Hertog motion to approve the agenda. James Hussey seconded.

IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 7, 2025

The Board reviewed November 7, 2025 minutes. James Hussey motion to approve the minutes as written. Bridget Komine seconded.

V. COMMUNICATIONS

None

VI. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Mr. William Kyereme, Acting Director, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs – Benefits – Present and no additions to the report.

Question for VBA Benefits: Do you offer translation of documents as a benefit to veterans? No, but there may be staff members that speak the language that can help a veteran with questions they may have.

Mr. Maurice Martin, Community Outreach Coordinator /Interim Public Affairs Officer, VA Pacific Islands Health Care System – Medical - Present and no additions to the report.

Add-on to question about translation: If you are a patient or a patient spouse and you need a translation, our patient Advocate's office should have a way to contact a department. That would be able to translate something for you. So, let's say a doctor and a patient who spoke a different language. We need to get some information. We can set up a phone call a three-way phone call so that translation could take place. And let's say a veteran who was had vision impairment and needed something.

Ms. Yolanda Ehere, Secretary, OVS – In John's absence

Briefed on: We are in the window for the National Cemetery administration visit to Hawaii. They are planning to be on island at the end of January 2026. The Wall that Heals opening ceremony will be held on Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at UH West Oahu Campus at 10am.

Mr. Wade Ishii, Asst. Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawaii DOD Engineering - Present and no additions to the report.

Ms. Kauai Chartrand, Long Term Care Administrator, Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home Relations - Not present, but submitted report.

Ms. Libby Pyo, Liaison Officer, Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home

Briefed on: Our census is at 49.

Mr. Kenneth Fink, Director, Department of Health - Present and no additions to the 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 - Not present, but no submitted report.

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

VII. BOARD MEMBER'S REPORTS

1. Kauai - Ms. Mary Kay Hertog, Vice Chair – Report submitted. No additions.
2. West Hawaii - James Hussey - No 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.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

None

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. Projects and Events Committee - No Report or Update

XI. ADJOURN – 9:23 am

Bridget Komine motioned, and Mary Kay Hertog seconded.
Yolanda Ehere – Recorder