

Appeal Discovery 718

Why Monument Policy Was Codified into Law

Shortly after the Veterans Monument was funded by private donors the county agreed to allow it to be built on public land. Acceptance of the Board's gift required the development of policies and procedures that walked the tightrope between allowing some veteran control over content and management but did not compromise the Board of Supervisors' duty to properly control the use of the people's land. Some of those policies and procedures were codified into ordinances aka law generally referred to as 4743 by the 2006-07 Board of Supervisors.¹

Among the policy considerations was space allocations for various categories of honoraria. The front wall aka "The Honor Wall" presented a finite area to mount bronze plaques honoring El Dorado County's most significant heroes. It turns out that nationally there are 1,248,053 bronze star winners defined by DoD (not EDC) as "heroes", 19,960 service cross winners defined by DoD as "exceptional heroes" and 3,527 medal of honor winners also defined as exceptional heroes in our nation's history. There are 8 known service cross winners in the history of EDC and no medal of honor recipients. Using the ratio of EDC service cross winners to bronze star winners indicates that the honor wall would need to accommodate 425 plaques if bronze star winners (heroes) were included. Obviously, we would need much more room. The policy was constrained by space, not by hero category discrimination by any of the Monument's founders, aka the original "Friends of the Veterans Monument."

Of the 8 service cross EDC veterans only one is currently mounted on the wall. There is no room for the other 7 because many plaques were mounted prior to the publication of policy and at least one plaque mounted in 2018 was attached to the wall with apparent disregard for county ordinance requiring every honorarium to meet specified criteria.

When Mr. Buchanan became aware of the Jacobs plaque proposal, he decided that it was time to promote a dialogue to facilitate the Monument's continued growth in an organized and effective manner, not only on the wall but throughout the plaza. Past violations or mistakes made at any time by anyone do not justify continued violations.

Mr. Buchanan and his team hope to convince the Board of Directors to accept a plan that will facilitate the orderly and controlled evolution of the Monument that will honor all of those veterans that served the cause of freedom in a dignified and proportional manner. We look forward to our meeting on July 27, 2021.

Ken Schoniger, by direction

For Richard Buchanan

¹ See https://library.municode.com/ca/el_dorado_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTAGECOOR_TIT9PUPEMOWE_CH9.54COVEMO_S9.54.010TI