



VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

222 W. Hospitality Ln., 3rd Floor, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0470

Minutes of the Meeting May 20, 2024, 3:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE –Members: Rachel Hay (Board Liaison), Jeff Allen, Paul Marsh, Kelly Maxwell, Terry Porter, James Willingham, and recording Secretary Johnna Yuhas were present. Jim Frost, Michael Rector, Octavio Sanchez, and George Valenzuela were absent.

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

REVIEW MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – Minutes from the meeting held on March 25, 2024, were reviewed. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

DEPARTMENT UPDATE – Rachel Hay provided an update.

- Ralph Duarte resigned as director effective May 13, 2024. Rachel is the Acting Director at this time and has full confidence in the department and the departmental mission will continue. This change will not have any negative effects on the veterans who are served.
- The list for Clinical Therapist II was received, and interviews are scheduled for next week.
- The vacant Supervising VSO position in Hesperia has been filled by a VSO in the San Bernardino office. That leaves an opening in San Bernardino, and the recruitment for that position has already begun.
- Since the last meeting the department has attended a Senior Resource Fair, Take Your Child to Work Day, provided a presentation at the Vet Center, attended a Workforce Development Department event and the Warrior Walk in Fontana.
- The Veterans Affairs Department will be attending these upcoming events:
 - May 22, 2024 – Presentation of the Adult Protective Services Multi-Disciplinary Team Conference in Ontario, and a presentation at UTI in Rancho Cucamonga.
 - May 29, 2024 – Women Veterans Resource Fair in Victorville
 - June 1, 2024 – United Way Standdown in San Bernardino
 - June 17, 2024 – CalTAP presentation at Ft. Irwin
 - June 27, 2024 – Barstow Resource Fair/Vet Connect

FROM THE MEMBERS

Jeff Allen – Please encourage support for Senate Bill 726. This bill increases the property tax exemption for disabled veterans from homes valued at 400,000 to 800, 000. This would relieve taxes on many veterans, and that money would go back into the local economies. San Bernardino County receives a lot of revenue from disabled veterans, and this would increase that, as well as increase the number of veterans who would be able to keep their homes. Grand Terrace will be hosting an event at Veterans Freedom Park for Memorial Day.

Terry Porter – Veteran hikers hiking the Pacific Crest Trail typically start in Mexico in March and make their way through Big Bear on their way to Canada. The American Legion in Big Bear hosts those hikers annually. They provide meals and a place to rest and shower. The original founder of Run for the Wall is being honored at Sturges this year. He will be receiving the award on August 8th. Big Bear will be holding a Memorial Day event at Veterans Park.

James Willingham – The Elks Club hosted a presentation on Honor Flights last week. There are two upcoming: one in June and the other in September. Previously the participating veterans served in WWII or the Korean War, and now it is more the Korean War and Vietnam, and more Gulf War veterans are beginning to participate.

Kelly Maxwell – Nothing to report.

Paul Marsh – Attended the City-County Conference in Lake Arrowhead. Paul requests information on the Point in Time Count, especially regarding homeless veterans. Unfortunately, no information has been released at this time but it is expected soon.

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DATE/TIME/LOCATION OF NEXT MEETINGS

Monday, July 22, at 3:00 p.m. in the SB County VA conference room and via Zoom.

Monday, September 23, at 3:00 p.m. in the SB County VA conference room and via Zoom.

ADJOURNMENT - Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeff Allen".

Jeff Allen
Chair