



Alameda County Veterans Affairs Commission

Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 20, 2026

10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

In-Person Location: County Veterans Service Office, 22225 Foothill Blvd – Freedom Hall Conference Room, Hayward, CA 94541

Virtual Attendance: Microsoft Teams

1. Call to Order

Chair Shewee Yohannes called the meeting to order at approximately 10:02 A.M.

2. Roll/ Call / Quorum Established

Chair Yohannes conducted the roll call of Commissioners. The attendance of Commissioners, including virtual participation, is reflected below. A quorum was established.

Commissioner	Status	Commissioner	Status
Shewee Yohannes (Chair)	Present	Joseph C. LoParo	Absent
James F. Phair (Vice Chair)	Present	Jack McIlvain	Present
Robert R. Cole	Present	Greg Owens	Present
Stephen M. Dolgin	Present	Keisuke Warner	Present
Omar Farmer	Absent	Diane Williamson	Present
Ronald Forbes	Present	Madeleine Reed	Present
Michael Gilmore	Present	Don Reed	Absent
Alfred P. Gordillo	Present	Daniel K. Bitner	Absent
Nathaniel Harrison	Present	Robert E. Hart	Present
Frederick Jaffin	Absent	Dylan M. Boldt	Absent
Lisa Brunner	Absent	Joshua F. Jones	Absent

3. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

The Commission reviewed the June 15, 2026 meeting minutes. No amendments were offered.

Action Taken

The June 15, 2026 meeting minutes were approved. No abstentions were recorded.

4. Salute Colors-in-Place

The Commission observed Salute Colors-in-Place.

5. Pledge of Allegiance

The Commission recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

6. Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed in honor of POW/MIA Service Members and Veterans lost by suicide.

7. Public Comment

No public comments were received.

8. Brown Act Training and Presentation

Deputy County Counsel Shanna Connor provided Brown Act training covering open-meeting requirements, serial meetings, agenda notice requirements, public participation, teleconference and remote-attendance rules, and consequences of violations.

Discussion included remote participation, Commission bylaws, ad hoc versus standing committees, agenda content, and email communications. Commissioners were advised to conduct Commission business in properly noticed meetings and to route Commission-wide information through staff when appropriate.

Ms. Connor also reviewed portions of Alameda County's Code of Ethics for boards and commissions.

9. Staff Update

Budget / Administrative Update

Anthony Simpson relayed an update on behalf of Faith Battles. Commissioners were reminded to submit invoices promptly and were encouraged to include a budget update as a standing agenda item so expenditures, balances, and proposed adjustments can be reviewed regularly.

County Veterans Service Office (CVSO)

CVSO reported continued outreach despite limited staffing, including the June 26–27 Stand Down, June 30 San Leandro Senior Center outreach, and a July 7 claims and health outreach event with Veterans Health Administration staff.

Staff reported continued efforts to increase awareness of the new Hayward CVSO location. Google location information and exterior signage remained in progress, while satellite appointments continued in Fremont and at the former Eastmont location during the transition.

Q2 2026 Performance

CVSO reported an overall increase of approximately 9% from the first quarter to the second quarter and expressed a goal of continuing to increase activity at the new location.

10. Subcommittee Reports

Outreach Subcommittee

The June Stand Down was reported as successful, with attendance estimated at just under 300 across both days. The next Stand Down was identified for September 25–26, 2026. Commissioners discussed reviewing participation data after the September event to evaluate future scheduling.

PAL Legislation Subcommittee

Vice Chair Phair provided an update on state and federal Veterans legislation, including measures related to military retirement income, disabled Veterans property-tax relief, CVSO coordination, and federal Veterans benefits.

Ceremonial Awards / Commemorative Veterans Program

A commemorative bench recognition event was announced for August 8, 2026, at the Hayward Veterans Memorial Building. Staff also reported progress on the challenge coin and Veterans Banner Project, including vendor coordination and payment processing.

Veteran Observance Days

Remaining Women Veterans Recognition Day follow-up focused on reimbursement processing.

Veterans Memorial Buildings

No substantive report was presented.

11. New Business / Announcements

Commission Budget / Finance Training

The Commission discussed maintaining a budget update as a standing agenda item, identifying a consistent financial point of contact, and holding Finance Department training at the September meeting.

Announcements

- August 1 – American Legion Post 647 yard sale in Alameda.
- August 8 – Commemorative bench recognition event in Hayward.
- September 11 – 9/11 remembrance events in Castro Valley and Alameda.
- September 25–26 – Veterans Stand Down.

12. Agenda Building

The Commission confirmed there would be no regular meeting in August. Proposed items for the September 21 meeting included Finance Department training, a budget update, Suicide Prevention Month programming, and planning for the September 25–26 Stand Down.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Yohannes adjourned the meeting. The transcript does not state an exact adjournment time.

Prepared By:

Tamar N. Mitchell

Secretary II

Alameda County Department of Adult & Aging Services