

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

1816 S. FIGUEROA STREET
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90015



Ruth A. Wong
Director

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, February 13, 2019**

Present:

Absent:

Commissioners

Commissioners

Thomas O'Shaughnessy
Patricia Jackson-Kelley
Fred Flores
Hector Elizalde
Tom Lasser
Michael McDowell

Joe Leal
Dennis Tucker

County Department

Military and Veterans Affairs

Ruth Wong, Director
Tatiana Rosas, Executive Secretary

Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and Approval of Minutes

Chair Thomas O'Shaughnessy called the meeting to order at 1:36p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Tom Ruck, Director, Los Angeles National Cemetery.

Chair O'Shaughnessy announced that Items 2 thru 5 to include the approval of the minutes until Fred Flores arrives and there is a quorum of Commissioners at the meeting.

Roll Call

There was a total of 5 Commissioners at the meeting – there was no quorum.

Public Comments: Comments from Audience on Items Not on Agenda (three minutes each):

Joel Brambila, Marine veteran, attended the Collaborative and was informed of the VAC meeting. He is also interested in the Veteran Peer Network and would like to learn about the process to attend.

Brian Heyman, Air Force veteran and member of the American Legion stated that the City of Downey has a Veteran's Housing Project and will be able to house sixty veterans.

Scott Collins, Senior Field Deputy, Senator Bob Archuleta, is here to introduce himself to the Commission and looking forward to working together on veteran issues.

Irving Pacheco, Regional Program Manager, California Complete Count to prepare for the 2020 census.

Kyle Orlemann, Hawthorne Veterans Affairs Commission, stated to Save the Date for April 13th for Veterans Appreciation Day in Hawthorne.

Commissioner Fred Flores arrived at 1:51pm and a quorum was formed upon his arrival. The minutes from the December 12, 2018 meeting were approved.

Chairman's Report

Chair O'Shaughnessy appointed Commissioner Tom Lasser as Chair of the By-Laws Committee and asked for another Commissioner to volunteer to join aside from himself to form the Committee. Commissioner Patricia Jackson-Kelley stated she would be interested in participating in the Committee. The By-Laws Committee consists of Commissioner Tom Lasser as Chair and Commissioners Patricia Jackson-Kelley and Thomas O'Shaughnessy.

Guest Speakers

Wheelchair Ballroom Dancing for Veterans - Brian Fortuna/Leilani Downer

Marcus Trevor Bovee II, Founder/CEO, VetFlicks introduced a new community partner that will bring Wheelchair Ballroom Dancing to Patriotic Hall with Mr. Brian Fortuna and Ms. Leilani Downer. Mr. Fortuna excels in Wheelchair Ballroom and Latin Dance Sport and is the teacher and performer for the United States Wheelchair Dancing Association, founded by his mother, Sandra Fortuna. Mr. Fortuna stated, "Dancing is not just an activity for able-bodied persons."

Tom Ruck, Director, Los Angeles National Cemetery, provided the following update that the Bob Hope Chapel will be available for services starting March 5th. The construction work on the columbarium has slowed down and now the new date for burials is August.

Nominations Committee Update

Commissioner Tom Lasser stated that the Nominations Committee put forth the motion to nominate Commissioner Patricia Jackson-Kelley as Chair and Commissioner Hector Elizalde as Vice Chair. The vote was as follows:

Chair O'Shaughnessy	Yes
Commissioner Jackson-Kelley	Yes
Commissioner Flores	Yes
Commissioner Elizalde	Yes
Commissioner Lasser	Yes
Commissioner McDowell	Yes

All present voted in favor and motion was seconded by Chair O'Shaughnessy. Commissioner Patricia Jackson-Kelley would commence being Chair and Commissioner Hector Elizalde as Vice Chair starting July, 2019.

Strategic Plan for FY 2019 to 2020

Chair O'Shaughnessy went briefly over the Strategic Plan and stated that there needs to be an amendment to the Table on Goal I: Objective 4. Also, the Meeting Location Calendar the Commission should consider doing a possible summit in lieu of the retreat.

Motion by Commissioner Patricia Jackson-Kelley to approve the Strategic Plan for FY 2019 to 2020 with the possible revisions. The vote was as follows:

Chair O'Shaughnessy	Approve
Commissioner Jackson-Kelley	Approve
Commissioner Flores	Approve

Commissioner Elizalde	Approve
Commissioner Lasser	Approve
Commissioner McDowell	Approve

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Hector Elizalde. All present voted in favor to approve the Strategic Plan FY 2019 to 2020.

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Report

Ruth Wong, Director, stated the following Department highlights of events of recent month –

- Distributed and went over the Budget Hearing packets with copies of the PowerPoint presentation.
- We are #1 in the State for veteran benefits
- Increased outreach
- Increased utilization work – above 20%
- Homeless initiative for veterans
- Expanded electronic claims
- Increased productivity in Antelope Valley
- Expanded Culinary class with LATTC
- Launched Pathway to Citizenship workshop
- Partnered with CALVET for services
- Partnered with DMH
- Partnered with US Vets
- Home Loan Program (Brad Pederson)
- Pathway to Citizenship
- Free Income Tax Preparation
- Replacing/repairing our equipment
- Expanding capacity using technology
- Parking for Patriotic Hall (Supervisor Solis' letter)
- 69 HUD Vash vouchers

Item's for Next Month's Agenda

Commissioner Lasser stated he will have sample of By-Laws.

Director Ruth Wong stated that DMH will assist with facilitating the Collaborative and have Valet Service available.

Chair O'Shaughnessy asked that the Approve VAC Ordinance item be added to the Agenda for the Commission to pass a vote.

Commissioner Elizalde inquired if next month's VAC meeting is in Lancaster will there be a quorum? Will everyone be able to attend? And Commissioner McDowell stated that he would not be able to attend the VAC in March. Chair O'Shaughnessy stated that the March VAC meeting be held at Patriotic Hall. Chair O'Shaughnessy stated that his Access ride was here and asked Vice Chair Patricia Jackson-Kelley to continue the meeting in his absence.

Chair O'Shaughnessy asked that the Approve VAC Ordinance item be added to the Agenda for the Commission to pass a vote.

Good of the Order

Commissioner Flores stated he has been hearing news about VA system that is changing (listed on Secretary, Veterans Affairs website). He requests that a representative of the VA come and brief the Commission on changes/updates.

Commissioner McDowell stated he had nothing for the good of the order.

Commissioner Elizalde thanked the Commissioners that are in the VPAN Committee and stated that he had his doubts of what could be accomplished, but after the last meeting, it was an eye opener. He is looking forward to the initial report.

Commissioner Lasser asked everyone present to get on the VAC distribution list. Provide the secretary your email and be added to the list. He will be attending on February 17th "Military Academy Orientation" at Los Angeles Air Force Base; on March 5th the LAAFB Community Partner Day, Los Angeles Air Force Base. On March 22nd the Commissioning Ceremony for the Coast Guard Cutter TERRELL HORNE.

Vice Chair Jackson-Kelley stated she attended the Black History Month Program on February 4th. The 1st Friday, "Women Vets on Point." The 3rd Annual Black History Month Luncheon hosted by Hollywood Business and Professional Women on February 9th in which she will be honored. Will be doing a presentation on March 19th, "Women's Health Transition Training," a TAP program at Patriotic Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 3:16 p.m.

Tatiana Rosas
Executive Secretary
February 13, 2019