



CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD

Meeting Minutes #735

December 8, 2011



Tom Moran, Chair
Thomas Richards, Vice Chair
Alexander Tsao

Donna L. Dacier, Board Member
Vernon Chong, Board Member
John Farrell

The California Veterans Board met by video conference between the Chula Vista Veterans Home, West Los Angeles Home, Yountville Home, and the California Department of Veterans Affairs in Sacramento at 9:00 AM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Tom Moran, Chair, Thomas Richards, Vice Chair, Vernon Chong, Member, Donna Dacier, Member, Alexander Tsao, Member, John Farrell, Member
Chairman Moran presided.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INVOCATION

WELCOMING REMARKS/INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Moran welcomed the group in attendance and thanked them for attending the meeting. The Chair then asked the Board Members to introduce themselves and give a little of their background.

Secretary Gravett introduced the Department staff, Undersecretary Homes Robin Umberg, Chief Counsel Robert Wilson, Deputy Secretary Communications JP Tremblay, Deputy Director Farm and Homes Jim Lowrey, Deputy Secretary Administration Mark Lennon, Deputy Secretary Minority Veterans Affairs Lee Guterrez, Craig Osborn, Veterans Services, Staff Counsel James Yi, Staff Counsel Vasilios Spyridakis

MINUTES

Executive Officer, Bonnie Kelly

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the minutes of the October 20, 2011 Board minutes.

Member Chong moved to approve the minutes. Member Farrell seconded.

Motion unanimously approved and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

OLD BUSINESS

A) Informal Hearing for John Thomas

Mr. Thomas and his Attorney, Ryan Del Georgio was in attendance for his appeal of his denial for admittance to the West Los Angeles Veterans Home. Due to the submission of Mr. Del Georgio's brief which contained new information, the hearing was put on hold and referred back to the Home's Admission Committee for review. Upon the Committee's decision, if Mr. Thomas is again denied admittance to the Home, the Board will hold a special meeting early in January to conduct the hearing.

B) Decision Rendered by ALJ on Timothy Taylor Appeal

The Board reviewed and discussed the Administrative Law Judge's decision to deny Mr. Taylor's loan pre-approval application of October 25, 2010. Member Tsao motioned to adopt the findings of the ALJ's decision. Motion unanimously approved by all and carried.

DEPARTMENT FORUM

Department Update

A. Veterans Services Update

Craig Osborn briefed the Board on the latest efforts of the Veterans Services Division:

- a. 2012 Resources Book is in the final stages of review and print
- b. DMV box for Veterans to check will be automated by February and will assist in our outreach efforts
- c. DMV has also added an area of interest for Veterans on their web page with the Department's input
- d. Mobile aps launched in November on Android and Apple for Veterans resources
- e. AmeriCorp was very successful in their first year, and tracked over 400 additional claims filed through their efforts in San Diego
- f. Prop 63 mental health funding from the Department of Mental Health was just revamped with six counties getting additional funds for additional outreach efforts for newly returning Veterans from current conflicts
- g. The Department is working on an agreement with the Department of Corrections to assist Veterans re-entering society from jail/prison
- h. Investigating participating in Public Assistance Reporting Information System to get Veterans off Medi-Cal since Medi-Cal took a 10% cut
- i. Working with other divisions to get My CalVet a portal of a one stop source for resources to get automated

B. Homes Update

Robin Umberg updated the Board on:

- a. we are at a capacity of 96% of our budgeted beds in all of the Homes
- b. all of the revenue generating contracts at Yountville are in the process of review

- c. the closing of the post office at Yountville is being pursued, with Congressman Mike Thompson leading efforts to keep it open
- d. notice has been given by the Lincoln Theatre that they will be filing bankruptcy. Efforts will be made to engage a new group to replace them as tenants and continue the theatre presentations
- e. the CIGMA 6 study to quantitatively look at increasing efficiency began its study in the behavioral wellness area with a goal to increase reimbursements by 12%, has achieved a 46% increase in September
- f. Barstow Home Administrator Art Robles is resigning, and will possibly stay on temporarily as a retired annuitant until a new appointment is made
- g. MOU for the nurses training in Barstow has been successful with graduates being hired
- h. in Barstow, they are working on an Elopement System to secure residents with memory care issues
- i. after an assessment of the community needs, the West Los Angeles Home will open with a memory care unit and the SNIF unit will follow.
- j. research being done on policy for service animals
- k. USDVA survey being done in Chula Vista
- l. will begin implementation of the statewide computerized system in the Homes in February

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2012 Legislation

Tom Richards will send copies of the latest Legislative Report to the members.

B. 2012 Board Meeting Schedule

Member Tsao moved to adopt a quarterly meeting schedule with afternoon meetings held the day prior to the regular meetings to accommodate board business as needed. Member Farrell seconded the motion. Motion unanimously approved by all and carried.

C. Board Chair Election

Member Chong moved to re-elect Tom Moran for an additional two year term of Chair. Member Farrell seconded the motion. Motion unanimously approved by all and carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

The Chair announced that the term of Tom Richards was ending on January 15th, and that this would be his last Board Meeting. In recognition of Member Richards' service to the Board, he was presented with a plaque and resolution.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:00 NOON.