



## **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, February 13, 2024 – 6:00 pm

### CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME / President Jason Chittavong

Meeting called to order at 6:05PM.

### ROLL CALL

#### PRESENT:

President Jason Chittavong, Vice-President Nicholas Rusanoff, Commissioners William Barnickel, Doug Bullard, Hanley Chan, Deborah Dacumos, Courtney Ellington, Stephen Martin-Pinto

ABSENT: Commissioners Baba (excused), Mansori (excused), Miller (excused)

Quorum present.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Chittavong led attendees in reciting Pledge of Allegiance.

### SET AGENDA

President Chittavong called for motion to set agenda.

Motion – Rusanoff/ Second – Martin-Pinto

All in Favor – Aye: 8, No: 0

Motion passed. Agenda set.

Absent: Baba, Mansori, Miller



## PRESENTATION

- Mr. Aaron Ramos, HVRP Case Manager with AmericaWorks gave a PowerPoint presentation about programs related to veterans employment services. [PPT slides posted to VAC website.] Presentation was followed by a brief Q&A with commissioners with the following points:
  - Question about type of training resources and supportive services provided to veterans by AmericaWorks. Mr. Ramos replied AmericaWorks currently works with a variety of connections to provide support. He specifically cited St. Anthony's and Goodwill as a sources for interview clothes and training. Goodwill offers a lot of free training for veterans. For security training, AmericaWorks works with Mission Hiring Hall.
  - Commissioner asked what information AmericaWorks would like to bring to attention of San Francisco Mayor and Board of Supervisors. Mr. Ramos introduced a program manager with AmericaWorks to answer the question. The program manager noted AmericaWorks is funded through the Department of Labor and relies on community partners and non-profits. Swords to Plowshares works with AmericaWorks. Currently AmericaWorks is not working with a city department, but does work with VA.
  - Commissioner asked how a homeless person can get housing assistance from AmericaWorks if they come into the office. Mr. Ramos responded that staff have experience of working directly with unhoused population and will interact immediately with anyone who walks into their office and follow through with assistance.
  - Question asked about stability of funding. AmericaWorks was re-funded in June 2023 with a three-year grant.

President Chittavong thanked presenters and encouraged commissioners to reach out to AmericaWorks with any follow up questions or comments.

## COMMUNICATIONS

### **Officers' Report:**

President:

- Discussed increase of claim filings due to PACT Act. Increase will lead to more job opportunities for veterans, he specifically cited a USA Jobs posting that will happen sometime in March. Also noted VA caregiver program funding in jeopardy. Encouraged commissioners to reach out to legislators.



Staff Secretary:

▪ **Commission Applications**

Applications for open BOS-appointed Commission seats are tentatively scheduled as an item for the BOS Rules Committee meeting of February 26, 2024. Commission secretary will keep commission updated.

**CVSO Report:**

- The interim director could not attend the meeting. He emailed the January CVSO Report which is posted to VAC website.

**Supervisor Liaison Reports for 2024**

Discussion continued from last month's meeting about the best way for the Commission to engage with BOS on veterans' issues during 2024. After discussion the following action was taken:

President Chittavong recommended removing assigned supervisor liaisons from VAC meeting agendas. He further recommended commissioners reach out to any supervisor of their choice and, when they have something to report, place an update on a meeting agenda by following the regular procedure to add a topic to an agenda. Commissioners were reminded that all requests to add an agenda item must be emailed to the commission secretary at least one week before a meeting.

Motion called to replace Supervisor Liaison Report with the new process noted above.

Motion – Rusanoff / Second – Martin-Pinto. All in favor. Motion passed.

Absent: Baba, Mansori, Miller

(Note: Discussion concluded with a recommended item for next month's meeting agenda: "Discuss Topics to bring to Supervisors.")

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Call for motion to approve January 9, 2024 regular meeting minutes.

Motion - Rusanoff/Second – Ellington

All in Favor – Aye: 8, No: 0.

Motion passed. January 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes approved.

Absent: Baba, Mansori, Miller



## **NEW BUSINESS**

Support request to BOS for ACR 126, Sgt. Nicole Gee United Marine Corps. Memorial Highway.

The Commission was grateful to have this item brought to their attention. After discussion it was recommended Commissioner Chan draft a support letter for commission's review and approval.

Motion to have Commissioner Chan draft a letter – Rusanoff / Second – Bullard. All in favor.

Absent: Baba, Mansori, Miller

## **GOOD WELFARE**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Commissioner Dacumos raised awareness on efforts to amend Proposition 19, noting the effects of the proposition on property taxes of World War II veterans and veterans' families.
- Commissioner Chittavong spoke about CA Proposition 1. He encouraged commissioners to look into it.
- Commissioner Chan reviewed several CA legislative bills.
- Commissioner Ellington announced she is working with a San Diego reboot transitional program for veterans. She proposed inviting soldiers transitioning to San Francisco to commission meetings and provide them with a list of resources.

## **GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Commissioner Chan said Happy Chinese New Year. Year of the Dragon.

## **HONOR REPORT AND MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Commissioner Rusanoff spoke in honor of the five Marines who tragically passed away in a helicopter accident in California last week and the three U.S. soldiers killed in Jordan last month.

This meeting is dedicated to their memory.



U.S. Marines lost in California helicopter crash:

Lance Cpl. Donovan Davis, 21

Sgt. Alec Langen, 23

Capt. Benjamin Moulton, 27

Capt. Jack Casey, 26

Capt. Miguel Nava, 28

U.S. soldiers killed by a drone attack in Jordan:

Sgt. William Jerome Rivers, 46

Spc. Kennedy Ladon Sanders, 24

Spc. Breonna Alexsondria Moffett, 23

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:11pm.

The next regular meeting of the Veterans Affairs Commission will be held in-person at 6:00pm in Room 416 at San Francisco City Hall on Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

Links and meeting documents can be found on the Veterans Affairs Commission website.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Murphy

Commission Secretary

Veterans Affairs Commission

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Veterans Affairs Commission Meetings:

General meetings of the SFVAC are scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month, with the exception for the month of July, when there is no scheduled SF VAC meeting, and are held in Room 416 in City Hall.

Meeting confirmation, and specific announcement of general meetings are made via public posting of the Meeting Agenda as required by law, at least 72 hours prior to scheduled meetings. Agendas for SFVAC meetings (and archived meeting minutes) are available on the SFVAC Pages of the City of San Francisco website, and are also available for public view and inspection at the 5th Floor Government Information Center at the San Francisco Public Library, at 100 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102. The documents librarian telephone number is (415) 554-4472.

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**Veterans  
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