

# **VETERANS ISSUES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

## **BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I: INTRODUCTION:**

- A. This committee shall be known as the Veterans Issues Advisory Committee (VIAC) for the Military & Veterans Affairs Office of Monterey County, and shall be governed by these By-laws in the performance of its duties. The VIAC is formed pursuant to the authority vested in the Board of Supervisors of Monterey County.

### **Article II: PURPOSE AND DUTIES:**

- A. The VIAC will champion Military & Veteran specific interests / causes / issues on or near the former Fort Ord for the benefit of all County Military & Veterans to include, disabled veterans, homeless veterans and other minority groups within the Military and Veteran community. The VIAC will identify, discuss, evaluate, advise and advocate to the Military & Veterans Affairs Office for the Veterans of the County of Monterey regarding the development of former Fort Ord and issues that will have a direct impact to the Military, Veteran and Dependent community. The VIAC will coordinate efforts regarding Federal, State and Local government and stakeholders on formulation, coordination, and execution of Military, Veteran and Dependent policy and strategy as appropriate. The VIAC will assist in the overall betterment of the Monterey County Military, Veteran and Dependent community by developing engagement strategies for Federal, State and local governments, stake holders, non-profits and Veteran organizations.
- B. Issues that are to be monitored by VIAC include but are not limited to:
  - 1. Liaison with elected federal, state, county and city officials.
  - 2. Liaison with the media to build public support.
  - 3. Liaison with the California Dept. of Veterans Affairs - Central Coast Veterans Cemetery.
  - 4. Liaison with veteran groups in adjacent counties regarding the Central Coast Veterans Cemetery.
  - 5. Liaison with the Central Coast Veterans Cemetery Foundation.
  - 6. Liaison with county veterans' organizations.
  - 7. Liaison with county non-profits serving veterans.
  - 8. Identify and apply for veteran/military services grants if applicable.
  - 9. Coordinate with State legislature, CDCR and other stake holders for the reintegration of justice-involved Veterans.
  - 10. Coordinate and assist with Veterans Treatment Court & Military Diversion Court.

11. Coordinate with Homeless Veteran Service providers including affordable housing.
  12. Monitor and advise through completion and expansion of the California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery.
  13. Monitor and advise through completion and expansion of the Department of Defense / VA Clinic to include expanded services such as mental health & women veterans.
  14. Advocate for federal, state local parks or historical sites specific to Fort Ord and the Military & Veterans of the County of Monterey.
  15. Advocate and support the Ord Community (Community Center, Gym, Commissary, Post Exchange, Gas Station, Housing).
  16. Facilitates joint municipality efforts to accomplish common goals for the benefit of the Military & Veterans in Monterey County.
  17. Work to establish a Veterans Memorial Building utilizing California Military & Veterans Code.
  18. Work to establish ancillary Structure(s) depicted on the 2008 California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery / CAC Master Plan: Chapel, Museum, Amphitheater immediately adjacent to the State Veterans Cemetery.
- C. The VIAC will continually identify opportunities and champion efforts to better the lives of Monterey County Military & Veterans; to include, disabled veterans, homeless veterans, justice involved and other minority groups within the Military and Veteran community.
- D. The VIAC will report to the Monterey County Military & Veterans Affairs Office. The VIAC is charged with reviewing resources necessary for the successful implementation of projects and will review data or recommendations that may come from the Military & Veterans Affairs Office, and provide input regarding organizational, policy, financial, and technical elements in processing these projects and others related to veterans or military issues as may be assigned by the Military & Veterans Affairs Officer. The County of Monterey Military & Veterans Affairs Office staff will provide technical and administrative support to the VIAC.

### **ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP AND SELECTION:**

- A. The VIAC shall be composed of eleven (11) voting members and eleven (11) ex-officio members as follows:
1. Voting Members Representation List:
    - i. Three (3) representatives designated by the United Veterans Council (UVC).

- ii. Two (2) representatives designated by the Monterey County Military and Veterans Affairs Advisory Commission (MVAAC).
- iii. One (1) representative designated by the City of Seaside.
- iv. One (1) representative designated by the City of Marina.
- v. One (1) representative designated by the City of Del Rey Oaks.
- vi. One (1) representative designated by the City of Monterey.
- vii. One (1) representative designated to represent Veterans Families.
- viii. One (1) representative designated by the Fort Ord Area Retiree Council.

2. Ex-officio / Non-Voting Members Representation List:

- i. One (1) representative designated by Congressional Office – 20<sup>th</sup> District.
- ii. One (1) representative designated by CA State Senate Office – 17<sup>th</sup> District.
- iii. One (1) representative designated by CA State Senate Office – 12<sup>th</sup> District.
- iv. One (1) representative designated by CA State Assembly Office – 29<sup>th</sup> District.
- v. One (1) representative designated by CA State Assembly Office – 30<sup>th</sup> District.
- vi. One (1) representative designated by the U.S. Army Garrison – Presidio of Monterey.
- vii. One (1) representative designated by U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA).
- viii. One (1) representative designated by designated by the California Dept. of Veterans Affairs (CalVet).
- ix. One (1) representative designated by the Veterans Transition Center (VTC).
- x. One (1) representative designated by the Central Coast Veterans Cemetery Foundation.
- xi. One (1) representative designated by the Monterey County Military & Veterans Affairs Office (MVAO).

B. The Military & Veterans Affairs Officer shall review and forward recommendations for voting membership on the VIAC to the Board of Supervisors for its approval and appointment. Such members shall serve at the pleasure of their designating authority or until resignation or other vacancy.

- C. Voting members shall be United States Veterans whenever possible and have preferred knowledge of the USDVA, Department of Defense (DOD), and State Veterans Department facilities located on the former historic Fort Ord.
- D. Voting members should have a history of supporting veterans and a general supportiveness for the Monterey County veteran community.
- E. The Military & Veterans Affairs Officer shall appointment “ex-officio” members. Such members shall be non-voting and shall serve at the pleasure of the Military & Veterans Affairs Officer or until resignation or other vacancy.

#### **ARTICLE IV: VACANCIES**

##### **A. Vacancies:**

1. A vacancy shall exist:
  - i. When a VIAC member submits a written resignation to the VIAC Chairperson and the Military & Veterans Affairs Officer.
  - ii. When a VIAC member has three (3) consecutive unexcused absences or is absent from four (4) of any nine (9) consecutive meetings of the Committee or any sub-committees upon which the member serves. An absence due to vacation, family emergencies, personal illness or out of town work related events, will be considered an “excused” absence provided the VIAC’s chairperson is given reasonable notice beforehand.
  - iii. When a VIAC member’s death, disability, or any other circumstance prevents him/her from completing the term for which he/she has been appointed.
  - iv. The member’s designating authority informs the Chair or Military & Veterans Affairs Officer that the member will no longer be serving.
2. Upon being informed of a vacancy, the Military & Veterans Affairs Officer shall solicit candidates from the designating entities described in II.A.1 and 2, above, and shall forward to the Board of Supervisors recommendations for the appointment of voting members, and shall make appointments of ex-officio/non-voting members.
3. The VIAC may, for good cause, grant leaves of absence for a reasonable period to its members. Request for a leave of absence must be presented to the VIAC in writing.
4. Any voting member of VIAC may be removed “for cause” with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting membership. “Cause” shall mean a violation of these By-laws, or a finding by a regulatory agency or court of competent jurisdiction of a violation of law involving dishonesty or moral turpitude.

## **ARTICLE V: ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURES**

A. Brown Act: The VIAC shall be governed by the provisions of the California Open Meeting Law, the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code section 54950 et seq.) (“Brown Act”). If any inconsistency exists between the provisions of the Brown Act and the Agreement or these bylaws, the provisions of the Brown Act shall control.

### **1. Regular Meetings, Time and Place:**

- i. Regular meetings of the Committee shall occur monthly; however, regular meetings may be cancelled by the Chairperson due to the anticipated lack of a quorum or lack of business to be addressed; however, the Committee shall meet at a minimum nine (9) times per year. At its regular meeting in December of each year, the Committee shall establish a regular meeting schedule for the following year. When able to meet in person, the Committee shall meet regularly at the Veteran’s Transition Center, 220 12th Street, Martinez Hall, Marina, CA 93933. During the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings of the Committee may be held virtually/remotely in compliance with Governor Newsom’s Executive Order N-29-20. Notice and posting of agendas for regular meetings shall be pursuant to the provisions of the Brown Act.

### **2. Special Meetings:**

- i. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson at any time for a specific, announced purpose. At the request of any five (5) voting members, the Chairperson shall call such a special meeting. Written notice of a special meeting shall be delivered to all Committee members (voting and non-voting) at least 48 hours in advance of any such meeting. Attendance at a special meeting by any Committee member amounts to a waiver of any defect in the giving of notice to such member, unless at the meeting the member specifically objects to the holding of the meeting on the grounds of such defect. Notice and posting of agendas for special meetings shall be pursuant to the provisions of the Brown Act.

### **3. Emergency Meetings:**

- i. Emergency meetings may be called by the Chairperson under the circumstances and conditions set forth in the Brown Act.

### **4. Quorum:**

- i. A quorum of the Committee shall consist of six (6) voting members. The VIAC may take action only if a quorum is present, except as may be provided in the Brown Act. Roll call shall be taken at the start of every meeting to determine the presence of a quorum.

### **5. Voting:**

- i. Actions of the Committee shall be by the vote of a majority of a quorum. If a Committee member is recused or prohibited from voting due to an actual or perceived conflict of interest under the California Political

Reform Act (Government Code section 8700 et seq.) or Government Code section 1090 et seq., the Committee member shall leave the dais, and his or her presence shall not be counted towards a quorum. The presence of any Committee member who otherwise abstains from voting shall be counted for purposes of determining a quorum, and shall be considered to be a vote in favor of the majority or, if a tie vote results not considering the abstaining Committee member's vote, in favor of the motion being voted upon.

Voting on all motions and resolutions of the Committee shall be by voice vote, calling for ayes and noes, except that if any Committee member requests a roll call vote, either before or after the voice vote is taken, then the vote shall be by roll call. During virtual or remote meetings pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 all votes shall be by roll call.

6. Conduct of meetings:

- i. The Board may not take action on or discuss items not listed on the agenda except as otherwise allowed by the Brown Act.
- ii. Each agenda of the Committee shall provide an opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee on any agenda item before or during the Committee's consideration of the item. The Chair may limit the time allowed for each person to speak.
- iii. Each agenda for regular meetings will include a regular time near the beginning of the agenda to receive public comment on items that are within the jurisdiction of the Committee but that are not on the agenda. Committee members are not required to respond to any issues raised during the public comment period, and may not take any action on such issues other than to refer the item to Staff or schedule action for a future agenda.
- iv. All items for discussion and decision by the Board shall be heard with the following procedure:
  - a) Introduction by the Chairperson.
  - b) The Military & Veterans Affairs Officer or designee presents the Staff report to the Committee.
  - c) The Chair inquires if Committee members have any questions of Staff.
  - d) The Chair opens the item for public comment; public speakers are requested to identify themselves.
  - e) Public testimony is closed, and the item returned to the Committee for further questions and discussion.
  - f) The Chairperson entertains any motion on the item.
  - g) Committee votes.

The Chair may alter the order specified above, if the Chair believes such change in the order would facilitate the hearing process.

- v. The Committee may reconsider any item upon which a final vote has been taken at the same meeting upon motion by a Committee member who voted in the majority on the item. If a motion for reconsideration is made and passes, the item will be reconsidered at the same meeting, or may be continued to a future meeting for reconsideration. A motion for reconsideration shall have precedence over every other motion except a motion to adjourn.
- vi. The Committee may continue any item to another meeting specified in the order of continuance, may adjourn any meeting without specifying a new meeting date, and may adjourn any meeting to a time and place specified in the order of adjournment. Less than a quorum may so continue an item or adjourn a meeting. If all members are absent from any meeting, the Military and Veterans Affairs Officer may so adjourn the meeting, and shall provide notice of any new meeting date and time as required by law.

7. Officers:

- i. The officers of the VIAC shall be a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, and shall be voting members.
- ii. The officers shall be elected by the VIAC at its first meeting of each calendar year.
- iii. Officers shall serve for a term of one (1) year. An officer may be nominated for reelection for a maximum of three (3) terms.

8. Duties of Officers:

- i. Chairperson:
  - a) Presides at all VIAC meetings.
  - b) Appoints committees and committee chairpersons.
  - c) Signs all documents to express the VIAC's decisions and recommendations.
  - d) Is a member of all sub-committees, ex-officio.
  - e) Is responsible for the approval of the agenda.
- ii. Vice Chairperson:
  - a) Assumes the duties of the Chairperson in case of absence or incapacity and becomes the Chairperson upon resignation, or permanent incapacity of the Chairperson.
  - b) In the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson Pro-Tem from the voting members present to preside at a meeting.

9. Sub-Committees:

- i. The VIAC may establish such sub-committees as it deems necessary or advisable to carry out the purposes of the VIAC. Sub-committees shall be subject to the provisions of the Brown Act unless specifically exempted.

10. Amendment of Bylaws:

- i. Any member of the VIAC may suggest amendments to the Committee bylaws.
- ii. To be approved, a proposed amendment must first be presented in writing at a regular meeting. At the next regular meeting, it must be approved by a two-thirds vote of those present. Thereafter, the proposed amendment must be submitted to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors through the Military & Veterans Affairs Officer or designee.

11. Staff Support:

- i. The Monterey County Military and Veterans Services Office shall be the Executive to the Committee and shall be responsible for preparing and posting an agenda, and preparation of minutes for each meeting, and for communicating to all members meeting agendas and informational materials.

12. Minutes:

- i. Copies of the approved minutes, indicating attendance and recording actions taken at each VIAC meeting, together with a record of all information presented to the VIAC, shall be submitted to the Military & Veterans Office by the Military & Veterans Affairs Officer.

13. Expenses:

- i. VIAC members shall serve without compensation. Transportation for VIAC related business shall be provided by the Military and Veterans Affairs Office when available. The Military and Veterans Affairs Officer will provide such staff support and other resources as the Military & Veterans Affairs Office deem necessary for the purposes of the VIAC.

14. Rules:

- i. Except as may be provided herein or in the Brown Act, the most currently revised version of the Roberts' Rules of Order revised shall guide the procedural conduct of all VIAC Meetings.

15. Review of Bylaws:

- i. Bylaws will be reviewed at least every two (2) years for revision, or more frequently if necessary.

[End of Bylaws]

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_, 2020