



County of El Dorado
Meeting Minutes
Veteran Affairs Commission

Todd Smith, District I – Alternate John Poimiroo
Chris Cockrell, District II – Alternate Roger Reynolds
Kurt Raffetto, District III – Alternate Josh Castro
Ken Welch, District IV – Alternate Tim Thompson
Daniel Browne, Jr., District V – Alternate Phillip Houseworth
Richard Todd, Acting Secretary Ex-Officio

Lauren Odell, Acting Recording Clerk of Veteran Affairs Commission

Department of Veteran Affairs
130 Placerville Drive, Suite B
Placerville CA 95667
www.edcgov.us/veterans
Telephone: 530-621-5892
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Thursday, November 18, 2021 @ 1200 hours
Veterans Memorial Building
130 Placerville Drive
Placerville, CA 95667

Veteran Affairs Commission Agendas and Minutes are available for viewing in the Veteran Memorial Building lobby at 130 Placerville Drive, Placerville CA 95667 and online
<https://www.edcgov.us/Government/Veterans/Pages/Commission-Agendas-and-Minutes.aspx>

I. CALL TO ORDER - PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Meeting called to order at 12:00pm

II. ROLL CALL

District	Present	Absent
I	Todd Smith, John Poimiroo	
II	Roger Reynolds	Chris Cockrell
III	Josh Castro	Kurt Raffetto
IV	Ken Welch, Tim Thompson	
V	Dan Browne, Phil Houseworth	

III. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME OF GUESTS

David Zelinsky, American Legion Service Officer; Richard Todd, HHS Program Manager; Patty Moley, HHS Assistant Director Human Services; Tim Whelan, Citrus Heights Vet Center, EDVR/MFSG; Al Soto, Festival of Lights; Andrea, Festival of Lights

IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR

Agenda change: Item XV, correct date for next Commission meeting to show December 16th, 2021

Motion to adopt agenda made by Roger Reynolds; Second by Dan Browne; Motion passes 5-0.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Motion to approve minutes made by Todd Smith; second by Tim Thompson; Motion passes 5-0

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

No action items

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR

VII. GUEST SPEAKER - VETERAN SPOTLIGHT - None

VIII. ACTION ITEMS - None

IX. EX-OFFICIO REPORT – RECEIVE AND FILE (Todd)
Report presented by Richard Todd, attached to these minutes.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS – RECEIVE AND FILE

- **TOT (Transient Occupancy Tax)** (Raffetto/Houseworth)
TOT Committee met to review the latest mini-grant applications. \$32,500 in grants were approved. Highlights include: EDC Fire Safe Council, Hearts Landing Ranch, and No Vet Goes Hungry. Some modifications to the funding requirements will be detailed in the next two weeks.
TOT also reviewed drafts of reporting requirements for grant recipient.
- **RULES** (Poimiroo/Houseworth)
 - **SPECIAL COMMITTEE – HOUSING** (Welch/Castro)
Ken Welch will prepare a report with updates on housing, including changes to funding.
- **LEGISLATIVE** (Smith/Raffetto) – No report given
- **TRANSPORTATION** (Browne/Thompson)
Dan Browne reported on the lack of transportation available for Veterans in the SLT area, specifically with transportation to the VA in Reno for appointments. Will work offline with EDVR on solutions.
- **BUDGET** (Houseworth/Reynolds) – No report given
- **EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT** (Cockrell/Browne)
Dan Browne reported on employment opportunities in the SLT area specifically for Veterans.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA** (Reynolds/Poimiroo)
Roger Reynolds reported on the statistics for the Facebook page.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS' REPORTS – RECEIVE AND FILE

- **VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING – VETERANS HOUSE COUNCIL** (Reynolds)
No report
- **AMERICAN LEGION SERVICE OFFICER** (Zelinsky)
Report attached to minutes.
- **EDC VETERANS ALLIANCE** (Poimiroo) No report
- **EL DORADO VETERAN RESOURCES** (Zelinsky)
Thanksgiving meal giveaway on 11/21; Christmas tree giveaway planned. New volunteers for driving and covering an open shift in the office.
- **REGIONAL VETERAN EVENTS**

XII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Vietnam Veterans Bridge Proposal (Raffetto/Castro)
Mr. Ramos has recently passed away; recommendation to move this proposal to the Board of Supervisors. Motion to approve made by Todd Smith; second by Roger Reynolds. Motion passed 5-0.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

XIV. GOOD OF THE ORDER (Additional Commission and HHSA Staff Comments)

1. March is National Women's History Month. Dan suggested acknowledging Notable Women Veterans. Comprise a committee to help flush out ideas, including Tim Whelan and volunteers from EDVR.

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2. Note from P. Houseworth to include the mini-grant table in the next agenda for review by the VAC.
 3. Review of the proposed schedule of meeting locations for 2022. Proposed schedule will be sent out and included for a vote at December VAC meeting.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Al Soto, Festival of Lights tree lighting event downtown Placerville is looking for Veterans to be acknowledged during the event. November 26, 2021.

XV. NEXT MEETING LOCATION, DATE & TIME

Thursday, December 16, 2021 @ 1200 Hours in El Dorado Hills

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 1:12pm




Veterans Services – November 2021 Report





Richard Todd, Acting Veterans Service Officer

- The Veteran Services office is happy to announce that the recent Veterans Service Officer (VSO) recruitment was successful in filling the position. Mr. Terry Thomas has accepted the VSO position and will be starting on November 22, 2021. Mr. Thomas served in the United States Marine Corps and comes to us from the Santa Clara County Veteran Services Office. With the addition of a new VSO, the office is now fully staffed to meet the needs of the Veteran population.

- **Claims:**
 Claims processed for June (104), July (94), August (89), September (60) and October (70). The dominate number of claims processed for each of the months reported was in the “Application for Disability Compensation” category.

- **Veteran Services Website Hits Form 9/1 to 11/1:** Total Visits: 1,122 Total Page Views: 2,473

#	Title	URL	Page views % of total	Visits % of total	Avg page views
	Veteran Services - EI				
1	Dorado County		544	409	1.33
	https://www.edcgov.us/G		22.0 %	36.5 %	
	overnment/Veterans				
	Veteran Services - EI				
	Dorado County				
2	https://www.edcgov.us/G		147	85	1.73
	overnment/Veterans/Page		5.9 %	7.6 %	
	s/veterans_main_info.asp				
	x				
	Commission				
3	https://www.edcgov.us/G		124	87	1.43
	overnment/Veterans/Page		5.0 %	7.8 %	
	s/commission.aspx				

	Commission Agendas				
	and Minutes				
4	https://www.edcgov.us/Government/Veterans/Pages/Commission-Agendas-and-Minutes.aspx		113 4.6 %	89 7.9 %	1.27
	Veteran Affairs - El Dorado County				
5	https://www.edcgov.us/Veterans/AboutUsDetails.aspx		104 4.2 %	92 8.2 %	1.13
	Page not found https://edcgov.us/Pages/PageNotFound.aspx?requestUrl=https://edcgov.us/government/veterans		100 4.0 %	83 7.4 %	1.20
	About Us Details				
7	https://www.edcgov.us/Government/Veterans/Pages/AboutUsDetails.aspx		94 3.8 %	67 6.0 %	1.40

- **Clipper Article:** In case you missed the November 9th cover of the Clipper, the Veteran Service Office was featured on the cover and in an article. There will also be a monthly add for Veteran Services running through August of 2022.



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- **SLT Veteran Services Office Update:**
 - Increase Office Hours: If there is an increase in the number of Veterans requesting appointments, we will increase office hours to accommodate the need.
 - Larger and More Signs: The request for exterior signs, is with the sign maker.

We should have the mock-up soon. An interior sign was installed on the window stating the time and days of operation.

- Tahoe Blvd sign: We are researching this request to evaluate the feasibility and cost.
- Red Phone (Hot line): While this item is not being considered at this time, we do offer a phone number to access services five days a week (from 8-5).

- **Veterans Administration Rate Change:**

There will be a **5.9%** increase for VA compensation and pension payments in 2022 due to a cost of living adjustment. Under federal law, the cost-of-living adjustments to VA's compensation and pension rates are the same percentage as for Social Security benefits. Periodically, The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) makes cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) to VA compensation and pension benefits to ensure that the purchasing power of VA benefits is not eroded by inflation. Under federal law, the cost-of-living adjustments to VA's compensation and pension rates are the same percentage as for Social Security benefits.

COLAs are determined by an increase in inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). The Bureau of Labor Statistics determined there was a 5.9% increase in 2021. Therefore, the COLA for 2022 is 5.9%.

- **Code Red:**

Are you ready? The El Dorado County Sheriff's Office- Office of Emergency Services Alert Notification System provides a number of ways in which the county may contact the community in the event of an emergency such as: evacuations due to wildfires or hazardous material spills, or urgent law enforcement operations.

The El Dorado County Office of Emergency Services partnered with CodeRED emergency notification service to alert residents and businesses by telephone, cell phone, text message, email, and social media when there is a threat to the health or safety of residents. [Click here to sign up!](#)

- **Virtual Career Fair:**

Are you looking for a new federal career in computer science, business management, information technology (A+, Net +, security +), customer support, management or program analysis or software engineering? Veteran Readiness and Employment's (VR&E) Employment Services Team has teamed up with Microsoft to host a federal virtual career fair on Friday, Nov. 19, from 12 to 3 p.m. ET. The live event will feature thirty federal employers who are committed to filling multiple open positions with Veterans! There will be openings nationwide and all Veterans seeking employment in these fields are welcome to participate.

Participants will have the opportunity to enter employers' "virtual booths" and interact directly with recruiters, where they can ask questions, apply for jobs, and directly

message the employer. If you're interested in participating, please [register here](#) and set up a profile PRIOR to the event.

Some of the participating agencies include:

- Veterans Health Administration
- Internal Revenue Service
- Defense Contact Management Agency
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Park Services
- National Geospatial Intelligence Agency
- Department of State
- Defense Logistics Agency
- US Department of Agriculture
- General Schedule Administration
- Department of Justice
- National Credit Union Administration
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Energy
- Ability One
- Defense Health Agency
- National Science Foundation
- Department of Transportation
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Social Security Administration
- Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services
- US Agency for International Development
- Defense Commissioner Agency
- National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Labor

A grateful nation thanks you for your service and we hope to see you there!

Veteran Readiness and Employment Service

□ Extension for the Presumptive Period for qualifying Chronic Disabilities:

The Department of Veteran Affairs has extended the presumptive period for qualifying chronic disabilities resulting from undiagnosed illnesses in Persian Gulf War Veterans to December 31, 2026.

Prior to the extension, Persian Gulf War Veterans had to file a claim for disability compensation before the end of the 2021 calendar year. VA is extending the presumptive

period for qualifying chronic disabilities of 10% or more to ensure benefits established by Congress are fairly administered.

With scientific uncertainty remaining as to the cause and time of onset of illnesses suffered by Persian Gulf War Veterans and current research studies are inconclusive, limiting entitlement to benefits due to the expiration of the presumptive period would be premature. If an extension of the current presumptive period was not implemented, Service members whose conditions arise after December 31, 2021, would be substantially disadvantaged compared to Service members whose conditions manifested at an earlier date.

VA presumes certain medically unexplained illnesses are related to Gulf War service without regard to cause. These include: chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, functional gastrointestinal disorders, and undiagnosed illnesses with symptoms that may include but are not limited to: abnormal weight loss, cardiovascular disease, muscle and joint pain, headache, menstrual disorders, neurological and psychological problems, skin conditions, respiratory disorders, and sleep disturbances.

A wide variety of symptoms can qualify a Gulf War Veteran for presumptive serviceconnection, Veterans who are experiencing unexplained medical issues are encouraged to file a claim.

To learn more about VA and Gulf War Veterans, click [here](#).

□ Identity Theft:

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reports that Veterans are especially vulnerable to fraud and identity theft. The FTC recorded more than 41,000 incidents of Veteran fraud and identity theft in 2020.

In today's digital world, you are more likely to have your identity stolen than your car. As a Veteran, you have more to protect than the average citizen. In addition to your personal accounts, you also need to protect your personally identifiable information (PII) and personal health information (PHI).

This website provides the information you need to understand, spot, and prevent identity theft. If you or someone in your family believes their identity has been stolen, call the toll-free VA Veteran Identity Theft Helpline.

VA Veteran Identity Theft Helpline: [1-855-578-5492](tel:1-855-578-5492)

Hours of Operation: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., ET

Visit the website for more information: <https://www.va.gov/IDENTITYTHEFT/index.asp>

- **GI Bill® Students:**

Don't forget that we have transitioned to a new system, "Ask VA." Our [GI Bill website](#) currently shows the updated links and buttons. Saved links to the existing system will still work, but we recommend that you link to the new system. You will

still be able to find answers to common GI Bill questions on the VA.gov website, but if you've saved a link to a particular FAQ, it will no longer work.

To make "Ask VA" secure and to protect your personal information, you need a [VA.gov](#) account, which you can also use to access other benefits and systems in VA. If you need to create a new account, you must [verify your identity](#). You can do so by using your premier account for certain secure VA systems, like [MyHealtheVet](#), or by [creating an ID.me account](#). Creating an ID.me account may require personal identity documents. If you have questions about the account verification process, these resources may help:

- [Privacy & security on VA.gov](#)
- [me Help](#)

Call the MyVA411 main information line at 800-698-2411 if you have issues setting up your account.

RESOURCES

- **Veterans Crisis Line** - If you are having thoughts of suicide, call [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255), then PRESS 1 or visit <http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>
- For emergency mental health care, you can also go directly to [your local VA medical center](#) 24/7 regardless of your discharge status or enrollment in other VA health care.
- **Vet Centers** - Discuss how you feel with other Veterans in these community-based counseling centers. **70% of Vet Center staff are Veterans.** Call [1-877-927-8387](tel:1-877-927-8387) or find one [near you](#).
- **CALVET**
- [VA Mental Health Services Guide](#) - This guide will help you sign up and access mental health services.
- EDC Veteran Services Webpage update is now complete. Please go to: [Veteran Affairs - El Dorado County \(edcgov.us\)](#).

American Legion Service Officer Report 11/11/21

Some thoughts on homeless shelters.

On the Western slope I have dealt with Mother Teresa House, Hope House, New Morning, New Beginnings, Recovery in Action, U Turn 4 Christ, Tree House Ministries, Center for Non-Violent Relations, Summitview, Progress House, Christ Like Services, Project Room Key in Pollock Pines, Nomadic Shelter, and in Tahoe, a residential recovery program that I believe has since closed, but a couple decades ago I used in juvenile dependency court to save a mom's life, and her parental rights.

All of these programs are very successful on their terms. They filter for who they serve, and have rules.

We serve men only, who will go to church, and engage in compensated work therapy. We will take registered sex offenders, but not if they are convicted under Penal Code Section 288 (the victim was under 14).

We serve pregnant women only, who intend to carry to full term.

We serve women with children only.

We serve underage runaway youth.

We offer residential recovery programs. You have to be willing to be sober.

There are more ways of slicing this up. As you can see, none of these take on all comers. They know what their skill set can handle, and what they can do.

So, who handles all comers? Hangtown Haven's supporters, who are very kind and sweet people, think they had a winner with their encampment. I sat in on meetings with law enforcement who had a completely different take on it. Defecation, alcohol abuse, etc. Not the success their advocates say it was.

The sheriff's department is the premier provider of homelessness services. Yes, the H.O.T. Team is great. Yes. P.E.R.T. is great. Yes, the Crisis Intervention Team is great.

But for an all comers, everyone come on down, the best homeless encampment in El Dorado county?

El Dorado County jail.

Withdrawing from alcohol or heroin? We will give you detox.

Part of a white gang that wants to kill everyone else? We have a separate pod for you.

Registered or accused sex offender, 288 or otherwise? We will administratively segregate you, and protect you from violence, and protect others from you.

Everyone in Placerville wants to beat you up? We will haul you up to Tahoe for custody.

Suffering from psychosis, hearing voices that are telling you to kill your self or others?

Here are some brain meds, and we will watch you in medical.

You are a hard worker and trustworthy? We will give you a job in the kitchen, or as night cat.

You are a woman, and afraid of men raping you? You will be in the women only pod.

You need a walker, and suffer from other medical needs? We have a medical unit.

You would like Bible study, or A.A.? We have it.

You are suffering from mental illness? We have clinicians.

Now, with that experience, EDSO knows how to handle a “we will take everyone” homeless shelter.

As I write this, one homeless Veteran escaped from his Covid motel, and, last I heard, was sleeping in the dirt near Mather. He has called in terrorist threats, held “parties”, broken the rules, etc., at every placement we have found him. He needs to have his civil rights curtailed, and be conserved, but, even then, where does the conservator place him? Soon, probation, will pick him up again, and after a short stint in custody, he will be free to sleep in the dirt again. I still have one idea, involving a Volunteers of America run, VA funded, program, that would give him a place to stay with few rules. But I suspect he will blow that too.

Homelessness cannot be solved by us, because so many of the homeless choose to be homeless. A lovely Veteran was housed in Project Room Key. He is a great candidate for a State Veterans Home, a forever home. But, at the moment, we cannot find the bare land he has chosen to relocate to.

I understand that there may be reasons, financial, legal and contractual that EDSO cannot run the Homeless encampment. If Volunteers of America is hired instead, I would hope that there would be solid collaboration with the experts in housing difficult people, EDSO.

By the way, on the case management meeting that I had to go to while you were all discussing H.O.S.T.E.S.S., Tahoe Coalition for the Homeless announced that someone I will call Murky, had been placed in permanent supportive housing.

Of course, Murky, might decide after winter is over, and the mountains beckon, to sleep in the dirt again.

But tonight, that Purple Heart Veteran, who has been sleeping and living rough for a long time, is warm and fed.

Have a blessed Veterans Day.

**MINUTES OF THE 11/4/21 MEETING OF THE EL DORADO COUNTY
VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING COUNCIL**

Officers and members – 7/1/21-6/30/22: Chairman – Mac McAdams, VFW Post 10165; Vice Chairman – Bud Sweet, FRA Branch 275; Treasurer – Bud Sweet; Secretary – Dave Sauv , VFW Post 10165; Trustees- Joe Young, FRA Branch 275 and Victor Mansfield, MCL Branch 697; At Large members – Bill Fiedler, VFW Post 2680, Mike Raffety, American Legion Post 119, Allen Amaro, DAV Chapter 63.

Chairman McAdams opened the meeting to guests at 6:01 PM. First guest was Melanie Reagan, described a program she and PDP Associates have established involving grants to 501 c 3 and c 19 non-profit groups associated with veterans organizations. She described the procedure and qualifications and handed out applications for grants and contact information. Second guest was Tim Whalen of FRA Branch 275, Citrus Heights Vet Center and EDVR/MFSG. He mentioned that counselling and group discussion is available at the VMB in the East room or the conference room every other Monday and Thursday and with him on the 2nd and 4th Fridays. He also mentioned he need for drivers for the EDVR vans and the need for an additional volunteer for the EDVR office on the upper level of the VMB for Thursdays, 10 AM to noon. EDVR/MFSG is also putting Thanksgiving dinner food donation bags for needy vets and their families – bag assembly 11/19 and distribution (pick up) on 11/21. Third guest was Rich Mason, AKA “Uncle Fuzzy,” who bought 1 ½ acres of commercial property outside Camino years ago and wants some help donating it to an organization that will help with housing needy/disabled/homeless veterans. He left his card with contact information

Chairman McAdams opened the business meeting @ 6:20 PM with 14 total in attendance. All officers were present. All organizations were represented except VFW Post 2680, Bill Fiedler was excused. The minutes of the 10/7/21 meeting were accepted as published on a motion by Trustee Joe Young and a second by Treasurer Sweet. The Treasurer’s report was accepted as presented by Treasurer Sweet, subject to audit, on a motion by Secretary Sauv  and a second by Trustee Young.

Organization events schedule for building use:

VFW Post 10165 – monthly meeting on 11/12/21

FRA Branch 275 – Thanksgiving dinner and monthly meeting on 11/20/21

MCL Detachment 679 – Thanksgiving dinner and monthly meeting 11/20/21

VFW Post 10165 – monthly meeting 11/2/21, breakfast set up 11/13/21, community breakfast 11/14/21

Veterans Commission – 11/18/21 at the VMB (TOT – 11 AM, business meeting noon)

CAP – every Thursday – 6:00 PM in the East room DAV Chapter 63 – Dark

American Legion Post 119 – Monthly meeting 11/3/21 at their facility

(Chairman McAdams made the 11/11/21 Veterans Day ceremony script and assignments available)

Building Manager’s Report: Building manager Dave Sauv  reported that the building will be closed on Veterans day, 11/11/21 and Thanksgiving, 11/25/21. He has scheduled a memorial service/celebration of life in the dining room 11/28 for Robert Herrera, an after-event victim of the Caldor fire. All daily building managers are performing admirably.

Veterans Service Office report: Richard Todd of the EDC passed out flyers announcing a drive through Covid booster shot event on 11/13/21 at 3100 Ponte Marino Drive in Cameron Park, and announced that the County will have a new full-time VSO, Terry Thomas, as of 11/22/21. The EDC Veterans Commission needs volunteers to string lights on the Christmas tree

at the EDC Veterans Monument on Friday, 11/26/21. **No unfinished or new business was tendered.**

“Good of the Council,” Secretary Sauvé mentioned that MCL 697 had reimbursed the Council for lost Saturday dance revenue due to the use of the parking lot by the Hangtown Music Festival staff.

Chairman McAdams adjourned the meeting at 7:45 PM. Next meeting is Thursday, December 2nd.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Sauvé, Secretary