



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 13, 2022 – 6:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME/President Mansori

President Mansori called the meeting to order at 6:12pm.

After welcoming commissioners and members of the public, President Mansori announced that on Friday, September 9, 2022, Mayor Breed appointed Mr. Jordan Sun to the Veterans Affairs Commission.

President Mansori and the commission welcomed Commissioner Sun.

ROLL CALL:

The VAC Secretary called the roll:

PRESENT: President Ikram Mansori, Commissioners Douglas Bullard, William Barnickel, Hanley Chan, Jason Chittavong, Deborah Dacumos, Courtney Ellington, Courtney Miller, Christopher McDonald, Nicholas Rusanoff, Jordan Sun

ABSENT: Commissioners Martin-Pinto (excused), Olivieri (absent), Wong (excused)

Quorum present.

PRESENTATIONS

Administrative Code – CVSO Roles and Duties

Amending the Administrative Code to place the County Veterans Service Officer (“Officer”) under the Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS) rather than the Department of Administrative Services; give the Director of the DAS authority to nominate the Officer; update annual reporting requirements of the Officer to the Board of Supervisors and Mayor; and provide administrative support to the Veterans’ Affairs Commission. Presentation by Bill Barnes, Legislative Assistant, Board of Supervisors.

- Mr. Barnes updated commission on the status of ordinance, and engaged in question and answer session. During discussion, Mr. Barnes shared a pdf, “CVSO Semiannual Report to Board of Supervisors,” a copy of which was distributed to commissioners. It was noted the ordinance was considered at the September 12 meeting of the Board of Supervisors Rules



Committee, and received a positive recommendation. The ordinance will be included on the agenda for the full Board of Supervisors meeting on September 20.

The Road Home Program

An innovative, two-week program for veterans impacted by the invisible wounds of war and life. Overview provided by the program outreach coordinator, Alejandra Hernandez.

- Presenter was not in attendance. Presentation will be rescheduled to a future meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

Officers' Report:

President

- Shared news about the hiring of new CVSO, Elena Kim.

Vice-President

- No report – VP Martin-Pinto absent.

Staff Secretary

- Business card orders processing, expect to receive shipment soon.
- Non-chartered commissions continue to meet remotely until further notice from the Mayor's office.

Committee Reports

- Legislative and Rules Committee – Report by Committee Chair Jason Chittavong:
 - Commissioner Chittavong commented on importance of meeting attendance. He noted there are seven members on the committee, but, to date, meetings have been attended by the same five commissioners only. He encouraged participation from all members, and asked those who have not yet participated to notify the committee.
 - During the August committee meeting, Commissioner Chan shared news that Supervisor Mandelman's office has offered to provide the commission with training on proper meeting procedures and adherence to the Sunshine Ordinance.
 - Discharge upgrade training was discussed at the August committee meeting. Commissioner Chittavong asked if training for commissioners is something the commission would like to pursue.

Commissioner Chittavong concluded his report, and President Mansori asked for questions or comments. Commissioner McDonald followed up about discharge upgrade training, noting it covers the process of veterans benefits and would be beneficial information to anyone helping veterans. Commissioner Chan recommended the commission consider legislation to obtain City ID cards for veterans, similar to San Mateo County process. President Mansori agreed ID cards are important and recommended committee begin researching data on the number of veterans in need of this type of service.



- Communication and Events Committee – Report by Committee Chair Nicholas Rusanoff:
 - Commissioner Dacumos shared that the Fleet Week Interfaith Blessing Event is scheduled for Sunday, October 9 at 9:00am. As Fleet Week events are finalized, invitations will be shared with the commission.
 - Commissioner Chittavong is spearheading efforts related to Operation Green Light for Veterans, and is in touch with City Hall about lighting building green from November 7 to 13.
 - Commissioner Barnickel notified committee about Navy Band performing in October at Jefferson Grammar School at 19th and Irving. Date to be determined and will be shared with commission via email.
 - Commissioner Wong working with organizers of the Veterans Day Parade scheduled for Sunday, November 6. Commissioners are welcome to participate, and sign-up information will be shared via email.
 - Commissioner Rusanoff requested commissioners send any events information to the commission secretary so event can be discussed by the committee and then submitted for review by the full commission for endorsement. If an event is not seeking commission endorsement, but is of interest to the veterans community, please send an event flyer to the commission secretary to post to the website for community awareness.

Commissioner Rusanoff concluded his report. President Mansori followed up with a clarification about event endorsements. She noted the Veterans Affairs Commission cannot endorse events, however the commission can publicize information about veterans related events on the website. Commissioner Chan followed up about Operation Green Light for Veterans, noting he's been in contact with Congresswoman Pelosi's office and they've offered to help. Commissioner Rusanoff responded by asking Commissioner Chan to coordinate efforts with Commissioner Chittavong.

Supervisor Liaison Reports

- District 1: Sup. Chan – Commissioner Bullard
 - Nothing to report.
- District 2: Sup. Stefani – Commissioner Wong
 - No report – Commissioner Wong absent.
- District 3: Sup. Peskin – Commissioner McDonald
 - Nothing to report.



- District 4: Sup. Mar – Commissioner Barnickel
 - Supervisor Mar continues to work on affordable housing in District 4. Currently three projects underway to bring more housing to veterans in three locations of Sunset District.
- District 5: Sup. Preston – Commissioner Chittavong
 - Spoke with Supervisor Preston’s legislative aide. Currently, supervisor is working on rent relief and asked about creating a veterans category. Commissioner Chittavong will bring item to Legislative and Rules Committee. Second item discussed was about improving safety in Tenderloin by identifying needs and directing veterans to resources.
- District 6: Sup. Dorsey – Commissioner Rusanoff
 - Nothing to report.
- District 7: Sup. Melgar – Commissioner Chan
 - No report, but plans to meet with the supervisor by end of next month.
- District 8: Sup. Mandelman – Commissioner Dacumos
 - Commissioner Dacumos continues to work with Supervisor Mandelman on affordable housing.
- District 9: Sup. Ronen – Commissioner Miller
 - Nothing to report.
- District 10: Sup. Walton – Commissioner Ellington
 - Meeting scheduled for September 19 with Supervisor Walton.
- District 11: Sup. Safai – Commissioner Bullard
 - Nothing to report.

At conclusion of Supervisor Reports, President Mansori advised Commissioner Sun that she will reach out to him to review district assignments.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- Call for motion to approve August 9, 2022 regular meeting minutes.
- Motion/Second
- All in Favor – Yes: 10, No: 0, Abstain: 0.
- Motion passed, August 9, 2022 Meeting Minutes approved.

Absent: Commissioners Martin-Pinto, Olivieri, Wong

AGENDA CHANGES

No agenda changes



UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Policy Roundtable Event [Discussion]
 - After brief discussion, it was determined the Communication and Events Committee will add this topic to the next meeting agenda and report back to the commission.
- Committees [Discussion]
 - President Mansori reminded commissioners of plan to eventually create several three-member committees. The expected timeline is for process to begin in January or February, 2023. Among the committees being considered are Rules, Events, Communication, and Legislative.

NEW BUSINESS

- Veterans Blvd. Signs in Need of Repair [Discussion]
 - Commissioner Bullard noted a concerned veteran brought this to his attention. After discussion, Commissioner Bullard volunteered to follow up with Public Works Department and Commissioner Chan offered to assist him.
- Wreaths Across America – Mobile Education Exhibit (MEE) [Discussion]
 - Commissioner Bullard brought this item to commission's attention. He commented it is an excellent program, and noted a portion of wreath sales support JROTC in San Francisco. Commissioner Ellington responded that she has met with the cemetery coordinator about wreaths program, and said wreath placing is scheduled for December 17, 2022. Commissioner Ellington further noted event is in planning stages, and she will forward information to the commission secretary. Commissioner Rusanoff advised this item will be added to the next meeting agenda of the Communication and Events Committee.

GOOD WELFARE

This is the opportunity for members of the Veterans Affairs Commission to share special thanks and congratulatory remarks for the good welfare taking place in the veterans community.

- Good Welfare Comments included:
 - President Mansori thanked Marine veteran working to provide historic military uniforms display at the Top of the Mark, San Francisco.
 - President Mansori acknowledged and thanked all the Veterans Affairs Commissioners for the time and effort they dedicate to the commission's work.
 - Commissioner Rusanoff offered good welfare wishes to the VA staff, specifically the caregivers at the VA Hospital at Fort Miley.
 - Commissioner Chan welcomed new Commissioner Jordan Sun.



PUBLIC COMMENT

- No public comment.

HONORS REPORT AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

In memory of American service members in all wars and conflicts who made the ultimate sacrifice. We also remember the passing of homeless veterans, veterans who died while awaiting approval of benefits, and suicides within the veteran and armed service communities.

- Special acknowledgement offered by President Mansori on the August 10 passing of veteran Dean Samuel Laird, a Distinguished Flying Cross and Congressional Gold Medal recipient who served in WWII, the Korean War, and Vietnam War.
- Commissioner Rusanoff offered remembrance for the victims of September 11, 2001.

ADJOURNMENT

President Mansori adjourned the meeting at 7:21pm.

The next regular meeting of the Veterans Affairs Commission will be held remotely at 6:00pm on Tuesday, October 11, 2022.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Murphy
Secretary to 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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If you or a Veteran, you know is in immediate danger to themselves or others, please call 911 or visit your local emergency room.

The Veterans Crisis Line is also available by texting 838255 or by going to their website and chatting with a mental health professional.



24/7 Confidential Support

Text [MYLIFE](#) to [741741](#)
Crisis Line:
(415) 781-0500

Veterans Affairs Commission



City and County of San Francisco