Monterey County Military and Veterans Affairs Advisory Commission

Minutes of Meeting November 12, 2008

Eddie Pedrozo, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

Members present: Bruce Evans, Ralph (Norm) Channell, Charlie Eskridge, Abel Quinones, Juan Sanchez, Jack Stewart, Ralph Villar

Members absent: Frank Aguillon (excused), Mack Jacobs, E.T. Price (excused)

Quorum of members present for Commission business.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting: Minutes of meeting September 10, 2008 were mailed to the Advisory Commission members. Mr. Stewart requested that the minutes be amended to reflect his absence as excused. Mr. Channell noted a typographical error in the Central Coast Veterans’ Cemetery report. Motion (Mr. Quinones) and second to accept the minutes as amended. Motion carried.

Public comment: None

Report From the Chair: Mr. Pedrozo commented that some modifications to the Veteran of the Year Award dinner should be considered. The speaker’s presentation went on too long and more focus needs to be placed on the awardees. Otherwise, the dinner was great.

Committee Reports:

Legislation (Mr. Quinones): Congress is out of session and will not return to next month. According to Congressman Farr the proposal to increase burial benefits has disappeared. There is a possibility of an increase in retiree costs for TRICARE medical coverage next year.

Central Coast Veterans’ Cemetery (Mr. Channell): The Board of Supervisors, acting as the Board of Directors of the County Redevelopment Agency, accepted the CAC Master Plan. Mr. Channell noted his concern about the possible deletion of habitat portion of the cemetery land allocation. He also stated his belief that the cemetery will get built and that the focus of the CAC now needs to shift to the development of the ancillary projects such as the amphitheater, chapel and museum. Mr. Sanchez noted the need for a professional fundraising effort to support the cemetery and ancillary projects. Mr. Stewart announced that a subcommittee of the CAC, devoted to fundraising liaison, met October 31 and will be recommending that the Central Coast Veterans Cemetery Foundation get professional fundraising assistance for current and ongoing fundraising efforts. Mr. Pedrozo reminded the Commission that there is already an offer of $3.4 million for the cemetery endowment parcel on the table. Next CAC meeting will be tomorrow, November 13 at 1:00 pm at the Marina Library. The public is encouraged to attend.

Veteran of the Year (Mr. Sanchez): General discussion about the purpose and conduct of the annual VOYA dinner. Mr. Sanchez reported that there was no final accounting of the expenses and income for the VOY program available yet. Mr. Pedrozo suggested that the VOYA Chair prepare an “after action” report for use by future Chairs and Commission members in general.
VA Clinic (Mr. Eskridge): The clinic began giving flu shots to enrolled veterans on October 25th. They will continue to give them in the afternoons on a walk-in basis.

VSO Report: (Mr. Garza): A written report was distributed to the Advisory Commission members. A copy of the California Association of County Veterans’ Service Offices 2009 Legislative platform was also distributed.

Old Business: None

New Business: Nomination of 2009 Officers: Nomination for Chair: Eddie Pedrozo. Nomination for Vice-Chair: Juan Sanchez. Further nominations and election of officers will be at the next meeting.

Commission Member Comments: None

Next Meeting:
January 14, 2009, 3:00 pm at VFW Post 811, 3131 Crescent Avenue, Marina.

Meeting adjourned 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Richard Garza, ex officio, Secretary