

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

1816 S. FIGUEROA STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90015



**Jim Zenner  
Director**

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday, January 17, 2024**

**Present:**

**Commissioners**

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

**Absent:**

**Commissioners**

Hugh Crooks

**County Department**

**Military and Veterans Affairs**

Jim Zenner, Director  
Stephanie Guerrero, Executive Secretary

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Allman at 1:31 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Allman announced the Salute Armed Forces Everyday S.A.F.E. acknowledgment, requesting all active-duty service members and veterans to stand up during the flag salute. Then, the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chair Jawana McFadden, 2nd District.

**Roll Call**

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

## **Approval of Minutes**

Motion made by Commissioner Jackson-Kelley to accept the Minutes for December 20, 2023, and seconded by Vice Chair McFadden. After a roll call was conducted with unanimous votes, the motion passed.

## **Chairman's Report**

Chair Allman stated that the notice of the Commission meeting was sent out on January 11<sup>th</sup> around 7:48 a.m., via GovDelivery from [MVA@subscriptions.lacounty.gov](mailto:MVA@subscriptions.lacounty.gov). To subscribe, please send an email to [info@mva.lacounty.gov](mailto:info@mva.lacounty.gov).

MVA's YouTube channel has grown with a total of 79 subscribers. Although the meetings are recorded, the goal is to reach 100, there is progress.

Chair for CY 2024: There is a rotating Chair protocol: beginning every Calendar Year the chair rotates by district. Chair Allman is taking over for Calendar Year 2024. Article 3, Item B.

Appointment of Vice Chair: Per Article 4, Item C, the Chair can appoint a Vice Chair. Commissioner McFadden has accepted the invitation, and when another commissioner fills in the vacancy for the 3<sup>rd</sup> district, she will be relieved of command for SD3.

Commission By-Laws Review: Commissioners review and submit amendments by 2/7/2024 to have enough time to publish.

Logos for Advisory Commission: Chair preference: Option 1 without stars; Vice Chair preference: Option 4; Commissioner Palmero preference: Option 4 with stars meaning something; Commissioner Noyola: Option 2 with stars and meaning (maybe 6 branches of service); Commissioner Jackson-Kelley: Option 2 all blue; Chairmen Szeto: Options 2 or 3 (likes branches being represented); Commissioner Gutierrez: Options 2 or 3 not stuck on color and have stars have meaning; Commissioner Anderson: Option 4, blue and green for the military branches and stars are ok.

Chair Agenda for the Year: Achieve three goals:

1. Get the process started on Bob Hope Patriotic Hall registered as a historical landmark.
2. Organizational structure re: Department mission.
3. Veteran reintegration at the local level.

## **Guest Speakers:**

Department of Regional Planning, Senior Planner Dean Edwards – Gave a presentation on the process of listing Bob Hope Patriotic Hall on a historical register, and determination of eligibility. Mr. Edwards stated that the building is already listed on the California Register and has already been determined to be eligible to be listed as a county landmark and on the National Register. The Department of Regional Planning will provide guidance when the request is made by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs or the Advisory Commission on proposed work to ensure that it complies with the guidelines, standards, and designation.

## **Public Comments**

No public comments.

## **Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Report**

There were updates on the following:

1. Claims per location

2. Types of Claims
3. Justice Involved Program
4. 1807 Program
5. Indigent Burial Program
6. Veterans Experiencing Homelessness (VEH) Program
7. VPAN Program
8. Administration Budget
9. Fundraising
10. Human Resources
11. VSO Accreditation
12. Building visitor volume (last 3 months)
13. Bob Hope Patriotic Hall (Winter Event Calendar)
14. Communications
15. Legislative Updates

The department recognized Chuck Jester’s contributions to the department and announced his retirement.

Chair Allman led a discussion on the proper format of presentation by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs report for future meetings. It was determined that the department report would be sent out with the notice of meeting, so the public could download it and review it before the Veteran Advisory Commission meeting. The focus for the next meeting will be on the department’s organizational chart in detail.

**Agenda Items for Future Meetings**

- |    |                      |   |                |
|----|----------------------|---|----------------|
| 1. | Guest                | Black History Month Dedication                                    | Jackson-Kelley |
| 2. | Board of Supervisors | Recommendation for a proclamation for Commissioner Jackson-Kelley | Noyola         |

**Good of the Order**

Commissioner Crooks, SD 1 – Not present

Commissioner Palmero, SD 1 – Nothing for the Good of the Order.

Commissioner Jackson-Kelley, SD 2 – Appointed by American Legion President, Department of California Auxiliary as a representative for the West Los Angeles Medical Center. She shopped for 14 women at the domiciliary and took clothing, gift cards, and toiletries for Christmas Eve. Extended gratitude to the Director, Jorge, Jose, Chuck, and anyone who helped in setting up the repass on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor for WWII Veteran Ben Milton who turned 100 years old in July of 2023, he served in a segregated unit in the Pacific and was the director of a big band in LA. His family is appreciative that they were able to utilize Patriotic Hall.

Vice Chair McFadden, SD 2 – Went to the Justice Involved Veterans Project meeting where various organizations were present from City to County to police and law enforcement showing support to make the event successful. The main issue that came up was the self-identification of veterans. She encouraged everyone in their district to try and support the effort in helping promote the self-identification of service members and the services available. She encouraged everyone to speak out and communicate with individuals, local representatives, and organizations to help and motivate. She will be speaking at an upcoming meeting with one of the offices.

Commissioner Szeto, SD4 – Nothing for the Good of the Order.

Commissioner Gutierrez, SD5 – Wishes Chuck the best in his retirement.

Commissioner Anderson, SD 5 – Noted the passing of 98-year-old WWII Veteran Palmer Andrews, he was a Marine in the Pacific 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment. He was involved in the landings at New Britain Peleliu in Okinawa where he finished the war. He was a Purple Heart recipient and California renowned Ray Scholar of Jack London; he is

loved and missed by many. SD5 Veteran Town Hall at the Lancaster Library was great. The room was packed with more than 100 Veterans in attendance, briefings were excellent. Observation: Make sure that there is half an hour for open questions. He hopes they do it again this year.

Commissioner Noyola, SD4 – Met with Mr. Brian Heyman with the Downey Veterans Counsel, he also partners with VPAN. They talked about how they can expand outreach to Veterans in the Downey, the Southeast LA area. They're looking for ways to start energizing that area and bring Veterans together. They will reach out to the County to see if there's a way to identify Veterans in that area and reach out to them and plan an event to bring them together.

Chair Allman, SD3 – Nothing to add.

The meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.

Loida Blackley, ITC  
Administrative Services Division  
January 17, 2024