

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

1816 S. FIGUEROA STREET
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90015



Jim Zenner
Director

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, June 17, 2026

Present:

Hugh Crooks
Jawana McFadden
Raul Barragan
Chi Szeto
Patricia Jackson-Kelley
John Follmer

Absent:

Rocio Palmero
John Oppenheim
John Gutierrez

County of Los Angeles
Department Military and Veterans Affairs
Jim Zenner, Director
Stephanie Guerrero, Executive Secretary

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Crooks at 1:32 p.m.

SAFE Acknowledgement & Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Follmer announced the Salute Armed Forces Everyday S.A.F.E. acknowledgment and requested all active-duty service members and veterans to stand up during the flag salute and led The Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

No public comments.

Roll Call

Six (6) Commissioners were at the meeting during the roll; a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Follmer to approve the Minutes for May 20, 2026, seconded by Commissioner Barragan. Roll call was conducted and the motion passed with unanimous votes.

Chairman's Report

Chair Crooks stated that the notice of the meeting was sent out on June 12, 2026, at 10:08 am via GovDelivery from MVA@subscriptions.lacounty.gov. To subscribe, please visit mva.lacounty.gov and click on the mail icon located at the top right of the webpage.

Guest Speaker

Terri Quinlan, Public Relations Specialist – Operation Song

- Non-profit located in Nashville, Tennessee.
- Operates out of 12 states.
- Services provided to veterans, first responders, and family.
- Veterans and professional songwriters collaborate to write and record a song.
- 2,700 songs developed.
- The program operates out of VA Long Beach with plans to expand across VA offices in the future.

Zachary Franklin – Commanding Officer for Navy Talent Acquisition Group Pacific

- Over 140,000 youth age 16-24 years old are neither employed nor attending school.
- As of Summer 2025, 64 percent of youth 16-21 years old stated that finding a full-time job is somewhat or not difficult at all. 35 percent stated that it is difficult and almost impossible.
- Same age group were asked “how likely is it that you will be serving in the military?” 12 percent males said yes, 7 percent females said yes, overall is 10 percent.
- In LAUSD from 2022-2025, 501 out of 114,000 students and 11 high schools out of 190 total participated in taking the ASVAB.
- Commander Frankling suggested that recruiters gain increased access to high schools, increased participation in the ASVAB, and positive veteran role models.

Recommendation #11: Five-Signature Letter of Support for HR 2102 Major Richard Starr Act

Commissioner John Follmer on behalf of the commission reads aloud Recommendation #11 advising LA County Supervisors to support HR 2102. Commissioner McFadden makes a motion to approve this recommendation which is seconded by Commissioner Jackson-Kelley. The recommendation is approved by all commissioners present.

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Report

Jim Zenner, Director – LA County Department of Military and Veteran Affairs provided the following updates:

- Mr. Zenner testified in Sacramento on positives surrounding Senate Bill 1201. A key component of the bill would require self-identified veterans in the DPSS system report to a local county VSO office to seek additional services and benefits from the VA with help from their county VSO's.
- MVA is currently narrowing down its candidates for the open Chief Deputy position.
- The Women's Veterans Summit and awards are taking place on June 11th and June 12th. Director Zenner gave thanks to Post 283 for their donation to the event.
- Shared about a meeting with a group of superintendents to discuss opportunities in the Armed Forces.

Future Agenda Items

1. Public Health Department	Land at West LA VA	Barragan
2. Loyola Marymount University	LA National Cemetery	Gutierrez
3. League of United Latin American Citizens	Deported Veterans	Barragan
4. Woodlawn Celestial Gardens Cemetery	Community Support	Palmero

Commissioner Announcements

Commissioner Follmer informed the commission of Bunker Social a weekly Monday event at the Sepulveda VA from 11am-1pm.

General Public Comments

Daniel Mendelson, U.S. Navy veteran, shared his concern for a law that requires companies who conduct business with the U.S. government to give veterans preference when it comes to hiring.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.
Hayden Velasquez, Staff Assistant II
May 20, 2026