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

Members present: Eddie Pedrozo, Chair, Ralph (Norm) Channell, Charlie Eskridge, Abel Quinones, Juan Sanchez, Jack Stewart and Ralph Villar

Members Excused: Bruce Evans

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

Quorum of members present for Commission business.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meeting: Minutes of meeting September 12, 2007 were mailed to the Advisory Commission members. It was pointed out that the minutes were incomplete in that sentence from Mr. Bogan, under the VA Clinic report, was incomplete. The full sentence should have read: “Public Comment: James Bogan requested that veterans’ organizations make contributions (in the form of grocery gift certificates) for fruit to be distributed at the clinic as an alternative to donuts.” Motion (Mr. Stewart) and second to accept the minutes as amended. Motion carried.

Public comment: None

Report From the Chair: Mr. Pedrozo commended Vice Chair Abel Quinones for his performance as Veteran of the Year Award Chair and Leland Irvine and Richard Garza of the Military & Veterans Affairs Office for their administrative support for the VOYA dinner.

Committee Reports:

1. Legislation (Mr. Quinones): Reported on TRICARE and related health care issues.

2. Central Coast Veterans’ Cemetery (Mr. Channell): Mr. Stewart reported on efforts to secure $191,000 from the Fort Ord Reuse Authority to fund the cemetery development planning effort. The funding, in the form of a loan, was approved by the FORA Board at its meeting on November 9, 2007. (Question from public: Has the State made any contribution to the endowment? Response: No.)
3. Veteran of the Year (Mr. Quinones): There were 200 dinners paid for at the VOYA dinner. A final accounting of the number of tickets paid for has not yet been received from the UVC Treasurer. Reports form people attending were very favorable about holding the event in the afternoon. Mr. Stewart reported that the updated S.O.P. for the VOY program will be presented at the January meeting.

4. VA Clinic (Mr. Eskridge): The Clinic will continue to provide flu shots, for veterans enrolled in the VA medical system through the end of the year. Mr. Villar reported that VA is now also providing shingles vaccine shots. (Question form public: Does the Commission issue certificates of appreciation to community agencies for their activities? Such a certificate was requested to be presented to the VA clinic for the flu shot program. Request to be placed on the agenda for the January 9, 2008 meeting.)

5. VSO Report: (Mr. Garza):

Old Business: Proposed revision to the County Military Leave Policy. Motion (Mr. Eskridge) and second to refer suggested amendments to the County’s military leave policy to the Board of Supervisors for adoption. Motion carried.

New Business: none

Commission Member Comments: Mr. Channell expressed concern about the incidence of suicide among troops returning from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. Stewart noted that the Commission had had a very productive year.

Next Meeting:

January 9, 2008, 3:00 pm at VFW Post 811, 3131 Crescent Avenue, Marina.

Meeting adjourned 4:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Richard Garza, ex officio, Secretary