



CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD

Meeting Minutes #736

March 15, 2012



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 at the Yountville Veterans Home in Yountville at 9:00 AM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Tom Moran, Chair, Vernon Chong, Vice Chair, 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. He announced that a new Board Member, Charlene Taylor has been appointed and will be attending the June meeting. The Chair then asked the Board Members to introduce themselves and give a little of their background.

Undersecretary Lawrence Gonzales introduced the Department staff, Undersecretary Homes Robin Umberg, John Kraft, Veterans Services, Angela Yamamoto, Administrative Services, Marcella McCormack, Hospital Administrator

MINUTES

Executive Officer, Bonnie Kelly

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the minutes of the December 8, 2011 Board minutes.

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

Motion unanimously approved and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ed Olson, Allied Council Chair talked about proposed Council legislation and the need for better communications with the Department. Member Dacier volunteered to be a

liaison between the Allied Council and the Department to develop some ideas to address the communications issue.

OLD BUSINESS

A) John Thomas Appeal Decision

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

B) Decision Rendered by ALJ on Juan Nelmidia Appeal

The Board reviewed and discussed the Administrative Law Judge's decision to deny Mr. Nelmidia's claim for coverage. Member Chong motioned to adopt the findings of the ALJ's decision. Member Farrell seconded.

Motion unanimously approved by all and carried.

DEPARTMENT FORUM

Department Update

A. Strategic Plan

Angela Yamamoto briefed the Board on the updated version of the Department's Strategic Plan.

B. Interagency Council

Undersecretary Gonzales reported that a great deal of progress was made at the last meeting, and that the plan going forward will be published soon.

C. Veterans Services Update

- a. John Kraft gave an overview of the CalVet Connect Portal, a single point of entry for California Veterans to learn about and apply for services on-line.

D. 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. With the release of the budget there were no cuts to the Department or the Homes, but there was not funding approved for the opening of the Fresno and Redding homes. Construction on Fresno and Redding will be complete in April, and a skeleton crew has been hired to maintain safety and security. Veterans in urgent need of housing in those areas will be admitted to other homes, and will be transferred upon opening.
- c. The Department is looking at creative ways to utilize unused space in the Homes
- d. The new Enterprise Wide Veterans Home Information System is in the process of being implemented in Barstow, W. Los Angeles, Lancaster and Ventura. Early indications from employees is very positive.

- e. A newly created position of Director of Health Care Services has been filled by Stan Jones, the previous SNF Administrator of Yountville.
- f. The Department purchased and will be installing an automated medication dispensing system, which will significantly reduce medication errors.
- g. Food service is transitioning from a contract provider to civil service employees at all of the Homes.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Draft Legislation – Farm and Home

The Chairman advised that draft legislation to revise the appeal process had been presented to him by J.P. Tremblay. After review by the Administrative Committee and the Board's legal counsel, it was determined that the Board would not approve the draft in its present form, and due to the deadline for this year's bill submissions, there would not be time to work on a revision.

B. 2012 Committee Appointments

The Chairman accepted Member Tsao and Farrell's request to serve on the Legislative Committee, and Member Tsao's to also serve on the Veterans Services Committee. The Chairman appointed the new incoming Board Member, Charlene Taylor to the Homes Committee and Veterans Services Committee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:00 NOON.