

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION**
1816 S. FIGUEROA STREET
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90015



Jim Zenner
Director

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, January 3, 2023**

Present:

Absent:

Commissioners

Commissioners

Anthony Allman
Joe Leal
Patricia Jackson-Kelley
Jawana McFadden
Chi Szeto
Alfonso Noyola
John Gutierrez
Dennis Anderson

County Department

Military and Veterans Affairs

Jim Zenner, Director
Stephanie Guerrero, Executive Secretary

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Allman called at 1:34 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Alfonso Noyola, 4th District.

Roll Call

Eight Commissioners were at the meeting during the roll call; a quorum was present.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Allman Stated that the notice of the meeting went out on December 28th. If you did not receive that email, please contact the Department of Military and Veteran Affairs to be added to the distribution list.

The Commission meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of each month. Beginning on January 18th, the 4th District Commissioners will take over as Chair and Vice Chair.

Today's special meeting aims to discuss the proposed Art Project at the Westwood VA Hospital Station.

Public Comment

Rob Reynolds, a veteran from the 3rd District, believes that Metro did a poor job of including the veteran community's input and feels that when people exit the train inside the tunnel they should look up and see a mural of a soldier at home.

Dan Ortiz is a veteran from the 1st District and former Commission Chair of this body in the late 90s. He argued that Metro selected an artist who proudly displayed the depravities of war on his website and encouraged the public to seek his work to decide for themselves. He hopes that this Commission will see to it and take care of this issue right away. Thank you.

Francisco Warez is a veteran from the 3rd District and NHDVS COALITION, who feels that the artist selected by Metro may be misrepresenting veterans. He is counting on the Commission's recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to cancel the contract with the chosen artist.

Diego Garcia a veteran of the 4th District believes that the artist chosen should be a veteran and the art inside the station should showcase and celebrate veterans and the land that is occupied by the public.

Richard Valdez is a veteran who argues that there needs to be a review and that veterans need to be included in the mural concept, which should represent the men and women who served and the doctors and clinicians who served them.

Proposed Art Project at Westwood/VA Hospital Metro Station

There was no representative in attendance from Metro.

Chairman Allman gave an overview of Metro expanding the Purple Line Station into three sections along the Westwood VA Hospital. Sandow Birk is the name of the artist selected, and there has been some concern about his past artwork and how he is portraying veterans. He shared a press release regarding the artist selection and there doesn't appear to be any inclusion from veteran organizations. The intent of this meeting was to hear from Metro to learn about their selection process.

Recommendation Discussion

After discussion, no action was taken. The Commission agreed that they needed to have a conversation directly with Metro.

Director Zenner requested from the Commission a list of questions to ask Metro and will circle back around with an invite for the next Commission meeting.

Good of the Order

Nothing to report.

The meeting adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

Stephanie Guerrero
Executive Secretary
January 3, 2023