

VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, January 25, 2007
County Council Room and Kona Mayor's Office (Via Videoconferencing)
3:00 p.m.

Present

Members

Denny Austen
Don D. Bennett
Richard Highley
Roy Hinokawa
Louis Kaoiwi
Edward Lee
George Mukai
George Yamamoto

Kona Mayor's Office (Via Videoconferencing)

Members

Antonio Gaspar

Guests (Kona)

Boss Hanato
Minoru Hanato

Guests (Hilo)

None

Ex-Officio (Hilo)

Patricia Engelhard, Director, P&R

Also Present (Hilo)

Nathalie Santos, Secretary
Keith Ribbentrop, Office of Veterans Services
Herring Kalua, Representative, State Veterans Advisory Board
Delbert Nishimoto

Absent

Penny Fox
Wendall Kekumu
Patrick Pavao
Gilbert Sampaia
Richard Stevens

CALL TO ORDER

- Chairman Richard Highly called the meeting to order at 3:10 pm.

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No Statements from the public.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS MINUTES – August 17, 2006

- The minutes of the August 17, 2006 meeting were approved as submitted. The meetings for September and October were cancelled. November's meeting was

cancelled because there was no quorum at the Prosecuting Attorney's Office Conference Room.

REPORT ON CEMETERIES – STATE VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD

Hawaii Island Representative Mr. Herring Kalua

Mr. Kalua gave the following report:

Veterans Cemetery II - East Hawaii

As of January 20, 2007, a new date was established for completion of work at Veterans Cemetery II. Extension granted based on negotiated repairs contractor will need to complete prior to receipt of final payment. Remaining work relates to landscaping and turf grassing required due to regrading of new burial areas for proper drainage and problems relating to an overabundance of weeds.

Veterans Cemetery III - West Hawaii - Phase II

Project consultant DPI (Design Partners Inc.) submitted the first draft of the Master Plan to VA State Cemetery Grant Services for review and approval. Master Plan includes comments received from the Kona veterans received by the State in November 2006 and also included VA guidance. Another project presentation to Kona veterans will be scheduled in January or February 2007 to present master plan, address veterans comments and include input. Date will be based on the date review comments received from the VA.

Mr. Highley asked if the January 10th meeting is being rescheduled. Mr. Kalua said it would probably be held in February since that date has passed.

Veterans Cemeteries I and II - Columbariums

Mr. Kalua said the state is contemplating either putting in another marble plate or break the old one down and get another columbarium like Veterans Cemetery III.

Director Engelhard said as an experiment P&R staff will be installing a steel plate (had to wait for screws or it would have already been installed) over columbariums to see how it will hold up in the weather.

Chairman Highley suggests installing columbariums like the ones at West Hawaii Cemetery, which has individual niches. The state purchased them for approximately \$25,000. Although they say its temporary, it really looks nice and saves cemetery space.

Director Engelhard said rather than tearing down what's already there, we will first try to put individual plates on the existing columbariums, which have approximately 36 niches each.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VETERANS CEMETERY II – EXPANSION PROJECT

Director Engelhard said Mr. Kalua already reported on the landscaping issue problems and stated that project has not yet been accepted.

VETERANS CEMETERY III – WEST HAWAII

Expansion Project

Director Engelhard reported that a geotechnical guy is arriving tomorrow around 9:30 am at Veterans Cemetery III from Honolulu to check the consistency of the soil on the left side. P&R staff will dig the grave on the right hand side for Saturday's burial and at the same time dig a similar size hole on the left hand side to see what needs to be done to make soil acceptable.

Mr. Minoru Hanato reported that the grave for Saturday was already dug.

Director Engelhard was hoping that staff would just have to be there once to dig both sides.

Vases Installed

Mr. Welter reported that the vases (approximately 190 to 200) have all been installed on the left side of cemetery.

Reforestation Project

Mr. Welter reported there would be another planting at the cemetery this Saturday, January 27th from 9 am to 11am, lunch to follow. Water will already be installed. Generally 75 to 100 volunteers participate in planting projects.

Minoru Hanato said there were volunteers from the Carpenters Union and a private contractor (Ian Riveira's crew) who put the finishing touches on the greenhouse and spread all of the cinders on January 14th. All that is needed for the completion of greenhouse is installation of sprinklers and side screens.

Minoru Hanato also said they would be planting along the roadside this Saturday, the County's backhoe is still broken so they are looking for another one.

Chairman Highley asked the status of the backhoe for Cemetery III and Director Engelhard said it is again being repaired.

Veterans Cemetery I and II - Faucets

Mr. Austen reported that every faucet at both Veterans Cemeteries I and II have two faucets on each. Members of the Korean War Veterans installed a cross on the top and welded the T so that job is complete.

Chairman Highley thanked the veterans for their community volunteer service and lending a hand at the cemeteries.

Veterans Cemetery III - West Hawaii

Mr. Kaiwi asked if we pay for water received from Kukio Golf Course.

Director Engelhard said we receive water for free - we do not pay for it. Golf Course personnel have said we may have as much water as we need. Maybe sometime in the future there will be a limit, but currently they have allowed us to have for free as much as we need.

NEW BUSINESS

ELECTION - VICE CHAIRPERSON

Vice Chairman Stevens has been unable to attend meetings due to his work schedule. A Vice-Chairperson is needed to help take over meetings in the Chairman's absence.

Nominations

Mr. Kaiwi nominated Penny Fox of the Hawaii Island Veterans Women's Association.

Mr. Mukai seconded the motion to nominate Penny Fox.

No other nominations were named. Mr. Mukai moved that nominations be closed and Mr. Kaiwi seconded closure.

Election

Penny Fox was unanimously elected as Vice Chairperson by acclamation.

MEMBERSHIP STATUS - Six Vacancies

Director Engelhard announced the following vacancies:

Denny Austen - VFW

Club 100

George Mukai - 442nd Veterans (Can be reappointed)

Louis Kaiwi - Independent

Patrick Pavao - Independent

George Yamamoto - Hilo Interpreters

Mr. Minoru Hanato has submitted an application as an Independent.

Recommendations for Independent slots can be made; selection is made by Mayor.

Recommendation/nomination letters and applications can be sent to P&R. Corporation Counsel has been handling filling of vacancies.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Offices Moved in West Hawaii - West Hawaii Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Veterans Center

Mr. Keith Ribbentrop of the Office of Veterans Services announced the following moves in West Hawaii.

Both the West Hawaii Community Based Outpatient Clinic and Veterans Center have moved from Pottery Terrace.

Veteran's Center is at 73 4976 Kamana Street. Their telephone is working as of today.

Community Based Outpatient Clinic has moved to Hualalai road.

Notices were sent to newspaper, however, they weren't published.

Support HB 613 - Add Representative from West Hawaii to State Veterans Advisory Board

Mr. Ribbentrop said that the Office of Veterans Services has introduced HB 613 which amends the State Veterans Advisory Board to include a representative from West Hawaii. He recommends veterans contact their legislators to support bill.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Correction - Phone List - Don Bennett's Cell Phone Number

Chairman Highley announced a correction to Member's Telephone List - The correct cell phone number for Mr. Bennett is 808-895-5566.

Meetings to be done by 4pm

Chairman Highley told members meetings in this Councilroom must be adjourned by 4pm. He asked members to prepare statements prior to meetings so that we can finish within the hour.

Chairman Highley thanked the Council for allowing us to use room.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 15, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. in the Hawai'i County Councilroom located at the Ben Franklin Building, 2nd Floor, 333 Kilauea Avenue and video-conferencing at the Kona Mayor's Office.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathalie Santos
Secretary