

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: Chief Executive Office

BOARD AGENDA # B-4

Urgent Routine

AGENDA DATE July 21, 2015

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES NO
(Information Attached)

4/5 Vote Required YES NO

SUBJECT:

Approval to Accept the Third Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2014-2015

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Accept the Third Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2014-2015.
2. Thank the Veterans Advisory Commission for their efforts on behalf of the Veterans of Stanislaus County.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Existing staff from the Chief Executive Office and Department of Aging and Veterans Services will continue to provide support to the Veterans Advisory Commission. There is no fiscal impact with acceptance of the Third Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2015-347

On motion of Supervisor O'Brien, Seconded by Supervisor Monteith

and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Chiesa, Monteith, De Martini, and Chairman Withrow

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1) Approved as recommended

2) Denied

3) Approved as amended

4) Other:

MOTION:

ATTEST: 
CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

DISCUSSION:

This document presents the *third Annual Report of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission to the Board of Supervisors for Fiscal Year 2014-2015.*

The Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission was established by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on April 3, 2012. The Commission provides the County's veterans a forum to discuss issues important to their health, welfare and well-being, and to advise the Board of Supervisors and County staff on all matters important to our veterans' community.

The Commission is comprised of seven appointed members: one regular member from each of the five Supervisorial Districts and two members appointed at-large. The at-large members are appointed to annual terms and the five regular members are appointed to alternating two year terms. The Commission elects a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary annually among its membership.

The Commissioners represent the interests of over 27,000 veterans and their families living in Stanislaus County and provide a forum for discussion of all matters of interest to the veteran community.

Monthly meetings of the Veterans Advisory Commission are held on the fourth Monday at 5:00 p.m. Meetings are generally held at the Stanislaus County Institute located at County Center III, 917 Oakdale Road, Modesto. The Commission regularly meets at alternate locations in each Supervisorial District for the convenience of veterans living outside of the Modesto area. Meeting locations and agenda are posted at the Stanislaus County Department of Aging and Veterans Services, 121 Downey Avenue, Modesto, CA.

Seven Commissioners are appointed by members of the Board of Supervisors: one Commissioner from each Supervisorial District, and two at-large Commissioners:

District #1	Richard D. Sylvester
District #2	Wardee R. Bruce
District #3	Richard Barboza
District #4	Richard Edgecomb
District #5	Richard O. Gaytan
At-Large	Joseph Madden
At-Large	Douglas L. Miller (July 2014-February 28, 2015)
	Lawrence M. Johnson (March 1, 2015-present)

The Veterans Advisory Commission conducted its third annual Strategic Planning meeting on February 21, 2015 to review the current year's accomplishments and to identify annual goals for the upcoming year.

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Five priorities were identified by the Commissioners for this year:

1. Develop a Veterans Center Facility "One Stop Shop" Concept and Plan.
2. Host Commission Meetings in different Supervisorial Districts every other month to provide Outreach to veterans throughout the county.
3. Identify and inform veterans of services available to them by publishing information about local veterans' affairs, news, services and social functions through an outreach program.
4. Provide access to transportation to/from veterans' services.
5. Provide education and job placement opportunities for veterans.

The Commission has established four standing committees to address specific priorities of:

- Education and Job Placement
- Facilities
- Outreach
- Transportation

Activities of the Commission and the standing Committees for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 are reported below:

Education and Job Placement Committee

- Job Fairs – The Veterans Advisory Commission participated in a regional job fair hosted by Congressman Jeff Denham on May 7, 2015. The Committee promoted the event to veterans at the Veterans Advisory Commission meetings, and to various veterans groups throughout Stanislaus County.
- Modesto Junior College – Commissioners met with Modesto Junior College's Director of Veterans Services to provide information and awareness as to available services through the county Veterans Service Office.
- California State University (CSU), Stanislaus – Commissioner Wardee Bruce attends the monthly Veterans Association Meeting at CSU, Stanislaus to provide information and awareness as to available services through the county Veterans Service Office.

Efforts to expand the membership within the Education and Job Placement Committee will continue by including other Commissioner members this next year. The Committee plans to increase communication to veterans needing education and job placement services, including new veterans returning from recent duty, and working with Modesto Junior College and CSU, Stanislaus. Additional strategic goals for 2015-2016 include the following:

- Increase visibility at local job fair events
- Gather, consolidate and publish employment related information for veterans on the VAC website
- Connect with other organizations and agencies
- Increase Committee membership

Facilities Committee

A major objective of the Veterans Advisory Commission has been to develop a “one stop” veterans facilities and services center central to Stanislaus County veterans. Many members of the local veterans community recognize an existing disconnection between many veterans and veteran families and the wide variety of services and resources available to them, and to a need for a central location for meeting, business, services and peer-to-peer socialization among veterans. These needs were verified in Needs Assessment analyses conducted in December, 2005 and November, 2012; and in a public workshop on Veterans Facilities Needs conducted on February 2, 2013.

In the past year, the Facilities Committee was committed to the development of an implementation strategy to achieve the goals outlined in the Facility strategy. A four-part strategy was developed as follows:

1. Create a Non-Profit Entity to Accept Contributions
2. Seek Fund Raising and Grant Opportunities
3. Create a Sustainable Financial Model
4. Request Proposals to Provide a Veteran’s Center.

The four-part strategy was presented by the Committee to the Commission and adopted in June, 2014; and presented in the Commission’s Second Annual Report to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on July 15, 2014.

Significant progress has been achieved toward implementation of the four-part strategy in the Commission’s third year.

Outreach Committee

This past year the Committee’s efforts included attending Job Fairs at Modesto Junior College (MJC), visited Stanislaus State and MJC campuses to provide information to veterans and about benefits available to them. The Committee has also collaborated

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with organizations that provide shelter to veterans, such as the Salvation Army and the Community Impact Central Valley Homeless Shelter. Additionally, the Committee attended the Gallo Winery's Veterans Stand-Down and reached out to West Care, Central Valley Veterans and American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 1546.

Transportation Committee

This past year the Transportation Committee developed a partnership with Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA). This transportation agency provides office space and currently facilitates scheduling and dispatching services for veterans to be transported to medical appointments. Currently the rides are provided by volunteer drivers. Additionally, the Transportation Committee met with staff from Alliance Network to inquire whether there is an opportunity to provide funding to hire drivers to transport veterans in need of transportation services. It continues to be a challenge to recruit and retain volunteers who can transport veterans for their appointments.

The Veterans Advisory Commission's third Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 can also be found at <http://www.veteranservices.info>.

POLICY ISSUE:

Approval to accept the third annual Veteran Advisory Commission Report supports the Board's priorities of A Healthy Community and the Efficient Delivery of Public Services by providing a forum to connect local veterans and issues with services, and to illuminate needs of veterans in our community.

STAFFING IMPACT:

Existing staff from the Chief Executive Office and Department of Aging and Veterans will provide support to the Veterans Advisory Commission.

CONTACT:

Patricia Hill Thomas, Chief Operations Officer. Telephone: (209) 525-6333.
Richard Edgecomb, Chairman, Veterans Advisory Commission. Telephone: (209) 558-7825.



ANNUAL REPORT TO THE
STANISLAUS COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015
BY THE

**STANISLAUS COUNTY
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION**

JULY 21, 2015



VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Richard T. Edgecomb
Chairman, District 4

Richard Sylvester, District 1
Wardee R. Bruce, District 2
Richard Barboza, District 3
Richard O. Gayton, District 5
Joseph Madden, At Large
Lawrence M. Johnson, At Large

July 21, 2015

Supervisor Terry Withrow, Chairman
Supervisor William O'Brien
Supervisor Vito Chiesa
Supervisor Dick Monteith
Supervisor Jim DeMartini

Dear Supervisors,

It is with great honor and appreciation that we submit the Third Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2014 – 2015 to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors. With this past year's accomplishments, challenges, and opportunities, our Veteran's Advisory Commission (VAC) has continued to focus on how we can best serve and support those who serve our country. This past year, the efforts by the Commission and many individuals within the veteran communities have contributed to assisting veterans in accessing resources.

This past year our Commission set an outreach goal of having Commission Meetings in each Supervisorial District throughout the county. I'm happy to say that the Commission hosted meetings in each one of the Districts this past year, and we intend to continue having Commission Meetings in different Districts every other month. The cities in which the meetings were held include, District 1 (Oakdale), District 2 (Turlock), District 3 (Salida), District 4 (Modesto) and District 5 (Patterson). These efforts served as a way for veterans throughout the county to hear what the Commission's Mission is and to provide information on what benefits and resources are available to veterans.

This Report includes the progress we've made towards the development of a Veterans Center Facility. The Report also provides an update on the progress of the four-part strategy to develop and sustain a Veterans Center Facility, which includes the exceptional progress of the Commissions Ad Hoc Committee to create a Non-Profit Organization. We are excited and optimistic that we continue to make progress on this very important project to assist our veterans and their families.

I want to thank the Board of Supervisors, all Veteran Service Organizations, my colleagues on the Veteran Advisory Commission, County staff, and the community at large for all the support provided to the Veteran Advisory Commission. The Commission also wants to express our appreciation to the Board of Supervisors for attending the Commissions Meetings at your various Districts. You truly have been supportive!

Sincerely,

Richard Edgecomb, Chairman
Veterans Advisory Commission

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Cover Letter from Chairman Richard Edgecomb

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Introduction

The Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission was established by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on April 3, 2012. The Commission provides the County's veterans a forum to discuss issues important to their health, welfare and well-being, and to advise the Board of Supervisors and County staff on all matters important to our veterans' community.

Mission

To represent all veterans in Stanislaus County by advising the Board of Supervisors and staff on matters pertaining to all veterans.

The Commission is comprised of seven appointed members: one regular member from each of the five Supervisorial Districts and two members appointed at-large. The at-large members are appointed to annual terms and the five regular members are appointed to alternating two year terms. The Commission elects a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary annually among its membership.

Regular meetings of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission are held on the fourth Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. This past year the Commission developed an Outreach Strategy to have their Commission meetings in different Districts every other month to better inform and engage veterans throughout the County.

The Commission has established four standing committees to address specific priorities of:

- Education and Job Placement
- Facilities
- Outreach
- Transportation

Annual Report

This document presents the *third Annual Report of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission to the Board of Supervisors for Fiscal Year 2014-2015*.

This Annual Report presents a brief biography of each Commission member and the Commission's strategic plan and goals, achievements in the past year, and objectives for the coming year.

HONORING OUR VETERANS

HERB MILLER

PEARL HARBOR SURVIVOR, U. S. NAVY VETERAN

At the Veterans Advisory Commission Meeting on April 27, 2015 Chairman Terry Withrow of the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors and the Veterans Advisory Commission honored Mr. Herb Miller in Turlock. Mr. Miller recently celebrated his 100th Birthday.

Mr. Miller spent nine years in active duty in the United States Navy and 24 years in the Navy Reserve.

Mr. Miller survived the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941, during World War II while serving on the USS Detroit where he was a gunner's mate third class (GM3).

Mr. Miller also served on the destroyer USS Vallette and the aircraft carrier USS Franklin, which got closer to the Japanese mainland than any other carrier and was hit by two torpedoes.

Mr. Miller went into the water and helped rescue fellow survivors.

Mr. Miller and his wife, Wilma, have been married for 69 years. After the war, they moved to Redwood City where they raised their three daughters and resided there for almost 50 years.

In 1996, the Millers retired to Covenant Village in Turlock, California, giving Stanislaus County the honor of being home to such an amazing individual.

We thank Mr. Herb Miller for his dedication and service to the United States of America.



Veterans Advisory Commissioners

The Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission was established by the Board of Supervisors on April 3, 2012 and conducted its first meeting on May 17, 2012.

The Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors' Veterans Advisory Commission is comprised of seven members, as follows:

- One member is appointed from each of the five Supervisorial Districts. Nominations are made by each Supervisor and appointed by a majority of the full Board of Supervisors. The appointed Commissioners from each District serve for a two-year term. Commissioners from Districts 2, 4, and 5 are appointed in even-numbered years; Commissioners from District 1 and 3 are appointed in odd-numbered years – each beginning on July 1.
- Two members are appointed from the Stanislaus County veterans community "at-large." Each "at large" Commissioner serves for a term of one year, beginning on July 1st.
- The Commissioners elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary each year.

The members of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission are:

Richard T. Edgecomb, District 4, Chairman

Chairman, Veterans Advisory Commission and Executive Committee

Committees: Facilities (Vice Chairman)
 Outreach
 Transportation

Term: Expires June 30, 2016

Mr. Edgecomb is a United States Army veteran. He also served in the California National Guard and is an active member and past District Commander of the American Legion, serving all of Northern California. He was originally appointed to the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission by Supervisor Dick Monteith, District 4, on May 8, 2012.



Mr. Edgecomb was elected as the first Chairman of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission and serves tirelessly as an advocate for veterans' interests in Stanislaus County. Mr. Edgecomb provides veterans in need with wheelchairs, walkers, hospital beds, medical supplies, clothing, and boxes of food during Christmas. This past year Chairman Edgecomb loaned 20 wheelchairs, many walkers, 12 electric wheelchairs, 9 hospital beds and many boxes of food.

Richard D. Sylvester, District 1

Committees: Facilities (Chairman)
 Term: Expires June 30, 2015

Mr. Sylvester served in the United States Marine Corps and is an active member of the Marine Corp League. He was originally appointed to the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission by Supervisor William O'Brien, District 1, on May 8, 2012. Mr. Sylvester serves as Chairman of the Facilities Committee.



Wardee R. Bruce, District 2

Committees: Education and Job Placement (Chairman)
 Term: Expires June 30, 2016

Mr. Bruce served 30 years in active duty for the United States Navy and retired as a Naval Officer. Mr. Bruce has served as a Commander for the American Legion Post 88 in Turlock, as an Assistant Quartermaster for Veterans of Foreign Wars, Turlock Post 5059, as Chaplain for Disabled American Veterans, Turlock Chapter 74, is a member of Military Officers Association in Merced and has been a Senior Naval Instructor for Turlock High School. Mr. Bruce was appointed by Stanislaus County Supervisor Vito Chiesa, District 2, on August 19, 2014.



Richard Barboza, District 3

Committees: Transportation (Vice-Chairman)
 Term: Expires June 30, 2015

Mr. Barboza served as a Corporal in the United States Army in the Korean War. He is an active member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3199, and the Korean War Veterans Association. Mr. Barboza was appointed by Stanislaus County Supervisor Terry Withrow, District 3, on May 8, 2012. Mr. Barboza also volunteers his time in providing haircuts and beard trims to homebound veterans, in wheelchairs and are bedridden. During this past year Mr. Barboza has provided 68 haircuts and 19 beard trims for these homebound veterans.



Richard O. Gaytan, District 5

Committees: Outreach (Chairman)
 Term: Expires June 30, 2016

Mr. Gaytan is a Vietnam Veteran served ten years on active duty with the United States Army and another ten years in the Reserves retired as an E6/Ssg. Mr. Gaytan is owner and operator of the Westside Veterans Outpost in Newman, California, and served as 12th District Commander for AMVETS, Past-Commander for American GI Forum, Adjutant for Disabled Americans Veterans, Modesto Chapter 26, member of VVA Chapter 391 and VFW Post 7635 was originally appointed by Stanislaus County Supervisor Jim DeMartini on May 8, 2012.



Joseph Madden, Member At Large

Committees: Transportation (Chairman)
 Outreach (Vice-Chairman)
 Term: Expires June 30, 2015

Mr. Madden served in the United States Air Force for eight years and is currently serving in the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary for the past eight years. Mr. Madden is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5059 in Turlock, California. Mr. Madden was appointed by the Stanislaus County Supervisors on May 8, 2012.



Douglas L. Miller, Member At Large

Committees: Education and Job Placement (Chairman)
Facilities

Term: July, 2014-February 28, 2015

Mr. Miller is a proud veteran of the United States Navy. He also served as Vice Commander of American Legion Post 872. Mr. Miller is the Chairman of the Education and Job Placement Committee, and a member of the Facilities Committee of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission. He was originally appointed by the Stanislaus County Supervisors on May 8, 2012.



Lawrence M. Johnson, Member At Large

Committees: Ad Hoc Committee (Co-Chairman)

Term: Expires June 30, 2015

Mr. Johnson is a Korean War Veteran who served three Years in active duty with the United States Army. Mr. Johnson currently serves as the President for the Korean War Veteran Association, Chapter 203 in Turlock, as the Co-Chair of Veterans Advisory Commission Ad Hoc Committee, is on a Steering Committee for Reunions of the Special Category Army Reassigned With Air Force Military Group of Aviation Engineers and as a Commission on Aging Board member representing Veterans in Stanislaus County. Mr. Johnson was appointed by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on March 17, 2015.



County Veterans Services Office (VSO)

Stanislaus County provides services to veterans by offering them, their families, dependents, and survivors, assistance in obtaining federal, state and local benefits through the County's Veterans' Service, Office (VSO.) The County VSO is a Division of the Stanislaus County Department of Aging and Veterans Services.

The Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission has been working diligently during the past year, in collaboration with the County Veteran Services Office and other veterans' organizations, to increase awareness about services and programs available to veterans. Thanks to the increased outreach efforts of the Commission, more veterans have been enrolled by the VSO in the Federal Veterans Administration (VA) system and are now receiving benefits and programs they are entitled to. In addition, the County Veterans Services Office has attended numerous outreach events in the community to contact and assist as many veterans as possible. Despite the efforts of both the Commission and the VSO, there are still many veterans, particularly the ones returning from recent wars, who are not aware of all the Federal benefits available to them.

**Stanislaus County
Veterans Services Office
(209) 558-7380
www.veteranservices.info**

Stanislaus County
Department of Aging and Veterans Services
121 Downey Street, Suite 102
Modesto, CA 95354

Margie Palomino, Director

The current VA service-delivery system has been working on providing more information about the services available for veterans. Even though the VAC and the VSO have done extensive work to connect veterans to all the services they are entitled to, more work needs to be done in this area. A key finding of the Commission's Needs Assessment study conducted last year revealed that many veterans have had difficulty in knowing where to go for help, or did not know that services and benefits are available to them. The Commission has sought to bring existing veterans' organizations and service providers together to create a more cohesive, coordinated network of services and to ensure veterans of all ages are aware of the various services and benefits available to them. The Commission's work in this area will be an on-going effort.

During this next fiscal year, the Commission and the VSO will work collaboratively to continue with their outreach efforts. They will particularly target the outlying areas of the County where access to services is more limited. It is imperative that veterans who are transitioning back into civilian life receive the assistance and the necessary services and support they need to rebuild their lives. Services such as assistance with education costs, job searches, medical, mental health treatment, and housing are essential to ensuring these veterans adapt to a civilian lifestyle as they return to their communities. Connecting veterans to needed benefits and services is a significant step toward ensuring their success in civilian life.

The Commission, the VSO and the County team continue to work to develop the Veterans Center Facility, a “one stop” location for veterans’ services, activities, and referrals. These groups have been working in collaboration with other organizations to develop this project to bring frequently accessed services together with veterans’ social and recreational activities where possible, and to provide referral to services where collocation of programs is not possible. This facility will aid in the communities’ efforts to coordinate all the services and benefits for veterans in Stanislaus County. This facility, which will be a “hub” for veterans in our County will not only provide direct services to veterans, but it will also be a “clearing house” for all veterans to obtain information about services, benefits and opportunities to volunteer and give back to their community. In the past year, the Commission and County Staff have worked to create a realistic and sustainable strategy for funding and operating the project for future consideration of the Board of Supervisors.

Strategic Plan

The Veterans Advisory Commission conducted its third annual Strategic Planning meeting on February 21, 2015 to review the current year's accomplishments and to identify annual goals for the upcoming year. The meeting was facilitated by Christy Almen, with the Community Services Agency.

- **Document Current Priorities**
- **Identify Successful Initiatives from the past year**
- **Identify challenges that impacted their ability to fully achieve the VAC's goals.**
- **List new and on-going issues and objectives to be accomplished**

Commission Priorities

1. Develop a Veterans Center Facility "One Stop Shop" Concept and Plan.
2. Host Commission Meetings in different Supervisorial Districts every other month to provide Outreach to veterans throughout the County.
3. Identify and inform veterans of services available to them by publishing information about local veterans' affairs, news, services and social functions through an outreach program.
4. Provide access to transportation to/from veterans' services.
5. Provide education and job placement opportunities for veterans.

Successful Strategies

Veterans Center Facility. The Commission was successful in the prior year in the development of the Facilities Needs Assessment, and seeks to further develop a strategy to create a sustainable financial model for the creation and on-going operations of a Veterans Center Facility project. The City of Modesto has joined this effort and has expressed support to develop this Veterans Facility. In addition, the Commission developed an Ad Hoc Committee to establish a new non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds for the development and operation of the Veterans Facility.

Communications with veterans has been enhanced to provide feedback to the Commission and to the Board of Supervisors on veterans' issues of concern, and to provide information to veterans about programs and services available to them. The Commission began hosting their monthly meetings in different Supervisorial Districts during this past year to provide outreach efforts to veterans throughout the county. The Commission will continue to host meetings in different Districts on an every other month basis.

Integration between **Job and Employment Service** opportunities have been presented by the California Employment Development Department, with participation in the Veterans Advisory Commission meetings, and sharing of veteran job programs, events, opportunities, etc.

Advocacy for veterans including amendment of County Parks & Recreation fees, statewide Veterans Identification Cards, etc.

Increase **coordination of services and referrals** between multiple programs and services available to veterans and veteran's service organizations, including a significant increase in the number of veteran referrals to services at the County's Veterans Services Office.

Provide **access to transportation** by veterans to events and services by securing two accessible, multi-passenger vans and coordinating transportation dispatch with the Veterans Administration Clinic staff.

Education and Job Placement Committee

Job Fairs

The Veterans Advisory Commission participated in a regional job fair hosted by Congressman Jeff Denham on May 7, 2015. The Committee promoted the event to veterans at the Veterans Advisory Commission meetings, and to various veterans groups throughout Stanislaus County.

Modesto Junior College

Commissioner Wardee Bruce met with Modesto Junior College's Director of Veterans Services to provide information and awareness as to available services through the County Veterans Service Office.

California State University, Stanislaus

Commissioner Wardee Bruce attends the monthly Veterans Association Meeting at CSU Stanislaus to provide information and awareness as to available services through the County Veterans Service Office.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Efforts to expand the membership within the Education and Job Placement Committee will continue by including other Commissioner members this next year. The Committee plans to increase communication to veterans needing education and job placement services, including new veterans returning from recent duty, and working with Modesto Junior College and CSU Stanislaus

- Increase visibility at local job fair events
- Gather, consolidate and publish employment related information for Veterans on the VAC website
- Connect with other organizations and agencies
- Increase Committee membership

Facilities Committee

A major objective of the Veterans Advisory Commission has been to develop a “one stop” veteran’s facilities and services center central to Stanislaus County veterans. Many members of the local veteran community recognize an existing disconnection between many veterans and veteran families and the wide variety of services and resources available to them, and to a need for a central location for meeting, business, services and peer-to-peer socialization among veterans. These needs were verified in Needs Assessment analyses conducted in December, 2005 and November, 2012; and in a public workshop on Veterans Facilities Needs conducted on February 2, 2013.

The Veterans Advisory Commission established a standing Facilities Committee in 2013. In the first year’s work, the Committee worked to validate and refine the needs and to create a concept, draft program and vision for a new Veterans Center Facility. By May of 2013, the Committee presented, and the Veterans Advisory Commission adopted a Veterans Facilities Needs Assessment and Program, along with the Facility strategy. The facility concept was presented to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on June 18, 2013 with the Commission’s First Annual Report.

The Facilities Committee identified several objectives:

- Create a Veterans Center Facility to meet long-term needs that is fiscally sustainable.
- Establish broad support including participation and investment in the Veteran’s Center.
- Seek financial support for public and private partners.
- Create a sustainable financial model for long-term success.
- Co-locate the County’s Area Agency on Aging and Veterans Services offices, and other offices as appropriate, to provide services and funding to the Veteran’s Center project.
- Get broad stakeholder participation and support, including all veterans’ organizations in Stanislaus County.
- Leverage funding from all available sources.

A strategy was developed to achieve the Facilities Committee’s objectives. The four-part strategy was adopted by the Veterans Advisory Commission in June, 2014 and presented to the Board of Supervisors in the Commission’s Second Annual Report on July 15, 2014.

The four-part strategy includes:

1. Create a Non-Profit Entity to Accept Contributions
2. Seek Fund Raising and Grant Opportunities
3. Create a Sustainable Financial Model
4. Request Proposals to Provide a Veteran's Center.

Progress has been achieved toward implementation of the four-part strategy in the Commission's third year.

FACILITY STRATEGY: PART 1

Create a Non-Profit Entity to Accept Contributions

- Specifically to support the Veterans Center Project.
- Create partnerships with all veteran service organizations, including accepting contributions.
- Obtain professional assistance to establish a non-profit entity.
- Establish membership in a governing Board and Bylaws.
- Must be separate from County Government.

At the recommendation of the Facilities Committee, the Chairman of the Veterans Advisory Commission created an Ad Hoc Committee to establish a new non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds for the development and operation of the Veterans Center Facility project. The Ad Hoc Committee met throughout late fall and winter of 2014 and spring of 2015:

- Recruiting participant veterans in the Ad Hoc Committee and obtaining necessary legal assistance;
- Selecting the Ad Hoc Committee leadership roles;
- Developing and adopting bylaws;
- Naming the proposed non-profit organization;
- Preparing and submitting articles of incorporation to the California Secretary of State, and receiving a taxpayer identification number;
- Nominating and electing officers of the proposed non-profit organization;
- Preparation and filing of an application for 501(c)3 non-profit status with the U. S. Internal Revenue Service.

The California Secretary of State has recognized the new **Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County**, and Internal Revenue Service has granted the new Foundation 501(c)3 non-profit status. The next steps will be to transition from the Ad Hoc organizing committee to the new Board of Directors of the Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County and to commence with fund-raising activities.

This is a remarkable effort taken on by Volunteers dedicated to serving our Veterans Community. The New Non-Profit has been created in record time and the Ad Hoc Committee members should be commended for their extraordinary efforts.

The new Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County is fully independent, governed and managed by an independent Board, and will be capable of accepting charitable contributions toward the development and operation of the Veterans Center project.

<p>Veterans Center Ad Hoc Committee</p> <p>Mr. Larry Johnson, Co-Chair Mr. Ray Alli, Co-Chair Mr. Mike Pelucca, Secretary</p>	<p>Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County</p> <p>Mr. Larry Johnson, Chairman Ms. Becky Crow, Executive Director Mr. Mike Pelucca, Secretary/Treasurer Mr. Ray Alli, Board Member</p>
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FACILITY STRATEGY: PART 2
Seek Other Fund Raising and Grant Opportunities

- Seek professional Grant Writer assistance.
- County could issue a "Request For Qualifications" for professional Grant Writer assistance.
- Grant Writer would develop a fund-raising strategy, including "The Ask" for contributions from potential donors.

In the summer of 2014, Stanislaus County issued a Request For Proposals for qualified professional Grant Writers. Two individuals were interviewed and the Veterans Advisory Commission selected Karen Servas for the assignment.

Ms. Servas researched the availability of grant opportunities, finding potential funding for veterans services and operations. No capital project development grants were identified. Ms. Servas is currently preparing two operational (or programs) grant applications for submission during the summer of 2015.

In addition, Stanislaus County has sought State and Federal sources of funds through the offices of the United States Veterans Administration; United States

Congressman Jeff Denham; State Senator Cathleen Galgiani and Assemblyman Adam Gray.

Further assistance in the development of the fund raising strategy is being provided by the Ad Hoc Committee, and will become a primary role of the new non-profit organization, the Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County. The Ad Hoc Committee is being assisted by the City of Modesto Parks, Recreation and Neighborhoods Department in the development of a fund-raising campaign strategy and materials.

FACILITY STRATEGY: PART 3**Create a Sustainable Financial Model**

- Ensure long-term financial success by identifying all funding required initially and for operation of the Veterans Center Facility.
- Secure sources of funds to meet long-term needs.
- Scale the facility plan to meet funding reality.

The Facilities Committee, working with the Ad Hoc Committee, has made significant progress toward achievement of a sustainable financial strategy. The financial model tests the scope and cost of the facility plan, including one-time and annual (recurring) operational costs against the available funding sources by all partners in the project, plus any revenue-generating potential estimated by private rental use of the assembly facilities. Stanislaus County staff have assisted development of the plan strategy, and work is nearly complete to verify the commitments of the partner agencies.

Stanislaus County Chief Executive Office staff expects to present the completed sustainable financial model to the Board of Supervisors during the summer of 2015 along with recommendations for proceeding with the Veterans Center Facility project.

Envisioned is a partnership between the County, the City of Modesto and the new non-profit Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County. The Facility Committee and the staff support team have adopted a strategy that seeks a long term 10 year lease of a privately owned property that can be re-purposed for the Veterans One-Stop Center.

The Veterans Commission understands that the Sustainable Financial Model and the consideration to issue a Request for Proposals for property options will

be considered by the Board of Supervisors later in the summer of 2015. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be proposed to establish this partnership.

The fourth part of the four-part Facility Strategy is to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) from property owners and developers for proposals for a Veterans Center Facility. The RFP will be adjusted to reflect the scope, scale and operation of the Veterans Center project based on the result of the Sustainable Financial Model developed in the third part of the strategy.

FACILITY STRATEGY: PART 4**Request for Proposals to Provide the Veterans Center**

- Consider create partnership and donation opportunities.
- Consider potential tax incentives for donors.
- Find creative opportunities to partner with property owners and other vendors.
- Seek proposals from property owners.
- Long-term lease of existing commercial properties to be renovated into the Veterans Center Facility.
- Property and improvement contributions.
- Possible "lease-to-own" arrangement.
- Consider both short-term and long-term offers as fund raising efforts continue – with the goal of a permanent Veterans Center solution.

The RFP will identify the needs of the facility in detail, including the number and size of rooms, use of spaces, finishes and spatial characteristics, relationship between spaces, security measures, location criteria, and all other "standards" by which individual proposals will be measured and evaluated.

The RFP will also identify the proposal submission and evaluation process, deadlines, selection, the project team and interaction (approvals) required by principal stakeholders.

Outreach Committee

This past year the Committee's efforts included attending Job Fairs at Modesto Junior College (MJC), visited Stanislaus State and MJC campuses to provide information to veterans and about benefits available to them. The Committee has also collaborated with organizations that provide shelter to veterans, such as the Salvation Army and the Community Impact Central Valley Homeless Shelter. Additionally, the Committee attended the Gallo Winery's Veterans Stand-Down and reached out to West Care, Central Valley Veterans and American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 1546.

Newsletter

The Outreach Committee continues to provide a newsletter to make information about veterans services and events available to local veterans and their families. The newsletter provides information about legislative matters, Veterans Advisory Commission activities and local service club events and other general interest stories.



Media

The Veterans Advisory Commission issues notices to local print media about upcoming meetings and events.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

The Committee identified objectives to continue efforts to reach out to senior and disabled veterans, homeless veterans, new veterans returning from Middle East conflicts and existing veterans service clubs, increase outreach to younger veterans, female veterans and homeless veterans. The Committee's goals include the following:

- Use of social media to improve communication with Veterans
- Increase Committee membership
- Build relationships with cities and other agencies

Transportation Committee

This past year the Transportation Committee developed a partnership with Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA). This transportation agency provides office space and currently facilitates scheduling and dispatching services for veterans to be transported to medical appointments. Currently the rides are provided by volunteer drivers. Additionally, the Transportation Committee met with staff from Alliance Network to inquire whether there is an opportunity to provide funding to hire drivers to transport veterans in need of transportation services. It continues to be a challenge to recruit and retain volunteers who can transport veterans for their appointments.

The volunteer drivers continued to provide transportation to eligible home-bound veterans to medical appointments within Stanislaus County and throughout Northern California. Despite the challenges of recruiting and retaining volunteer drivers the following number of veterans was transported to medical appointments.



- Palo Alto 41 rides
- Livermore 64 rides
- Modesto Clinic 18 rides
- Menlo Park respite care 7 rides
- Fresno 1 ride

Service is provided by calling **(209) 200-9021** 48 hours in advance on a first-come, first-served basis. Scheduling is provided by Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (CTSA) in coordination with veteran's appointments at various medical providers.

Volunteer drivers are always needed, and the Transportation Committee created flyers and also had an article in the Modesto Bee to help seek additional volunteer assistance and to announce availability of the door-to-door van services to the veteran community.

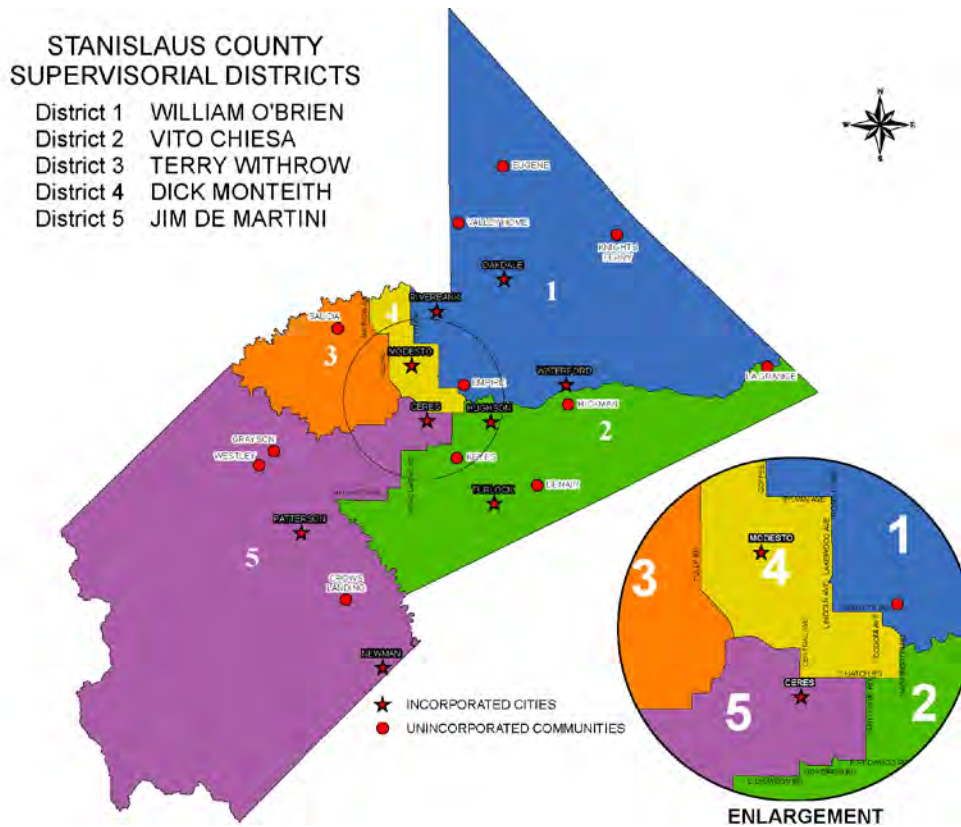
Goals for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

The Transportation Committee will continue to seek funding opportunities to provide paid positions for drivers to transport veterans who are homebound. Additionally, the following goals will also be implemented:

- Increase the number of Volunteer drivers and escorts
- Continue conversations with Veterans Administration and Consolidated Transportation Services Agency to improve Transportation efforts

Contact Your Commissioner

Chairman Richard T. Edgecomb, District 4	(209) 521-0093
Richard Sylvester, District 1	(209) 848-4855
Wardee R. Bruce, District 2	(209) 634-3604
Richard Barboza, District 3	(209) 529-2295
Richard Gaytan, District 5	(209) 417-9330
Joseph Madden, Member At Large	(209) 914-4764
Larry M. Johnson, Member At Large	(209) 543-9244



Stanislaus County Veterans Services Office

Department of Aging and Veterans Services (209) 558-7380
 121 Downey Avenue, Suite 102
 Modesto, CA 95354
 Margie Palomino, Director





STANISLAUS COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

**APPROVAL TO ACCEPT THE THIRD ANNUAL VETERANS ADVISORY
COMMISSION REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015**

JULY 21, 2015

STANISLAUS COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

PATRICIA HILL THOMAS
STANISLAUS COUNTY
CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

STANISLAUS COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

***“The Willingness of America’s Veterans to Sacrifice For
Our Country Has Earned Them Our Lasting Gratitude”***

-- Jeff Miller



STANISLAUS COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

RICHARD T. EDGECOMB

VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION, DISTRICT 4
CHAIRMAN

VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

RICHARD T. EDGECOMB, DISTRICT 4, CHAIRMAN

RICHARD D. SYLVESTER, DISTRICT 1

WARDEE R. BRUCE, DISTRICT 2

RICHARD BARBOZA, DISTRICT 3

RICHARD O. GAYTAN, DISTRICT 5

JOSEPH MADDEN, MEMBER AT LARGE

LAWRENCE M. JOHNSON, MEMBER AT LARGE

The Veterans Advisory Commission was established by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on April 3, 2012.

The Commission's Mission:

"To represent all veterans in Stanislaus County by advising the Board of Supervisors and staff on matters pertaining to all veterans."

Progress made in past year:

1. Veterans Center Facility planning progressing
2. Continued Outreach Efforts to Veteran communities
3. Collaborative transportation Efforts
4. Collaborative Efforts with Local Colleges

STANISLAUS COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

PETE DUENAS
STANISLAUS COUNTY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

The Commission established four priorities:

1. Develop a Veteran's Center Facility "one stop shop" concept and plan.
2. Create an outreach program to identify and inform veterans of services, affairs, news and social functions.
3. Provide access to transportation to/from various veteran's services.
4. Provide education and job placement opportunities for veterans.

The Veterans Advisory Commission conducted a third annual Strategic Planning Session on February 21, 2015 to:

- Document Current Priorities.
- Identify Successful Initiatives from the past year.
- List new and on-going issues and objectives to be accomplished.

Education and Job Placement Committee

Efforts have been to participate in Job Fairs and the Stanislaus State and Modesto Junior College Veterans Services monthly meetings.

1. Increase visibility at local job fair events.
2. Gather, consolidate and publish employment related information for Veterans on the VAC website.
3. Connect with other organizations and agencies.
4. Increase Committee membership.

Facilities Committee

Four-Part Facility Strategy Progress:

1. Create Non-Profit Entity to Accept Contributions
 - Ad Hoc Committee created to establish non-profit organization (*Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County*)
 - Submitted articles of incorporation to California Secretary of State and received taxpayer identification number
 - Received 501(c)3 non-profit status with U.S Internal Revenue Service

Facilities Committee

Four-Part Facility Strategy Progress:

2. Seek Other Fund Raising and Grant Opportunities
 - Professional Grant Writer hired
 - Grant applications pending submission
3. Create a Sustainable Financial Model
 - County, City and Non – Profit Partnership

Facilities Committee

Four-Part Facility Strategy Progress:

4. Request For Proposals to provide the Veterans Center
 - Pending completion, Board of Supervisors' approval late summer

Outreach Committee

Continued efforts to reach out to veterans at Stanislaus State and Modesto Junior College. VAC Meetings are being held in different Supervisorial Districts every other month.

1. Use of social media to improve communication with Veterans.
2. Increase Committee membership.
3. Build relationships with cities and other agencies..

STANISLAUS COUNTY VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

Outreach Committee

Brochure

Employment Assistance
EDU Modesto (209) 576-6110
 • Job Searches
 • Resume Assistance
 • Employment Benefits

Education
CEJUH (209) 942-4754
 SOURCE@CALSTATE.CA.GOV
 • Veterans Retraining Assistance Program (VRAP) (209) 942-4551
 SOURCE@CALSTATE.CA.GOV
 • VA Vocational Rehab Program
 Chapter 31 (209) 942-4551
 • Modesto Junior College Vet Rep
 (209) 925-6107
 • CSU Stanislaus Vet Rep (209) 667-0881
 CSU@STANISLAUS.CSUCALSTATE.EDU

Health Services
 • VAModesto Clinic (209) 577-6230
 • Vet Center Modesto (209) 577-6733 (Outreach Services)
 • VAMC Palo Alto, Ca. (805) 493-1890 (209) 477-6087
 • VAMC Merced Park District Recovery Program (209) 637-8754 (209) 737-2549
 • VA Suicide Hot Line (1.800) 273-8223
 • Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (209) 668-6234
 • Medically Indigent Assistance (MIA Program) (209) 654-7333

Services Available to Veterans
 • VAHS Personal Care Services (209) 467-2224
 • VA Prosthetic Center Palo Alto, Ca. (209) 527-7300
 • VA Debt Center Palo Alto, Ca. (805) 627-0474
 • VA Insurance Center SUI / VVAX (209) 437-9947
 • Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (209) 822-4520
 • Oper of Issues in Agent Charge etc (209) 743-8837
 • VA Education Loans (209) 738-2396

California Department of Veterans Affairs
 • CDA Veterans Treatment Centers (209) 652-9923
 • Cal Vet Home Loans (209) 323-4576
 • CDA Student Fee Waiver Programs (209) 652-9923

Newsletter

Stanislaus County
Veterans Advisory Commission

Welcome to the First Edition of the Veterans Advisory Commission's Newsletter

On April 3, 2012, the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors established the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission (VAC), comprised of seven members, one from each Supervisorial District and 2 at large public member with consulting terms.

The Commission meets once a month, on the fourth Monday, at the Modesto Library at 5:30 P.M. Meetings are open to the public, and all veterans are strongly encouraged to attend.

The purpose of the Commission is to represent all veterans in Stanislaus County by advising the Board of Supervisors and County staff on matters relating to veterans and provide the public with information and receive comments relative to veterans' issues.

The Commission has focused their efforts in four strategic areas:

- Define facility purpose/needs within Stanislaus County and implement a strategy to address those needs;
- Identify and partner with existing education and job placement programs;
- Develop and implement an outreach strategy;
- Increase access for veterans to transportation.

For more information to get involved in one of the four Committee meetings, please contact Jim Greer, Veterans Services Officer at (209) 558-7580.

Stanislaus Council of Governments recognizes Volunteer Veteran Transportation Service

On Wednesday, March 17, Commissioner Jane Madden was recognized by the Stanislaus Council of Governments for his efforts in acquiring two vans that are used to take homebound aging veterans to Bay Area medical appointments.

For five years, Joe, a 75 year old veteran, and his brother Richard, have used their own car and gas to take veterans to the Department of Veterans Affairs clinic in Livermore and Palo Alto. These homebound veterans are generally too frail to withstand the daily trips provided by Stanislaus County and the VA outpatient clinic in Modesto, but not sick enough for very costly ambulance rides.

A year ago, a joint effort of local and federal agencies provided donations of the two vans, with the VA covering the cost of fuel and repairs.

The newly named Stanislaus Veterans Medical Transport Program provides door-to-door service for those needing extra care throughout the County, approximately 80 veterans are eligible for the special transport service.

"We wanted to pay tribute to the individual who saw a critical need in our community and did something about it," Stan COG Director Carlos Tamayo said at the ceremony.

We agree, Great job Joe!

Upcoming Meetings

- Veterans Advisory Commission meets 4th Monday of the month, at 5:30 p.m. in the Modesto Library, Eastmont Community Room.
- Facility Committee meets 3rd Wednesday of the month, at 11:00 a.m., 10th Street Place, Modesto.
- Educational Committee meets on various days/times. Contact Douglas Miller for more information.
- Transportation Committee meets 4th Monday of the month, 11:00 a.m., 125 Downey Avenue, Suite 102, Modesto.
- Outreach Committee meets 4th Monday of the month, 11:00 a.m., 102 Downey Avenue, Suite 102, Modesto.

Contact Information

- District #1 - Richard Swytter (209) 848-4855
- District #2 - Vacant
- District #3 - Richard Bobson (209) 228-2295
- District #4 - Richard Edgemois (209) 511-8093
- District #5 - Richard Gaultier (209) 862-3755
- Member at Large - Joseph Madden (209) 531-4935
- Member at Large - Douglas Miller (209) 553-2945

Page 1

Transportation Committee

Partnership with Consolidated Transportation Services Agency developed to assist with scheduling and dispatching services.

1. Increase the number of Volunteer drivers and escorts.
2. Continue conversations with Veterans Administration and Consolidated Transportation Services Agency to improve Transportation



Transportation Committee

131 trips have been provided for veterans to/from appointments since July, 2014:

- VA Livermore Hospital: 64 trips
- VA Palo Alto Hospital: 41 trips
- Modesto Area Facilities: 18 trips
- Other destinations: 8 trips

Transportation Committee

Completely volunteer-based services



***Make a difference for a Homebound Veteran
Be a volunteer!***

VA PAHCS VA HEALTH CARE
Supports Military Public Health Care Excellence in the 21st Century

You can make a difference for homebound Veterans by volunteering for any of the positions listed below. You can volunteer as little as one day a week.

We will work around your schedule!

Volunteer Driver



Assist Veterans by picking them up at their home and driving them to their medical appointments in the Veteran Vans.

- Training will be provided
- Valid California Drivers License and clean DMV report required
- Physical and background check paid for by the VA

Escort

Assist Veterans from their home into the van, medical appointment and back into their home.

- Orientation will be provided
- Background check and lab work paid for by the VA



Scheduling Desk



Assist with scheduling rides and drivers for the Veterans to their medical appointments in the VA Palo Alto Health Care System.

- Orientation and Training will be provided
- Background check and lab work paid for by the VA

**If you are interested in becoming a volunteer please call
Jammu Owens at (925) 449-6448 or email: Jammu.Owens@va.gov**

How to Participate:

Monthly meetings of the Veterans Advisory Commission are held on the ***fourth Monday of each month:***

County Center III
921 County Center Drive, Modesto & the
Commission also meets in different Districts
every other month
5:30 p.m.

Monthly meetings of each Committee are also held.

For Further Information:

Contact the Stanislaus County Veteran Services Office:

(209) 558-7380

121 Downey Avenue, Suite 104
Modesto, CA 95354

<http://www.veteranservices.info/>

Next Steps:

- Objectives of adopted **Four Part Strategy** reaching completion, including the Sustainable Financial Model
- The Sustainable Financial Model – A Collaborative **Plan** to support a 10 Year Lease for a One-Stop Veterans Service Center
- The Plan will be presented to the Board of Supervisors soon
- Approval of the Sustainable Financial Model will lead to a recommendation to issue a Request for Proposals to property owners for proposals for a Veterans Service Center

Recommendations:

1. Accept the Third Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2014-2015.
2. Thank the Veterans Advisory Commission and the Ad Hoc Committee for their efforts on behalf of the Veterans of Stanislaus County.

Thank You!!

Questions / Comments