

VETERANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Thursday, May 20, 2004
County Council Room and Kona Mayor's Office (Via Videoconferencing)
3:00 p.m.

Present

Members

Penny Fox
Richard Highley
Roy Hinokawa
Louis Kaiwi
Wendall Kekumu
Morris Kihara
George Mukai
Gilbert Sampaia
Hideo Segawa
Dale Wilson

Kona Mayor's Office (Via Videoconferencing)

Members

None

Guests (Kona)

Minoru Hanato
Herb Lum
Alfredo Tobias
Robert Welter

Ex-Officio (Hilo)

Patricia G. Engelhard, Director, P&R

Also Present (Hilo)

Nathalie Santos, Department of Parks and Recreation
Keith Ribbentrop

Absent

Denny Austen
Peter Callahan
Paul Johnston
Charles Mayes
Patrick Pavao
George Yamamoto

Call to Order

- Chairman Louis Kaiwi called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No public statements made.

Previous Meeting Minutes – April 15 , 2004

- The Minutes of the April 15, 2004 meeting were approved as circulated.

STATE VETERANS ADVISORY BOARD – REPORT

No Report - Mr. Delbert Nishimoto, Big Island representative on the State Veterans Advisory Board was unable to attend the meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Veterans Cemetery I – Expansion of Flagpole Area

George Mukai – Same Report - No List Available. Mr. Gilbert Sampaia offered his assistance to help Mr. Mukai in some way with this project. Mr. Mukai responded that he needs a mason that will donate services.

Veterans Cemetery II

Director Engelhard reported that the wall is probably 2/3 completed and is not as high as originally planned. Although unsure of plans, she shared that possibilities may include installation of a fence on top the wall or planting a hedge to buffer activity at cemetery from the neighboring residents.

Trees

Trees were not yet removed, however, removal expenses is a contract item and should be covered under the contract.

Veterans Cemetery III – West Hawai‘i

Landscape Improvements

Mr. Highley reported that sprinkler system is working well and turning on automatically, grass is growing nicely, however, that grass will be poisoned in order to make landscape improvements following Memorial Day.

Removal of Headstones for Landscaping – Responses from Families

Mr. Kekumu asked the status of responses received from families regarding temporary removal of headstones for landscaping improvement project. Director Engelhard responded that 3 or 4 of the letters were returned stating that they do not want the headstones of their loved ones removed, the rest seem to be okay.

4-6” Curbing (Retaining Wall) and Accessibility to Cemetery

In order to do planting, the area has to be raised 4 to 6 inches – the volunteer group is proposing to erect a short (4-6”) retaining wall along the parking lot to avoid soil erosion.

Director Engelhard expressed the importance of keeping the area accessible to the disabled. Mr. Highley asked how many accessible entrances are necessary and if there are plans to follow. Director Engelhard responded that there needs to be at least one access. They both agreed that the access should be near the disabled parking stall.

Walkway

Mr. Highley said that the volunteer group has asked permission to install a crushed stone walkway to also prevent soil erosion, but the drawback is that vehicles and equipment cannot drive on walkway.

Mr. Highley asked if these additional requests fall under the scope of the initial project and Director Engelhard requested that Less Chess call her to discuss these items.

Ms. Fox asked if the walkway will be used regularly and Director Engelhard responded that it will be a maintenance walkway otherwise it would need to meet ADA standards.

Portable Restroom

Mr. Highley asked if there could be one or two more portable restrooms installed at the cemetery for the upcoming Memorial Day Ceremony. He also requested that the one there be serviced. The ceremony would last approximately 1 – 2 hours including time for refreshments. Director Engelhard will request to service the one that is there and check on getting one more if the cost is not too high for that short time.

Set up for Memorial Day Service

Mr. Minoru Honato will provide three tents for ceremony:

1 - 20X30 tent and 2 – 40X30 tents

8 tables

250 chairs (100 from the cemetery and 150 additional from Konawaena School)

Graveliners

Mr. Highley expressed concern about funding for graveliners since he has not heard from Major Mitsuyoshi for at least one month on status.

Director Engelhard will report on current status of graveliners for cemetery at next months meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Monument for West Hawai'i Veterans Cemetery

Mr. Kekumu asked for the status of the Monument. Mr. Highley said that has not heard from the Board of Directors of the church concerning the monument, but spoke to person who put plaque on that monument and although they don't make decisions both agreed that nothing should be removed and instead if a monument is installed at the cemetery, funds should be generated for a new one.

Mr. Highley said there are plans to start a corporation. He said they are working to put a memorial committee together, including someone from a financial institution and through the Friends of the Park program try to raise funds to build a Memorial and make landscape improvements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Office of Veterans Services – New Director

Hilo Veterans Services Counselor Mr. Keith Ribbentrop announced the appointment of Edward R. Cruickshank as the new Director of the Office of Veterans Services effective May 3, 2004.

ADA/State Law Compliance for Public & Contested Case Hearings Workshop

Chairman Kaiwi reminded members about the workshop being held on June 30th and to inform Martha of Corporation Counsel by June 17th if interested.

Vietnam Veterans Post 10583 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars

Chairman Kaiwi shared invitation received to attend a Memorial Day Eve Candlelight Ceremony on Sunday, May 30th at 6:15pm at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl).

Memorial Day Ceremonies

KMC

Monday, May 31st, at 4 pm on the Front Lawn at KMC (Kilauea Military Camp)

Veterans Cemetery I

Monday, May 31st, at 9:45 am at Cemetery I Pavilion.

Veterans Cemetery III – West Hawai'i

Monday, May 31st at 11 am – Keynote Speaker will be Congressman Ed Case.

Flag Day Ceremony

Mr. Sampaia announced that the Big Island Retired Military Association will be hosting Flag Day Ceremonies on June 14th at 12:45 pm at Veterans Cemetery I.

NEXT MEETING

Mr. Kekumu said he will be unable to attend the June meeting. He was asked to send a representative to report back to his organization.

The next meeting will be held on June 17, 2004 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 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nathalie Santos
Secretary