

LOS ANGELES COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

1816 S. FIGUEROA STREET
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90015



Jim Zenner
Director

MINUTES REGULAR MEETING Wednesday, November 15, 2023

Present:

Commissioners

Anthony Allman
Dennis Anderson
Rocio Palmero
Patricia Jackson-Kelley
Chi Szeto
John Gutierrez
Alfonso Noyola
Hugh Crooks

Absent:

Commissioners

Jawana McFadden

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 Szeto at 1:36 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Rocio Palmero, 1st District.

Roll Call

Eight (8) Commissioners were at the meeting during roll call; a quorum was present. Commissioner Anderson attended the meeting virtually. Commissioner McFadden was absent from the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Commissioner Crooks to accept the Minutes for September 20, 2023, and seconded by Commissioner Gutierrez. After a roll call was conducted with unanimous votes, the motion passed.

Chairman's Report

Chair Szeto stated that the notice of the Commission meeting was sent out on November 10, 2023, via GovDelivery from MVA@subscriptions.lacounty.gov. To subscribe, please send an email to info@mva.lacounty.gov.

MVA's YouTube channel has grown with a total of 70 subscribers. Each meeting recording and other departmental content can be found on YouTube by searching "LA County Military and Veterans Affairs."

Mr. Szeto announced that all communication will be sent through the County email and the training will be rescheduled in February 2024. Last, he attended the VetDay LA event which had a great turnout.

Public Comments

Shad Meshad of the National Veterans Foundation (NVF) 3rd District veteran - wants to ensure that veteran organizations continue to bring everyone together to get to know each other and not segregate.

John Oppenheim, 4th District veteran – spoke of Veteran Peer Access Network (VPAN) and Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (MVA) Director, Jim Zenner. He's very pleased that we have such strong leadership for veterans now and wants to continue to strengthen the veteran peer-to-peer community.

Mario Sibrian, 2nd District veteran – would appreciate more support, more personnel to help with the mission of the NVF and would also like to partner with Community partners especially with workforce employment and other types of deployment. Would also like to provide support wherever they can.

Keith Star, of Tarzana Treatment Centers, MA, LMFT – introduced himself and appreciated the invitation to attend the meeting today.

Guest Speakers

1. **Director Kelly LoBianco, Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) Presentation** – spoke on the DEO and how they serve the veteran community ensuring they receive priority services for all DEO programs, including the veteran led America's Job Center of California (AJCC) for job seekers located at Bob Hope Patriotic Hall.
2. **Department of Mental Health (DMH), Director Lisa Wong** – provided an overview of the VPAN and the Veteran Suicide Review Team (VSRT).

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Report

Director Jim Zenner provided an update on the current operations of services, developments, and growth of the Department.

Agenda Items that are deferred to Next Month's Meeting

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 1. LA County Homeless Initiatives | FY23 Funding Strategies | Allman |
| 2. West LA VA Campus | Women Veteran Program | Jackson-Kelley |

Good of the Order

Commissioner Crooks, SD 1 – awarded MVA Director Jim Zenner an award in recognition of Veterans Day.

Commissioner Jackson-Kelley, SD 2 - attended a special presentation in Carnegie Hall honoring the Harlem Hellfighters. On March 17th, 2024, she will be inducted into the Army's Hall of Fame at the Women's Memorial.

Commissioner Allman, SD 3 – mentioned that he has a Metro update regarding a letter from the secretary of the VA to the Metro CEO but will save it until next month in respect of meeting time constraints.

Commissioner Gutierrez, SD 5 – acknowledged the City of Palmdale and Antelope Valley for a very nice Veterans Day ceremony last Saturday. It was the first one they had but it seems they plan to make it an annual event. He's also looking forward to the Thanksgiving dinner for veterans at Bob Hope Patriotic Hall on Thursday, November 16, 2023.

Commissioner Anderson, SD 5 – on December 2nd, 2023, the Homes for Families Veteran Service (non-profit) will be holding its key ceremony for eight (8) new veteran families to take occupancy in the 53 home veteran-enriched neighborhood in Palmdale. There will also be a bench dedication for high desert medical groups.

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

JeNai Davis
Administrative Services Manager
November 15, 2023