



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 12, 2024 – 6:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME / President Jason Chittavong

Meeting called to order at 6:10PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

President Jason Chittavong, Commissioners Joseph Baba, William Barnickel, James Boatman, Hanley Chan, Deborah Dacumos, Courtney Ellington, Prince Jordan Kelly, Darya Kutovaya, John Reissenweber

ABSENT: Vice-President Nicholas Rusanoff (excused), Commissioners Ikram Mansori (excused), Jenny Perez (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 / Second / All in Favor / None Opposed

Motion passed. Agenda set.

Absent: Mansori, Perez, Rusanoff



PRESENTATION

“Home Match – the Way to Stay” A home sharing program that connects community members seeking more affordable housing options with an extra room in their home or an in-law unit on their property. Presentation given by Home Match Program Director, Lucie Ashley. PPT slides posted on VAC website. At conclusion of presentation there was a brief Q&A with commissioners with the following comments:

- A commissioner inquired if it matters what location the applicant is applying from. Ms. Ashley replied that it does not, applications are accepted from anywhere. She noted the Home Match application list is quite detailed, down to a specific neighborhood in San Francisco.
- There was a question about the required qualifications of home seekers – do they have to be employed? Ms. Ashley responded employment is not a requirement, but applicants need to have some income source – such as pensions, social security, savings, etc.
- A commissioner asked about lifestyle preferences listed on one of the presentation slides. Ms. Ashley replied that Home Match tries to match home occupants as compatibly as possible by gathering information about cleaning styles, types of interest such as cooking, etc. And they are cognizant of requests that are non-negotiable, such as a private bathroom, for example.
- A commissioner asked about staff to applicant ratio. Ms. Ashley replied it is variable. In San Francisco usually two staff members work with each applicant. If there are additional language needs, more staff will be added. She noted the organization has a pretty robust staff.

President Chittavong thanked presenters. He noted securing affordable housing in San Francisco is a challenge faced by many veterans. President Chittavong encouraged commissioners to reach out to Home Match with follow up questions or comments.

COMMUNICATIONS

Officers' Report:

President:

- Welcomed new commissioners and thanked City Attorney David Chui for leading the special swearing in ceremony that directly preceded tonight's meeting. Advised new and current members to



review, “San Francisco City Attorney Good Government Guide.” This guide is used by all SF City & County policy bodies for meeting procedures. A link to the guide (which is a public document) was previously emailed to all commissioners. Commissioner Chan commented there is also a video available online for public access. The video reviews “Good Government Guide” practices.

- The Administrative office of Golden Gate National Cemetery has started planning for the 2024 Memorial Day ceremonies. The commission secretary will meet with Golden Gate staff next week to discuss opportunities for commissioners to participate in this event. A Golden Gate Cemetery staff member plans to attend the Commission’s April 9 meeting.
- Noted that March 30 is designated as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” A memorial marker in Justin Herman Plaza honors and remembers San Franciscans who served our country and died in the Vietnam War. We gratefully honor their service and sacrifice.

Staff Secretary:

- Re-stated importance that commissioners review the “San Francisco City Attorney Good Government Guide,” and the video mentioned by Commissioner Chan. The guide and video are accessible online to the public. The secretary briefly reviewed a few meeting procedure examples.
- Provided an overview of process to request placing item(s) on VAC meeting agendas. Approximately two weeks prior to a meeting, the commission secretary will send an email titled, “Call for Agenda Items.” Respond to this email with requests to have item(s) included on that agenda. Include in request if the item is “discussion” or “action,” and attach any supporting documents, for example – draft letter or draft resolution, edits to bylaws, PPT slides, etc. Attach anything commissioners need to review as part of the item’s discussion or action (vote). [NOTE: Agenda item requests are reviewed by VAC executive team. The commission secretary will follow up with requester.]

CVSO Report:

- CVSO interim director, Maurice Delmer, presented the February CVSO report. [Report is posted on VAC website.] At conclusion of report, Mr. Delmer accepted questions or comments:
 - Commissioner Barnickel asked if construction at VA Hospital is completed. Mr. Delmer replied he was not sure, but he will stop by soon to check out space and will follow up.
 - Commissioner Reissenweber commended the outstanding work of John Gallagher. Mr. Delmer concurred.



- Commissioner Chan asked if Mr. Delmer knew who the new chairperson of CA Assoc. of VSO is. Mr. Delmer replied the incoming new president is David West of Nevada County. Commissioner Chan inquired if SF CVSO has followed up on state funding for CVSOs. He noted this is related to a bill by CA Senator Archuleta. Mr. Delmer will look into this and follow up with the commission. Commissioner Chan offered his help if needed.
- Commissioner Baba asked for the point of contact for Golden State Warriors' Hoops for Troops Program's Veterans Wellness Day. He may be able to connect Salesforce resources for the event. Especially with resume writing. He will follow up with Mr. Delmer offline.

At conclusion of discussion, President Chittavong thanked Mr. Delmer for his presentation.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Call for motion to approve February 13, 2024 regular meeting minutes.

Motion / Second / All in Favor.

Motion passed. Minutes approved.

Absent: Mansori, Perez, Rusanoff

NEW BUSINESS

Welcome new Commissioners! President Chittavong provided a brief overview of the function and goals of the VAC. He summarized some of the Commission's past achievements, and again briefly reviewed meeting procedures.

Commissioners recommended ideas to bring to supervisors. Commissioner Barnickel said he spoke with Supervisor Engardio about placing a veterans item in the Supervisor's District 4 newsletter. Additionally, he is working with Supervisor Engardio on a video interview with a veteran. Commissioner Chan volunteered to participate in the video interview. President Chittavong reminded commissioners that if they want a supervisor report included on a future VAC agenda to follow the procedure instructions mentioned earlier in this meeting for the commission secretary's "Call for Agenda Items" email. Commissioners can always email the commission secretary with any questions.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of draft resolution to support ACR 126 SGT Nicole Gee United States Marine Corps. Memorial Highway. This item was introduced by Commissioner Chan during last month's meeting.



Commissioner Chan shared brief remarks, including thanking Commissioner Kutovaya for drafting the resolution. Commission voted on approval of resolution.

Motion / Second / All in Favor / None Opposed

Motion passed – resolution approved.

Absent: Mansori, Perez, Rusanoff

GOOD WELFARE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Commissioner Chan announced the CA State Commanders Veterans Council will meet in Sacramento on March 19. During the meeting new veterans legislation will be discussed. He asked commissioners to email any ideas to the commission secretary.
- Commissioner Dacumos announced that the Bataan Memorial Death March commemoration will be held on April 13 at the Presidio National Cemetery. The Congressional Gold Medal will be awarded to WWII veterans.
- Commissioner Ellington announced several veterans-related events for April, including:

Agricultural Training Course for Veterans – April 5th, 6th, 12th and 13th. Scholarships are available for veterans.

Veterans Tours of Northern California – dates TBD. One pick-up location will be the SF War Memorial Building.

Women Veterans Engagement Conference – April 27.

Commissioner Ellington will provide flyers for events.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

- Speaker Chris Scott asked about the meeting’s housing presentation. Mr. Scott will provide his contact information to the commission secretary.



- Speaker Mitch Weller spoke about housing programs for veterans and the importance of the commission focusing its resources based on need and accessing best housing programs.

HONOR REPORT AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:10pm.

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, April 9, 2024.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Murphy
Commission Secretary
Veterans Affairs Commission

This document is Official Business of the Veterans Affairs Commission, City and County of San Francisco. It is part of the official Public Record of the City and County of San Francisco.

Public Access:

Public Records are covered under the State of California Brown Act, as well as the Sunshine Ordinance of the City and County of San Francisco. These acts ensure that deliberations of City Business are conducted “before the People,” and that City and County operations are open to the People’s review.

For information on your rights under the Sunshine Ordinance (Chapter 67 of the San Francisco Administrative Code), or to report a violation of the ordinance, please contact the Administrator of the Sunshine Ordinance Task Force.

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.

Disability Access:

City Hall of San Francisco is wheelchair accessible via all entrances. There is wheelchair accessible public parking nearby, including the underground garage at the north side of City Hall. The nearby BART/MUNI station (Civic Center) is wheelchair accessible as are nearby city bus lines and stops. For more public transit information services, call (415) 923-6142 or dial 311.

**Veterans
Crisis Line**



1-800-273-8255
PRESS 1

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.



**SAN FRANCISCO
SUICIDE
PREVENTION**

24/7 Confidential
Support

Text **MYLIFE** to **741741**
Crisis Line:
(415) 781-0500

Veterans Affairs Commission



City and County of San Francisco