



Alameda County Veterans Affairs Commission

Executive Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 18th, 2024



6955 Foothill Blvd – Ste. 300
Oakland, CA 94605
<http://alamedasocialservices.org>

I. CALL TO ORDER

- Meeting called to order at 10:01 am
- Roll Call, Quorum Achieved.

In Attendance: (P=Present, E=Excused, A=Absent, O=Online Attendance)		County Staff Present:
O. Farmer (Chair) = P	M. Gilmore (Vice-Chair) = P	Jennifer Stephens Pierre (o)
G. Owens = P	N. Harrison = P	Rhoda Turner
Phair = P	D. Williamson = P	Luna E Contreras
F. Jaffin = E	K. Warner = A	
J. LoParo = P	R. Forbes = P	

II. AGENDA/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Item	Discussion/Recommendations
Adopt Agenda	Meeting agenda adopted by Commission as read.
Approval of Meeting Minutes	February Minutes were not approved and will need to be revised.
Public Comment	None
Removal of Commissioner Parshall	Former Commissioner Parshall signed the letter of resignation, Commission will move forward with finalizing the resignation with the Board.
Sub-Committee Reports	<p>A. Membership: Membership is in a pretty good place right now. We have five pending applicants: Lisa Brunner, Dylan Boldt, Shewee Yohannes (appointed to Women's Vets), Gloria Wilson, and Bob Turner.</p> <p>Action: Luna Contreras will follow up on the applicant's status.</p> <p>B. Budget: Budget was approved for \$9,000 and funds have been allocated, the Commission can now spend funds for items designated in the budget. Jennifer Stephens-Pierre, further clarified that the commission can only spend the money within the designated purpose. If the commission finds a different purpose to expend funds a new Commission Budget Request form needs to be submitted and departmental approval is required prior to spending A to submit the request as early as possible because the approval process can take up to 30 days-</p> <p>Action: Jennifer Stephens-Pierre will email the Budget Request form to Commissioner Farmer.</p> <p>C. PAL Legislation Recommendations: The following proposals are being considered for legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AB 1882: Special License Plates - This bill will grant a special license plate to a veteran who has a service-connected disability rating at 50 percent or



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	<p>greater but does not meet the qualifying eligibility criteria for a special plate pursuant to Section 5007.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• AB 1854: Pending: <u>Assembly Military and Veterans Affairs Committee</u>. This bill provides additional benefits to a reservist who is called to active duty by having the option to defer payments. <i>A request for deferral shall be submitted no later than 180 days following the period of active duty on which the deferral is based.</i>• H.R. 502: This bill modifies the process for repaying service members and veterans who paid to keep benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill, but later chose to utilize post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. Specifically, the bill removes the requirement for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to issue the repayments with the last monthly housing stipend under the post-9/11 GI Bill. This requirement has limited the repayments to individuals who are receiving stipends. Under the bill, the VA must make such a repayment before the exhaustion of the individual's entitlement to education assistance.• Isakson-Roe Education Oversight Expansion Act': This bill requires educational institutions to notify state approving agencies or the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) within 30 days of becoming subject to certain unfavorable actions as a condition of approval for VA educational assistance purposes. For example, a reportable event would include punitive action taken against an educational institution by a state or federal agency. Action: The PAL Legislative Committee which includes Commissioners Farmer, Phair, LoParo and Jaffin will discuss which legislative bills they want to put forward for recommendations at next month's meeting. <p>D. VSO: Supervisor Howard is looking to open a satellite office this year. At present time, the Veterans Service Office (VSO) does not have a VSO Officer and. Commissioner Farmer is asking the commission to support the county in finding one.</p> <p>E. Steet Plaques: Commissioner Farmer provided an update regarding the cost of the initiative, the total to complete the project is \$1,852. The funds have already been designated in the budget. Action: Commissioner Phair? made a motion to authorize the expenditure for the fee associated with renaming three streets on the site of the former Oakland Army Base; not to exceed \$1900. Motion seconded by Commissioner Owens. Commissioner Farmer will follow up with payment.</p> <p>F. Stand UP/Down Event: 24 organizations and six government officials have confirmed their participation. In April the Advisory Commission is going to schedule multiple opportunities for organizations to attend a virtual meeting where they will go over set-up and all other details of the event. Commission Farmer addressed the cost for getting tables and chairs, the budget does not have enough funds in the budget to lease the tables & chairs. Laney Staff will</p>
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come by later and can confirm if they can provide the tables and chairs. Commissioner Farmer is also in communication with BART to secure transportation to the event.

Commissioner Williamson has also reached out to San Francisco Center of Transportation department to discuss transportation options but was referred to the Public Affairs office.

Action: *Commissioner Williamson will reach out to Diane Shaw at AC Transit and get additional information that will assist with transporting veterans to the event.*

G. Veteran Observation Days: Upcoming events the commission would like to possibly support:

- **National Vietnam Veterans' Day**-The first event is on the U.S.S Hornet March 30h and the second event is in Castro Valley. September 20th P.O.W. Remembrance Day on the U.S.S. Hornet
- **A Veteran's Day Celebration Concert** at the Yacht Club in the Alameda Memorial. USS Hornet is hosting the National POW Remembrance Day on Friday, September 20th, that this will be the first time it's held in Northern California.
- **June is PTSD Awareness month.**
- **June 12th is Women's Veterans Day**
- **September is Suicide Prevention Month.**

The commission came up with two ideas: (1) Have an event on Women's Veterans Day as well as have proclamations from the Board of Supervisors to acknowledge certain events or initiatives like PTSD Awareness Month in June and Suicide Prevention Month in September.

Commissioner Williamson suggested a display be done to commemorate the history of Women Veterans Day.

Lisa Brunner suggested that a documentary be made for Women's Veteran's Day. Commissioner Gilmore suggested that they get the county supervisors to issue proclamations, for example: PTSD Awareness Day. Have the County Supervisors put something out there to publicize the recognition.

- **Memorial Day:** Commissioner Farmer has asked that commissioners send flyers addressing Memorial Day events to him, so they can be added to next month's agenda. They can also address who will attend which event in the next meeting. The purchase of the wreath for Memorial Day needs to be submitted by April. Jennifer Stephens-Pierre informed Commissioners of their options for purchasing the wreath. The county locates a local florist and get it delivered to the desired location or you can purchase the wreath (with valid receipt) so the county can reimburse you from the budgetAction: Commissioner Phair



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	<p>made a motion to allocate \$250 for a Memorial Day wreath, Commissioner Harrison 2nd the motion.</p> <p>Action: Luna to search for vendor and request purchase of wreath.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Independence Day': Commissioner Owens would like the commission to participate in the Alameda Independence Day parade to have a car/float in the parade. <p>Action: Commissioner Owens made a motion for the Alameda Veterans Affairs Advisory Commission to participate in the city of Alameda Fourth of July Parade. Commissioner Williamson seconded the motion.</p>
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