



County of El Dorado

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667

Minutes - Draft

Veterans Affairs Commission

Todd Smith, Vice Chair, District I - Alternate Robert Fischer
Roger Reynolds, District II - Alternate Donna Mullens-Becker
Seth Culver, Chair, District III - Vacant
Ken Welch, District IV - Alternate Tim Thompson
Gary Norton, District V - Alternate Thomas Millham
Jon Brown, VSO, Secretary Ex-Officio
Courtney Frame, Recording Clerk of Veteran Affairs
Commission

Thursday, February 12, 2026

12:00 PM

<https://edcgov-us.zoom.us/j/86378230395>

330 Fair Lane, Building A
Board of Supervisors Chamber
Placerville, CA 95667

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION INSTRUCTIONS: The Commission meeting room will be open to the public. The meeting will continue to be live-streamed via Zoom. By participating in this meeting, you acknowledge that you are being recorded.

To observe the live stream of the Commission meeting go to <https://edcgov-us.zoom.us/j/86378230395>. Members of the public may address the Commission in-person or via Zoom to make a public comment. The public should call into 530-621-7603 or 530-621-7610. The Meeting ID is 863 7823 0395. Please note you will not be able to join the live-stream until the posted meeting start time. If you are joining the meeting via zoom and wish to make a comment on an item, press the "raise hand" button. If you are joining the meeting by phone, press *9 to indicate a desire to make a comment. Speakers will be limited to 3 minutes.

Although the County strives to offer remote participation, be advised that remote Zoom participation is provided for convenience only. In the event of a technological malfunction, the only assurance of live comments being received by the Commission is to attend in person. Except for a noticed teleconference meeting, the Commission reserves the right to conduct the meeting without remote access if there is a malfunction.

If you choose not to observe the Commission meeting but wish to make a comment on a specific agenda item, please submit your comment in writing. You are encouraged to submit your comment in writing by 4:00 PM on the Tuesday before the meeting to ensure the Commission has adequate time to review. Please submit your comment to the Clerk of the Board at edc.cob@edcgov.us. Your comment will be placed into the record and forwarded to Commission members.

PROTOCOLS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment will be received at designated periods as called by the Commission Chair.

Individuals will have three minutes to address the Commission. Except with the consent of the Commission, individuals shall be allowed to speak to an item only once.

Individual Commission members may ask clarifying questions but will not engage in substantive dialogue with persons providing input to the Commission.

If a person providing input to the Commission creates a disruption by refusing to follow Commission guidelines, the Commission Chair may take the following actions:

Step 1. Request the person adhere to Commission guidelines. If the person refuses, the Commission Chair may turn off the speaker's microphone.

Step 2. If the disruption continues, the Commission Chair may order a recess of the Commission meeting.

Step 3. If the disruption continues, the Commission Chair may order the removal of the person from the Commission meeting.

CALL TO ORDER - PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG - 12:01 PM**ROLL CALL**

Present: 9 - Commissioner Norton, Alternate Thompson, Commissioner Welch, Commissioner Millham, Alternate Mullens-Becker, Alternate Fischer, Commissioner Reynolds, Chair Culver and Vice Chair Smith

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS AND WELCOME**ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR**

All items on the Consent Calendar are to be approved by one motion unless a Commission member requests separate action on a specific item including moving items to or from the Consent Calendar and adopt the Agenda and the Consent Calendar for discussion. At the appropriate time as called by the Chair, members of the public may make a comment on matters on the Consent Calendar prior to Commission action.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- 1. 26-0273** Commission to review and approve mileage reimbursement for Veterans Affairs Commissioners for the month of January 2026.

Attachments: [January 2026 MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT](#)

- 2. 26-0274** Commission to review and approve Veterans Affairs Commission January 8, 2026 meeting minutes.

Attachments: [Draft Minutes Veteran Affairs Commission 1-8-26](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Reynolds, seconded by Commissioner Norton to adopt the agenda and approve the consent calendar.

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Norton, Commissioner Welch, Commissioner Reynolds, Chair Culver and Vice Chair Smith

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR

AGENDA ITEMS

3. **26-0275** The Education and Employment Committee will present their recommended goals to the Commission.

Commissioner Mullens-Becker reported that she and Commissioner Fischer met to discuss priorities for the Education and Employment Committee and consulted with VAC Chair Culver, VSO Brown, and Administrative Technician Frame to better understand current veteran needs. After reviewing the committee responsibilities outlined in the VAC Bylaws, they identified several initiatives, including using VAC social media to share education, employment, and financial resources such as CalVet and CALTAP. They also proposed creating a list of veteran-owned businesses in El Dorado County and offering a link for businesses to post job opportunities for veterans. Additional goals include providing information for sole-proprietor business education-such as QuickBooks training and guidance for new business owners-and promoting programs like NorCal Veterans Business Outreach, Boots to Business, and the SBA Veterans Advantage Program. Mullens-Becker obtained a list of veteran-owned sole-proprietor businesses from the Treasurer-Tax Collector's Office. Commissioners expressed support for expanding veteran resources on VAC social media. Fischer and Mullens-Becker plan to visit local colleges to gather more information, and Fischer requested that monthly CalVet College Fee Waiver numbers be added to the Ex-Officio report. When asked about promoting county job openings, Mullens-Becker noted that the county already provides veterans with additional hiring points but that the committee is currently focused on veteran-owned businesses. Culver emphasized the importance of having structured information available for veterans, and Mullens-Becker stated the committee intends to work more closely with the Veteran Services Office. She also hopes to strengthen communication with local veteran organizations to share job opportunities.

4. 26-0324 Commission to review and approve changes to the Transient Occupancy Tax FY 25/26 annual grant allocations.

Commissioner Mullens-Becker reported that the Annual Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Grants will be going before the Board of Supervisors in March for approval of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Annual TOT Grants, which were approved by the VAC last fall. One of the approved grants was awarded to Only Kindness; however, the organization recently notified the VA TOT Committee that they are disbanding their operations and will be declining the funds. Only Kindness had originally been allocated \$15,000. The TOT Committee is proposing that these declined funds be redistributed to two organizations that already participate in the annual TOT grant program. The Military Family Support Group (MFSG) recently requested an increase from their current \$8,000 allocation to better support veterans and their families. The TOT Committee is recommending that MFSG's funding be increased from \$8,000 to \$15,000, and that the Food Bank of El Dorado County allocation be increased from \$10,000 to \$18,000 for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 only. These adjustments would fully utilize the \$15,000 declined by Only Kindness. Mullens-Becker noted that the Food Bank of El Dorado County has been actively serving veterans through food delivery services and could benefit from additional funding to expand its support, similar to MFSG. She stated that the committee feels this is an appropriate and effective way to reallocate the returned funds.

Public Comment: D. Zelinsky

A motion was made by Commissioner Culver, seconded by Commissioner Smith to increase the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 recommended allocation to the Military Family Support Group from \$8,000 to \$15,000 and to increase the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 recommended allocation to the Food Bank of El Dorado County from \$10,000 to \$18,000.

- Yes:** 5 - Commissioner Norton, Commissioner Welch, Commissioner Reynolds, Chair Culver and Vice Chair Smith

EX-OFFICIO REPORT - RECEIVE AND FILE (Brown)

26-0376 Amy Higdon, Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Program Manager, reported that Jonathan Brown, VSO, and Tisha Holy, Veterans Service Representative (VSR) II, are currently attending the California Association of County Veteran Service Officers (CACVSO) Winter Training Conference. They are expected to return to their regular schedules on Tuesday, February 17, 2026. Higdon reported that they hope to bring back valuable information and training for the rest of the Veteran Service Office staff. Next, Higdon reported that the Veteran Service Office has been working on securing the funding needed to complete an additional office for one of the VSRs. The new office will provide clients with increased privacy during their appointments. The Board of Supervisors approved a donation to the Veteran Service Office on January 27, 2026, and construction is expected to begin in early March 2026. Next, Higdon reported that Senate Bill 694 passed and was signed by Governor Newsom yesterday, February 11, 2026. Next, Higdon reported that for the month of January 2026, the Veteran Service Office received 119 walk in clients, 88 scheduled appointments, 303 phone calls, and completed 9 College Fee Waiver applications. Higdon added that a total of 203 College Fee Waiver applications were completed in 2025. Lastly, Higdon reported that there were no changes to the services provided in South Lake Tahoe.

Attachments: [Feb 2026 Ex-Officio Report](#)

COMMITTEE REPORTS - RECEIVE AND FILE

- TOT (Transient Occupancy Tax) (Reynolds) - Commissioner Reynolds stated there was nothing additional to report.
- RULES (Culver/Smith) - Commissioner Smith stated there was nothing to report.
- HOUSING (Welch) - Commissioner Welch stated there was nothing to report.
- LEGISLATIVE (Smith) - Commissioner Smith stated there was nothing to report.
- TRANSPORTATION (Thompson/Whalen) - Commissioner Thompson stated Tim Whalen had a report, but Whalen was unable to attend the meeting.
- BUDGET (Reynolds/Mullens-Becker) - Commissioner Reynolds stated there was nothing to report.
- EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT (Mullens-Becker/Fischer) - Commissioner Culver stated there was nothing additional to report since they had presented at their agenda item.
- OUTREACH (Reynolds) - Commissioner Reynolds reported that he is able to post from the VAC Facebook page to the VAC Instagram page.

Public Comment: D. Zelinsky

COMMUNICATIONS' REPORTS - RECEIVE AND FILE

- **VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING – VETERANS HOUSE COUNCIL (Reynolds) -** Commissioner Reynolds reported that the Veterans Memorial Building (VMB) House Council met on Thursday, February 5, 2026. The House Council discussed the possibility of moving and rebuilding the bar in the lounge. Reynolds noted that they have \$60,000 set aside for the project and that the goal is to redesign the bar to resemble the one at the American Legion. Next, Reynolds reported that other counties have implemented a Meal Tax to raise funds for veterans' buildings, and this idea was presented to the VMB House Council. The Meal Tax is added to property taxes and is calculated by multiplying the amount owed by 0.00125. Next, Reynolds reported that the VMB still needs the maximum occupancy signage posted for each room in the building. Lastly, Reynolds reported that the VMB refrigerator is being replaced due to ongoing issues.
- **AMERICAN LEGION SERVICE OFFICER (Zelinsky) -** David Zelinsky reported that the previous night he had planned to attend the Marine Corps League meeting at the VMB but instead received a call from a homeless veteran on probation whom he has been working with. This veteran had been doing very well since leaving state prison and was preparing to move to Lake County to live with family. However, he learned that his family had passed away in a vehicle accident. Zelinsky and another veteran met him at Raley's to provide support during this crisis. Zelinsky paid for five nights at a hotel for the veteran, who was also receiving kind and supportive messages from extended family members. Next, Zelinsky reported that he was able to use the Veteran Services Office conference room to assist additional veterans in need. The first veteran he helped was facing eviction at the beginning of March, and Zelinsky assisted the family with a Victory Village application to secure housing. While at the VMB, he also stopped by El Dorado Veteran Resources (EDVR) and encountered another veteran he had previously supported. This veteran, who has a large family, had fallen behind on their PG&E payment plan. Zelinsky was able to help bring the account current later that day. Next, Zelinsky then received a call about another homeless veteran living in a remote area who uses a cane due to mobility issues. Zelinsky helped him complete paperwork to request his military service records through the Veteran Services Office and brought him to the library for a Navigation Center interview. Next, Zelinsky reported that in South Lake Tahoe, Commissioner Millham, Commander of American Legion Post 795, assisted a veteran and their family by securing temporary housing for a few days. Next, Zelinsky reported that South Lake Tahoe Housing contacted him about another veteran behind on rent; he plans to request assistance from MFSG to help the veteran get caught up. Next, Zelinsky further reported that he was contacted by the Tahoe Coalition regarding a Marine living in his vehicle and struggling with severe alcoholism, but the individual was arrested before Zelinsky could reach him. Next, Commissioner Millham added that he received a call from Zelinsky to help another veteran with housing. Millham also noted that the weather in South Lake Tahoe has been beautiful, resulting in fewer calls, but he expects an increase in need over the weekend as the weather worsens. Next, Millham reported that a veteran they assisted last month had been jailed but only required new medication to manage PTSD. Millham contacted the jail and was pleased to report that the veteran was released and is now back home. Lastly, Zelinsky reported that Volunteers of America were able to help a homeless veteran secure housing and that the veteran is doing well.

- EDC VETERANS ALLIANCE - Jack Babbitt reported that the El Dorado Veterans Alliance is working on ceremonial ideas for the Memorial Day event in May. He asked that any suggestions for speakers or additional program elements be sent to him so he can bring them to the next Veterans Alliance meeting. Next, Babbitt shared that the new El Dorado County Veterans Monument Criteria is final, and a new application for monument bricks is now available from the Veteran Services Office. Babbitt also reported that the Veterans Alliance is working on improvements to the Veterans Monument within the honor circle. There are some tripping hazards in the current design. He noted that the Alliance's original concept included an atlas of the world, but they are still exploring funding options for that feature. Lastly, Babbitt reported that the Veterans Monument contains two time capsules, and the Alliance is considering adding a third in recognition of the military's 250th anniversary. He is unsure how long the new capsule would remain sealed but stated that the Veterans Alliance is seeking suggestions for what items should be included.
- VA VET CENTER/MILITARY FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP/EL DORADO VETERAN RESOURCES (Whalen) - Tim Whalen was not available to provide a report.
- REGIONAL VETERAN EVENTS - Commissioner Culver stated there was nothing to report.

GOOD OF THE ORDER (COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS)**OPEN FORUM**

Open Forum is an opportunity for members of the public to address the Veteran Affairs Commission on subject matter that is not on their meeting agenda and within their jurisdiction. Public comments during Open Forum are limited to three minutes per person. The Commission Chair may limit public comment during Open Forum.

Public Comment: B. Hill

NEXT MEETING LOCATION, DATE & TIME

March 12, 2026 at 12 PM

3883 Ponderosa Rd

El Dorado County Child Support Services

Shingle Springs, CA 95682

ADJOURNMENT - 12:57