

VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thursday, May 19, 2005

County Council Room and Kona Mayor's Office (Via Videoconferencing)

3:00 p.m.

Present

Members

Denny Austen
Richard Highley
Roy Hinokawa
Louis Kaiwi
Wendall Kekumu
George Mukai
Gilbert Sampaia
Hideo Segawa

Kona Mayor's Office (Via Videoconferencing)

Members

None

Guests (Kona)

Ted Funk
Minoru Hanato
Herb Lum
Joe Pretsch
Lee Pretsch
Dick Scritchfield
Mary Ellen Smith
Dr. Richard Stevens

Ex-Officio (Hilo)

Patricia Engelhard, Director, P&R

Also Present (Hilo)

Delbert Nishimoto
Keith Ribbentrop

Absent

Penny Fox
Paul Johnston
Morris Kihara
Patrick Pavao
George Yamamoto

Call to Order

- Chairman Kaiwi called the meeting to order at 3:20 p.m.

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

Previous Meeting Minutes – March 17, 2005

- The Minutes of the April 21, 2005 meeting were approved as submitted.

STATE VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD – REPORT

Delbert Nishimoto, Big Island representative on the State Veterans Advisory Board reported the following:

Veterans Cemetery II

Veterans Cemetery II – Expansion Project is 98% Completed. Granite sign has been installed and the landscaping sub-contractor has been instructed to continue to make improvements in order to meet the contract requirements. The current condition of the turf is still unacceptable, as there is still a lot of sleeping grass. The County will not accept the project until all items are up to contract standard.

Director Engelhard added that the County has informed the Department of Defense and M&E Pacific that the project has been rejected because of the landscaping problems.

Director Engelhard also said that during last months meeting some concerns were shared about access to grave sites, she confirmed that there is access.

Veterans Cemetery III – West Hawai‘i

Temporary Columbarium

Mr. Nishimoto reported that the only bidder of the four columbarium unit is Coppenberg Enterprise, Inc. from the State of Washington. Advisory Notice dated May 6th, states that it would take approximately two weeks to execute contract and vendor would be allowed 120 days to complete installation. The contractor ensured OVS that they would complete project within 90 days after the contract is awarded. The cover for the temporary columbarium has been ordered and there will be approximately 119 spaces for each cover. The columbarium is 4 individual units with 4 individual concrete foundations. Also awaiting Certificate of Compliance.

Mr. Highley shared photos of Veterans Cemetery III – which includes the construction area for the temporary columbarium. Fence was moved and now just two poles must be removed from the former fenceline. Gravel has been spread in various areas and more is needed. A request has been made to Director Engelhard for a truckload of gravel to be delivered.

Mr. Nishimoto confirmed that the contractor Coppenberg Enterprise, Inc. will be responsible for pouring the slab in place. The temporary columbarium will be placed on the temporary base.

Mr. Highley wanted to know what volunteers should do to prepare for construction and Mr. Nishimoto responded that putting in the ¾” base course material and watering it down to compact should be sufficient. DeLuz Trucking donated gravel during the landscaping project however more gravel is needed.

Minoru said that the waterline had to be repaired and a lot of the gravel was used to cover that area and depleted the stockpile, which does not leave enough for the columbarium. P&R Director said the County would provide 10-15 cubic yards of gravel as requested.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VETERANS CEMETERY III – WEST HAWAII

Mr. Highley reported that volunteers have been working with P&R to keep grass looking nice by spreading fertilizer, helping to install and trim around headstones. Very appreciative of P&R employees who have been responsive to their assistance.

(Reforestation Project)

Mr. Highley said that they are working with the West Hawaii Veterans Cemetery Development Expansion Association to raise funds to supplement reforestation project.

Dr. Richard Stevens reported that they are picking up momentum and lots of people are coming out to help support the project. Plants are continuing to grow, still dealing with goats and will be until fence is erected. Completed a new grant application to an organization that is supported by DLNR and U.S. Forestry to purchase plants for the next phase. Planning a golf tournament fundraiser. Some organizations recommended that they put in wish lists of what they would like for the reforestation project and the cemetery.

Mr. Highley said they contacted a Vietnam veteran of a very large corporation who wants to get involved and requested a wish list of items that he can solicit for the cemetery.

The following is Mr. Highley's wish list items which will require approval by the County.

- 1) Installation of cups to prevent problems they are having with glass and moving them back and forth - he estimated \$2,000 should cover that cost.
- 2) Light on flagpole – he contacted a Solar Company who said its very doable and estimates that the package would cost \$1,000. The only problem is that equipment could be stolen so it would have to be bolted down.

VETERANS CEMETERY I & II – COLUMBARIUMS **SUB-COMMITTEE - REPORT**

No report. Will keep item on the agenda until there is a report.

NEW BUSINESS

Veterans Cemetery II – Culdesac (Lighting)

Chairman Kaiwi said that he was approached by someone who requested a light be installed at the top culdesac at Veterans Cemetery II because of people hanging out and drinking. He told them he would refer request to P&R Director.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

No Report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Daughters of the American Revolution

Keith Ribbentrop said that if his memory serves him right the Daughters of the American Revolution is the oldest veterans service organization in the nation and welcomed Mrs. Smith who was attending the meeting in Kona.

Mrs. Smith announced that their organization is considering a program that was originated by the Arlington ladies and continues in Phoenix, Arizona. Members would volunteer to attend veterans burial ceremonies and briefly express their appreciation and give thanks for their service. This volunteer program has been presented to members of their organization (there are approximately 35 ladies throughout the island) and will be presented again to the entire group at the fall meeting. This would be offered in both East and West Hawaii Veterans cemeteries. Director Engelhard suggested that they work with veterans and mortuaries as the County is not directly involved in the burial ceremony.

Memorial Day Ceremony – East Hawai‘i

Chairman Kaiwi said that American Legion, Hilo Post 3 will be hosting the Memorial Day event at Veterans Cemetery I on May 30th beginning at 9:45 am.

Memorial Day Ceremony – West Hawai‘i

Mr. Dick Scritchfield announced that American Legion, Post 20 is hosting the Memorial Day event at Veterans Cemetery III on May 30th beginning at 11 am.

Congress Visits Hilo – June 1, 2005 (Petitions)

Keith Ribbentrop announced that on June 1, 2005, the U.S. Representative from Senate Sub-Committee on Veterans Affairs would be visiting Hilo to basically address Community Based Outpatient Clinic Staffing, retention of the PTSD Treatment Center in Hilo and mission of the Vet Centers. Distributed petitions that were given to him by Veterans League of Hawaii Island to be returned to his office by June 1, 2005 for presentation to congress. Petitions were also faxed to Kona.

Groundbreaking Ceremony – State Long Term Care Facility

August 16, 2005; 3:30 pm

Keith Ribbentrop announced that on Tuesday, August 16, 2005 at 3:30 pm at Hilo Medical Center there would be a groundbreaking ceremony for the State Long Term Care facility that should last approximately 1 ½ hours. Refreshments to follow.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on June 16, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. in the Hawai'i County Councilroom and video-conferencing at the Kona Mayor's Office.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathalie Santos

Secretary