

**Veterans Commission
Meeting Minutes**

November 13, 2023

Present: Alfred Banfield, Hank Scherf, Donna Vaillancourt, Fred Baer, Kyle Corcoran, Brandon Jones, Stan Maupin, Mary Cravalho, Corey Braddock, Caroline Schockler, Mark Mcvay

Staff: Ed Kirychn, Alex Ayag, Samay Chhun, John Nibbelin

Public Comments By: John Helin

| Topic | Discussion | Actions/Next Steps |
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| Meeting called to order & Pledge of Allegiance Recited | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm- Pledge of allegiance and roll call taken – 11 present | No Additional actions or steps |
| Approval of minutes & adoption of agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Minutes from September 11, 2023, commission meeting was adopted.- Minutes approved 11 Y/ 0 N- Agenda approved 11 Y/ 0 N- Swearing in of New Commission Members: Corey Braddock | No Additional actions or steps |
| Public Comments | <p>John Helin-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- December 22, 2023: Hosting Veteran Christmas Event at the San Mateo Elks Lodge- -Reaching out to HUDVASH veterans to attend and WW2 Veterans- -Will have different partners that will be attending event | No Additional actions or steps |

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| Veterans Commission Business | <p>Ed Kiryczun, VSO Operation Update</p> <p>Alex Ayag, Website Updates/Current Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- -Expanding outreach to RWC Libraries within the cities and counties- -Now at SMC library and half moon bay once a month- Dec 18, 2023, there will be an event for Veterans who wants to enroll in VA Healthcare at Harbor Bldg.- Website updates: Veterans Healthcare Connect Website- -Broken up into 2 portions; 1) Healthcare resources 2) Veterans and their families- -Main focus is how to navigate urgent care and emergency services- -Step by step guide case scenario on how a Veteran need to notify the VA within 72 hours <p>Ed Kiryczun, Military & Veterans Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Partnership with veterans and military organization to empower them in career transition- Bridging gap between military experience and civilian employment | <p>-Alex will be sending out emails to current website draft</p> <p>-Alex will be reaching out to different city libraries to inquire about possible outreach at location</p> |
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| Veterans Commission Business (Continued) | Ed Kiryczun, VSO Operation Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Army PaYs (Partnership for Your Success) Programs: - Established alliance between the U.S Army and diverse range of corporations, companies and public sector - Offers a chance to contribute to their respective counties while preparing for post-military careers - Skill Bridge Programs: - Offer service members a unique opportunity to intern with select employers for a duration of 180 days - Invaluable program allows participants to gain hands-on-training in civilian career areas while continuing to receive their military compensation and benefits - San Mateo County will provide comprehensive training and work experience by helping bridge the gap between military service and start of civilian careers - VA Non-Paid Work Experience (NPWE) | No Additional actions or steps |
| Veterans Commission Business (Continued) | Ed Kiryczun, VSO Operation Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide eligible servicemembers and Veterans with training and practical job experience - Ideal for servicemembers and Veterans who have clear career goals - County does not pay a salary to the Veteran. The VA provides monthly allowance directly to the Veteran - Current Progress: - Partnership established for all 3 listed programs - Public Service Career Fair-For Military Personnel, Veterans, and their families Friday March 1, 2024 - Hosted by San Mateo County HR department in partnership with County Veterans Service Office - Objective: provide a platform for military personnel and veterans to explore opportunities for their next career - Additional resources with resume support, application submission and professional head shot photos | No Additional actions or steps |

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| Veterans Commission Business (Continued) | Hank Scherf- VOY Debrief <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Last year with VOY event. Will be retiring in 2024- Selected wonderful group of awardees along with having five WW2 Veterans- Great honoring the De Soto Family whose fathers remains was found and returned to family after so many years missing Aditi Patel, Corey Braddock and Marci Vaillancourt, Legislative Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Head a brief meeting with Carol on the in regard to how bills are made and go through the legislative process- Will look into and find things that aligns with Veterans and see where the commission can change and provide input- San Mateo County has their own legislative agenda Finding support from Supervisors | |
| Veterans Commission Business (Continued) | Mary Carvahlo and Brandon Jones, Mental Health Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attended Healing our Hero's Programs- Utilizes healing through plant medicine- Been showing a lot of promise of the programs by 3 organizations and veterans who benefited from the program- Program offers certifications to help others- There is legislation to allow use of plant medicine for use by Veterans who has PTSD, Brain Injury, etc..- Recognize that there isn't just one path that a Veteran can use- Looking into Veterans Rites in wilderness event—offer to have veterans experience 11 days in the wilderness | |

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| Veterans Commission Business (Continued) | Stan Maupin and Kyle Corcoran Updates; Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First task in affordable housing is understanding what exist in the county currently - Where are the areas and situations that can prevent Veterans from becoming homeless - Best practice is to do outreach. Reach out to property management and how companies advertise when it comes to Veterans getting housing - Try to avoid what is happening at Millbrae Gateway by knowing their approach in attracting Veterans to their property - Educate Veterans on VA housing home loans | No Additional actions or steps |
| Veterans Commission Business (Continued) | Donna Villiancourt Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - April 17th 2024 at Elks Lodge. Will be hosting Veterans Networking Event - Bringing together organization that provide services for Vets and their families - The point is to strengthen connections and build communities with providers gaining partnerships, collaboration and organization resources - Working with other organizations for a standdown (possible invites are enterprise of the year and other Veterans resources) | |
| Adjournment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm - Adjourn approved 11 Y/ 0 N | |