

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

DEPT: Chief Executive Office

BOARD AGENDA #: B-14

AGENDA DATE: August 30, 2016

SUBJECT:

Approval to Accept the Fourth Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2016-465

On motion of Supervisor O'Brien, Seconded by Supervisor Withrow
and approved by the following vote,

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

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: 
ELIZABETH A. KING, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

File No.

**THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
AGENDA ITEM**

DEPT: Chief Executive Office
Urgent Routine

BOARD AGENDA #: B-14

AGENDA DATE: August 30, 2016

CEO CONCURRENCE: *pht*

4/5 Vote Required: Yes No

SUBJECT:

Approval to Accept the Fourth Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Accept the Fourth Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

DISCUSSION:

This document presents the *Fourth Annual Report of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission to the Board of Supervisors for Fiscal Year 2015-2016*.

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 of 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 it's 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 5:30 p.m. Meetings rotate from site to site within the County. 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.

Approval to Accept the Fourth Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

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

| | |
|------------|---------------------|
| District 1 | William Johnson |
| District 2 | Wardee R. Bruce |
| District 3 | Richard Barboza |
| District 4 | Richard Edgecomb |
| District 5 | Richard O. Gaytan |
| At-Large | Joseph Madden |
| At-Large | Lawrence M. Johnson |

Activities of the Commission and the standing Committees for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 are reported below:

Education and Job Placement Committee

One of the Committee's goals for this past year was to increase visibility at local job fair events. Commissioner Wardee Bruce has attended several Job Fairs this past year and has provided information to veterans who are seeking Educational opportunities and employment. Below are the Job Fairs in which Mr. Bruce has participated:

- Educational Job Fair at Modesto Technical College
- Congressman Denham's Job Fair a Modesto Civic Center
- Heavy Equipment Job Fair
- Ag Center and Farmers Job Fair
- Plumbers Unions Job Fair

Commissioner Bruce continues to participate in the monthly Veterans Association Meeting at California State University, Stanislaus to provide information on available resources for Stanislaus County Veterans.

Additionally, Mr. Bruce has attended the monthly Veterans Employment Commission Meeting and the monthly Employment Development Department Committee Meeting to collaborate and provide information on employment opportunities for Veterans.

This past year Commissioner Bruce has made efforts to connect with other organizations within Stanislaus County who provide resources, employment and education opportunities to veterans.

Facilities Committee

The Veterans Advisory Commission identified the need for development of a "one-stop" veteran's facilities and services center centrally located for the County's veterans as a primary goal early in the formation of the Commission. The Veterans Facilities Committee was established with three members of the Commission. The Committee was first tasked with updating and surveying veterans groups and refining the scope and scale of needs for a proposed Veterans Center project, and the facility concept was presented to the Commission and to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors in June, 2013. The Veterans Center concept envisioned broad participation of public and private organizations, including the City of

Approval to Accept the Fourth Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Modesto, Stanislaus County and private contributions from veteran's groups and donors, to develop a single place shared by all veterans for services, support and social activities.

The Veterans Center concept approved by the Commission contemplates the development of a shared-use meeting hall and conference area with an adjoining full-service kitchen and lounge, with adjacent service offices supporting veterans. The Veterans Center will provide convenient access to services for veterans benefits, referral for health services, education, job placement and training, recruitment services, housing benefits, services for seniors, adult protective services, in-home supportive services, general assistance eligibility, transportation assistance and other services. These services will be provided in offices adjacent to the Veterans Hall and Conference Area to be occupied by the Stanislaus County Department of Aging and Veterans Services, Stanislaus County Community Services Agency and MOVE (formerly the Stanislaus Consolidated Transportation Services agency.) Referrals to other services will be offered by the County Veterans Services Office to services provided off-site, such as to the Veterans Administration Clinic system.

The team carefully considered the ability of the partnership to raise sufficient funding to support the purchase and/or development of a new building, and ultimately opted to recommend seeking a lease of 30,000-to-65,000 square feet of space (subject to the availability of suitable spaces in the local real estate market) for a term of 10-years, with options to extend the lease beyond the original term. The lease term would allow for additional fund raising opportunities toward the ultimate goal of developing a permanent, longer-term facility solution, but allows the Commission to fulfill its goals more expeditiously.

In 2014, the Facilities Committee developed a Four-Part Strategy to implement the Veteran's Center plan. The Four-Part Strategy was reviewed and approved by the Veterans Advisory Commission in June, 2014 and approved by the Board of Supervisors in July, 2014.

Each step of the Four Part Strategy was addressed in 2015. The Veterans Advisory Commission appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to explore organization of a non-profit entity to conduct fund raising and accept donations for the development of the Veterans Center project. In summary of 2015, the *Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County* was established, bylaws were established, a Board of Directors and staff were appointed, the *Foundation* was established and received 501(c)3 tax-exempt status was granted by the Internal Revenue Service.

In early 2015 the County sought grant funding opportunities. Unfortunately, it was determined that grants for operation of such a facility were available, but no grant opportunities could be identified to assist with the development of the facility project.

The Facilities Committee working with County Staff established a consolidated pro forma for project development and initial operating costs, and identified the projected cost of the proposed Veterans Center project and the available sources of funding. The pro forma revenues and expenses were instrumental in balancing the overall scope of the project within a defined budget, and the pro forma became the basis for the refined facility plan.

In the fall of 2015, the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors approved the conceptual plan and authorized staff to proceed with issuance of a Request For Proposals to provide the Veterans Center. Seven proposals were received in early November, and a Proposal Evaluation Team methodically evaluated each proposal. The evaluation process narrowed to

two favored building proposals, keeping one proposal to share use of a banquet facility as an alternative. The final proposals were developed by the Owners in February, 2016. Ultimately, one proposal best met all of the Facilities Committee's criteria, including price, location, and scope/amenities. The selected proposal is at Sylvan Square, 3500 Coffee Road, Modesto owned by Stone Brothers.

The final site selection was presented at the March 2016 Veterans Advisory Commission meeting and to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on April 19, 2016.

Since the facility selection was announced, County staff, the Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County and the City of Modesto have been working with the Chairman of the Veterans Advisory Commission to finalize lease agreements, formalize subleases and operating agreements and to develop plans and design details. The property owner has initiated demolition of the space, and the construction plans for the new Veterans Center have been issued a Building Permit by the City of Modesto.

Outreach Committee

This past year the Committee made significant progress in developing partnerships with cities in Stanislaus County. The Committee has collaborated with the communities of Oakdale, Patterson, Newman and Modesto to assist homeless veterans. These collaborative efforts have assisted some homeless veterans to secure shelter or housing. Through these community partnerships the Committee has provided available resource information for veterans.

The Committee has also been attending various Job Fairs throughout the County, to provide information to veterans on available benefits to them. Committee members have also been attending the Focus on Prevention Initiative Meetings to understand and advocate how veterans can be considered for the Prevention Initiative.

Committee members have joined the Veterans Employment Committee (VEC), this Committee assists veterans in finding employment, provides veterans with resources and Salvation Army Clothing Vouchers.

The Committee membership has increase this past year, and they continue to provide opportunities for others to join the Committee by promoting their efforts in various meetings that the Committee members attend.

Transportation Committee

This past year the Veterans Transportation Committee continued to collaborate with staff from MOVE (formerly Consolidated Transportation Services Agency), the Veterans Services Office (VSO) and the Veterans Administration (VA) Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC). In coordination with MOVE, volunteer drivers have continued to provide transportation to eligible home-bound veterans to medical appointments within Stanislaus County and throughout Northern California. The following are the activities and accomplishments of the committee during the year:

Approval to Accept the Fourth Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Transportation to Medical Appointments: (113 Total)

- Modesto VA Clinic 20
- French Camp VA Clinic 3
- Livermore VA Hospital 63
- Palo Alto VA Hospital 17
- Menlo Park VA Hospital 8
- Other 2

This past year there were 71 denials due to the difficulty of recruiting and retaining volunteer drivers. There were only four volunteer drivers this past year.

With the continued challenges of recruiting and retaining volunteer drivers, the Transportation Committee has begun working toward having the VA transfer the vehicles and the transportation operations to the County's Veterans Services Office. The Board will be asked to consider and approve this transfer in a separate action on August 30, 2016.

It is anticipated that transferring the transportation operations to the county and MOVE, it would assist in streamlining the application process to get the volunteer drivers started much quicker. MOVE would continue to provide the scheduling and oversee the volunteers. The Veterans Services Office will assist volunteers to go through Stanislaus County's volunteer orientation process. In addition, MOVE has received approval for a grant to hire a Volunteer Coordinator who will assist with recruiting volunteers for the Veterans Transportation program.

POLICY ISSUE:

The Veterans Advisory Commission was established by the Board of Supervisors to advise the Board of Supervisors and County staff on all matters important to our veterans' community. The annual report provides an opportunity for the Commission to inform the Board of Supervisors on the Commission's work and actions during the year.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item has no additional Fiscal Impact to the County.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' PRIORITY:

Approval to accept the Fourth Annual Veterans 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 for 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 PERSON:

Richard Edgecomb, Chairman, Veterans Advisory Commission. Telephone: (209) 558-7825.

ATTACHMENT(S):

1. Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Annual Report Of The Veterans Advisory Commission

Attachment 1



**FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION
TO THE STANISLAUS COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

AUGUST 30, 2016





VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

*Richard T. Edgecomb
Chairman, District 4*

William Johnson, District 1

Wardlee Bruce, District 2

Richard Barboza, District 3

Richard O. Gaytan, District 5

Joseph Madden, At Large

Larry Johnson, At Large

August 30, 2016

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

Dear Supervisors:

It's been another exciting and rewarding year for the Veterans Advisory Commission! My colleagues on the Veterans Advisory Commission and I submit to you, Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors, the Fourth Annual Veterans Advisory Commission Report for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. In this report you will see the accomplishments and opportunities we've had in representing veterans in our community. We continue to be honored to be able to serve and support those who served our country.

This past year the Commission again set forth a goal to continue to have Commission Meetings in each Supervisorial District throughout the County. I'm very happy to say that the Commission hosted meetings in District 1 (Riverbank), District 2 (Hughson), District 3 (Salida), District 4 (Modesto), and District 5 (Patterson). Having the Commission Meetings at the various Districts has given the Commission the opportunity to hear what some of the challenges veterans have within our communities.

With your leadership and support, this Report includes information on the site selection for the "one-stop" Veterans Center Facility that we've been working towards for the past several years. My Commission colleagues and I are very thankful that this Veterans Center is becoming a reality. We also want to thank the City of Modesto and the Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County for their support in assisting with the development of this Veterans Center.

I want to thank the Board of Supervisors, all Veterans Service Organizations, my colleagues on the Commission, County staff and the community at large for their continued support provided to the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission. I hope to see all of the Board of Supervisors at the celebration for the Veterans Center Facility on Veterans Day, November 11, 2016!

Sincerely,


Richard Edgecomb, Chairman
Veterans Advisory Commission

STRIVING TO BE THE BEST COUNTY IN AMERICA

**FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION
TO THE STANISLAUS COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

INTRODUCTION

The Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission ("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.

Regular meetings of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission are held on the fourth Monday of each month (except December) at 5:30 p.m. This past year the Commission developed an Outreach Strategy to have their Commission Meetings in different Supervisorial 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

This document presents the fourth *Annual Report of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission to the Board of Supervisors for Fiscal Year 2015-2016*. This report provides an update of the Veterans Advisory Commission activities and its progress

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.

MEET THE VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSIONERS

Richard Edgecomb District 4, Chairman
Committees: Facilities (Vice Chairman)
Outreach
Transportation

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.

William Johnson District 1
Committees: Outreach

On July 28, 2015, William Johnson became the newest member of the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission representing District 1. Mr. Johnson was a proud member of the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam conflict and mustered out in 1969 at the rank of corporal. In the 1980's he became heavily involved in Veterans affairs in Tuolumne County and served as commander, quartermaster, adjutant and service officer for Keith Dale Wann, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4748 in Tuolumne, California. Bill is currently serving as Chaplain of the Modesto Bill King Post 019 of the



Marine Corps League, a member of Hughson American Legion Post 872, a lifemember of the VFW and a trustee with Romaine Schell Post 2922 of Oakdale. He is also serving on the Commission's Outreach Committee and plans to get more involved in other commission projects and committees.

FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Wardee R. Bruce District 2
Committees: Education and Job Placement, Chairman

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

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 who are bedridden.



Richard O. Gaytan District 5
Committees: Outreach, Chairman

Mr. Gaytan is a Vietnam Veteran who served ten years on active duty with the United States Army and another ten years in the Reserves, then 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 De Martini on May 8, 2012.



FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Joseph Madden Commissioner At Large
Committees: Transportation, Chairman
 Outreach

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.



Lawrence Johnson Commissioner At Large
Committees: Facilities Committee, Chairman

Mr. Johnson is a Korean War Veteran who served three active tours of duty with the United States Army. Mr. Johnson currently serves as the President for the KoreanWar 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 StanislausCounty. Mr. Johnson was appointed by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on March 17, 2015.



THE STANISLAUS COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES OFFICE

Shortly after the Civil War, veterans began to organize by forming associations to advocate for government benefits for their comrades who were physically or mentally injured as a result of their wartime service. These veterans service organizations advocated at the state and county level for help for veterans. In the beginning, the states and counties responded by establishing commissions, boards and committees to assist their veterans. This led to the establishment of a system known as County Veterans Service Offices (CVSO). The CVSO system is the most widely used model to deliver services to and assist veterans in obtaining federal and state benefits.

Established in 1924, the Stanislaus County Veterans Services Office was the first CVSO in California and has been providing services to veterans and their families ever since. Recognizing the need to increase awareness about the programs and services that are available to veterans and their families, the County Veterans Services Office has been working closely with the Commission to bring these services to veterans in need. Thanks to the continued outreach efforts of the Commission, more veterans have been enrolled by the CVSO in the Federal Veterans Administration (VA) system and have access to the benefits and programs they are entitled to. In addition, members of the Commission, working closely with the CVSO and other community partners are striving to address the issue of homelessness among the veteran population and have succeeded in securing housing for several veterans over the past 6 months.

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 CVSO 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 in 2014 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 CVSO will work collaboratively to continue with their outreach efforts. The CVSO will continue to target the new generation of veterans who are transitioning back into civilian life by insuring that they 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. The CVSO is also committed to targeting the seasoned generation of veterans and their spouses and/or widows who are now or will soon be residing in assisted living facilities or in need of in-

FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

home care by aggressively expanding outreach efforts to senior living, assisted living and hospice care facilities. The goal is to educate care providers and administrators about the services provided by the CVSO and potential benefits available to their residents.

The CVSO and the Commission are proud to announce the approval of the long-awaited Stanislaus Veterans Center that will feature 37,547 square feet of space for a meeting hall, conference area and one-stop veterans services center in Sylvan Square, at the northeast corner of Sylvan Avenue and Coffee Road in Modesto. The project will give veterans groups a 300-seat hall for sit-down dinners and dances; full-service kitchen; lounge; seven-room conference center; and offices for County Veterans Services, the Area Agency on Aging, Community Services Agency Adult programs and transportation for eligible veterans.

The Commission's New Outreach Activities for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 are:

- Weekly outreach presentations in the community
- Monthly participation in the Stanislaus County Veterans Treatment Court
- Partnership with the Back-to-School Brigade to distribute donated school supplies to veterans and their families
- Veteran outreach letters sent to veterans referred from outside agencies
- Expanded social media presence

ACTIVITIES OF THE VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission has four standing committees including the Education/Job Placement Committee, Facilities Committee, Outreach Committee and the Transportation Committee. In 2014, the Veterans Advisory Commission established an Ad Hoc Committee to explore and aid in the establishment of an independent non-profit entity for the purpose of raising funding and support the a proposed Veterans Center Project. In the summer of 2015, the Ad Hoc Committee's work was completed with the election of the first independent Board of the *Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County*, and the Chairman of the Veterans Advisory Commission thanked and excused the Ad Hoc Committee members. The new Foundation continues to serve to raise awareness of the Veterans Center facility project and to seek charitable contributions toward its development.

Education and Job Placement Committee

Members: Wardee Bruce, Chairman

One of the Committee's goals for this past year was to increase visibility at local job fair event. Commissioner Wardee Bruce has attended several job fairs this past year and has provided information to veterans who are seeking educational opportunities and employment.

Mr. Bruce represented the Stanislaus County Veterans Advisory Commission at:

- Educational Job Fair at Modesto Technical College
- Congressman Denham's Job Fair a Modesto Civic Center
- Heavy Equipment Job Fair
- Ag Center and Farmers Job Fair
- Plumbers Unions Job Fair

Commissioner Bruce continues to participate in the monthly Veterans Association Meeting at California State University, Stanislaus to provide information on available resources for Stanislaus County Veterans.

Additionally, Mr. Bruce has attended the monthly Veterans Employment Commission Meeting and the monthly Employment Development Department Committee Meeting to collaborate and provide information on employment opportunities for veterans. This past year Commissioner Bruce has made efforts to connect with other organizations within Stanislaus County who provide resources, employment and education opportunities to veterans.

FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Facilities Committee

Membership: Larry Johnson, Chairman
 Wardee Bruce, District 2
 Richard Edgecomb, District 4

The Veterans Advisory Commission identified the need for development of a "one-stop" veteran's facilities and services center centrally located for the County's veterans as a primary goal early in the formation of the Commission. The Veterans Facilities Committee was established with three members of the Commission. The Committee was first tasked with updating and surveying veterans groups and refining the scope and scale of needs for a proposed Veterans Center project, and the facility concept was presented to the Commission and to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors in June, 2013. The Veteran's Center concept envisioned broad participation of public and private organizations, including the City of Modesto, Stanislaus County and private contributions from veteran's groups and donors, to develop a single place shared by all veterans for services, support and social activities.

The Veterans Center concept approved by the Commission contemplates the development of a shared-use meeting hall and conference area with an adjoining full-service kitchen and lounge, with adjacent service offices supporting veterans. The Veterans Center will provide convenient access to services for veterans benefits, referral for health services, education, job placement and training, recruitment services, housing benefits, services for seniors, adult protective services, in-home supportive services, general assistance eligibility, transportation assistance and other services. These services will be provided in office adjacent to the Veterans Hall and meeting facilities to be occupied by the Stanislaus County Department of Aging and Veterans Services, Stanislaus County Community Services Agency and MOVE (formerly the Stanislaus Consolidated Transportation Services agency.) Referrals to other services will be offered by the County Veterans Services Office to services provided off-site, such as to the Veterans Administration Clinic system.

The team carefully considered the ability of the partnership to raise sufficient funding to support the purchase and/or development of a new building, and ultimately opted to recommend seeking a lease of 30,000-to-65,000 square feet of space (subject to the availability of suitable spaces in the local real estate market) for a term of 10-years, with options to extend the lease beyond the original term. The lease term would allow for additional fund raising opportunities toward the ultimate goal of developing a permanent, longer-term facility solution, but allows the Commission to fulfill its goals more expeditiously.

FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

In 2014, the Facilities Committee developed a Four-Part Strategy to implement the Veteran's Center plan. The Four-Part Strategy was reviewed and approved by the Veterans Advisory Commission in June, 2014 and approved by the Board of Supervisors in July, 2014.

Each step of the Four Part Strategy was addressed in 2015. The Veterans Advisory Commission appointed an Ad Hoc Committee to explore organization of a non-profit entity to conduct fund raising and accept donations for the development of the Veterans Center project. In summary of 2015, the *Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County* was established, bylaws were established, a Board of Directors and staff were appointed, the *Foundation* was established and received 501(c)3 tax-exempt status was granted by the Internal Revenue Service.

In early 2015 the County sought grant funding opportunities. Unfortunately, it was determined that grants for operation of such a facility were available, but no grant opportunities could be identified to assist with the development of the facility project.

The Facilities Committee working with County Staff established a consolidated pro forma of project development and initial operating costs with County staff assistance, and identified the projected cost of the proposed Veterans Center project and the available sources of funding. The pro forma revenues and expenses were instrumental in balancing the overall scope of the project within a defined budget, and the pro forma became the basis for refined facility plan.

In the fall of 2015, your Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors approved the conceptual plan and authorized staff to proceed with issuance of a Request For Proposals to provide the Veterans Center. Seven proposals were received in early November, and a Proposal Evaluation Team methodically evaluated each proposal. The evaluation process narrowed to two favored building proposals, keeping one proposal to share use of a banquet facility as an alternative. The final proposals were developed by the Owners in February, 2016. Ultimately, one proposal best met all of the Facilities Committee's criteria, including price, location, and scope/amenities. The selected proposal is at Sylvan Square, 3500 Coffee Road, Modesto owned by Stone Brothers .

FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION



WMB Architects/Stone Brothers Property Management

The final site selection was presented at the March 2016 Veterans Advisory Commission meeting, and to the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on April 19, 2016.

Since the facility selection was announced, County staff, the Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County and the City of Modesto have been working with the Chairman of the Veterans Advisory Commission and the Facilities Committee to conclude lease agreements, formalize subleases and operating agreements, develop plans and design details. The property owner has initiated demolition of the space, and the construction plans for the new Veterans Center have been issued a building permit by the City of Modesto.

The project is slated to be substantially complete by early November, 2016, and a Celebration of the Project is being planned for the afternoon of Veterans' Day, November 11, 2016 at the site. Final occupancy of the office and Veterans Hall will occur shortly thereafter, with the fully operational kitchen and lounge to open later.

Outreach Committee

Membership: Richard Gaytan, Chairman
 Joe Madden, Vice Chairman
 William Johnson

This past year the Outreach Committee made significant progress in developing partnerships with cities in Stanislaus County. This Committee has collaborated with the communities of Oakdale, Patterson, Newman and Modesto to assist homeless veterans. These collaborative efforts have assisted some homeless veterans to secure shelter or housing. Through these community partnerships the Committee has provided available resource information for veterans.

This Committee has also been attending various job fairs throughout the County, to provide information to veterans on available benefits to them. Committee members have also been attending the Focus on Prevention Initiative Meetings to understand and advocate how veterans can be considered for the Prevention Initiative.

Committee members have joined the Veterans Employment Committee (VEC) that assists veterans in finding employment, provides veterans with resources and Salvation Army Clothing Vouchers.

The Outreach Committee membership has increase this past year, and they continue to provide opportunities for others to join the Committee by promoting their efforts in various meetings that the Committee members attend.

Transportation Committee

Membership: Joe Madden, Chairman
 Richard Barboza, Vice Chairman

This past year the Veterans Transportation Committee continued to collaborate with staff from MOVE (formerly Consolidated Transportation Services Agency), the Veterans Services Office (CVSO) and the Veterans Administration (VA) Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC). In coordination with MOVE, volunteer drivers have continued to provide transportation to eligible home-bound veterans to medical appointments within Stanislaus County and throughout Northern California.

| Transportation to Medical Appointments | |
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| • <u>Other</u> | <u>2</u> |
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FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION

This past year there were 71 denials due to the difficulty of recruiting and retaining volunteer drivers. There were only four volunteer drivers this past year.

With the continued challenges of recruiting and retaining volunteer drivers, the Transportation Committee has begun working towards having the VA transfer the vehicles and the transportation operations to the Veteran Service Office. It is anticipated that moving the transportation operations to the county and MOVE, it would assist in streamlining the application process to get the volunteer drivers started much quicker. MOVE would continue to provide the scheduling and oversee the volunteers. The CVSO will assist volunteers to go through Stanislaus County's volunteer orientation process.

In addition, MOVE has received approval for a 5310 grant to hire a Volunteer Coordinator who will assist with recruiting volunteers for the Veterans Transportation program.

Service is provided by calling (209) 522-2300, 48 hours in advance on a first-come, first-served basis. Scheduling is provided by MOVE Transportation, in coordination with veteran's appointments at various medical providers.

**FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
VETERANS ADVISORY COMMISSION
TO THE STANISLAUS COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

AUGUST 30, 2016



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Tim Fedorchak

Stanislaus County Chief Executive Office

- Fourth Annual Report of the **Veterans Advisory Commission.**
- The Board of Supervisors established the Commission on April 3, 2012:

“Commissioners will represent all veterans in Stanislaus County by advising the Board of Supervisors and County staff generally on matters pertaining to veterans, hold informal public meetings, provide the public with information and receive comments relative to veterans’ issues.”

■ Veterans Advisory Commissioners:

Richard Edgecomb, Chairman

District 4

William Johnson

District 1

Wardee Bruce

District 2

Richard Barboza

District 3

Richard Gaytan

District 5

Joseph Madden

Commissioner At Large

Lawrence Johnson

Commissioner At Large

- The Commission created four standing committees:
 - ✓ Education and Job Placement
 - ✓ Facilities
 - ✓ Outreach
 - ✓ Transportation

▪ **Education and Job Placement Committee**

Commissioner Wardee Bruce, Chairman

- Educational Job Fair at Modesto Technical College
- Congressman Denham's Job Fair at Modesto Civic Center
- Heavy Equipment Job Fair
- Agricultural Center and Farmers Job Fair
- Plumbers Union Job Fair
- California State University, Stanislaus – Veterans Association
- Veterans Employment Commission
- Employment Development Department

■ **Facilities Committee**

Commissioner Larry Johnson, Chairman
Commissioner Wardee Bruce
Commissioner Richard Edgecomb

- 2012-2013
- Surveyed Veteran Groups; Conducted Workshop
 - Developed Facilities Needs and Program

■ **Facilities Committee**

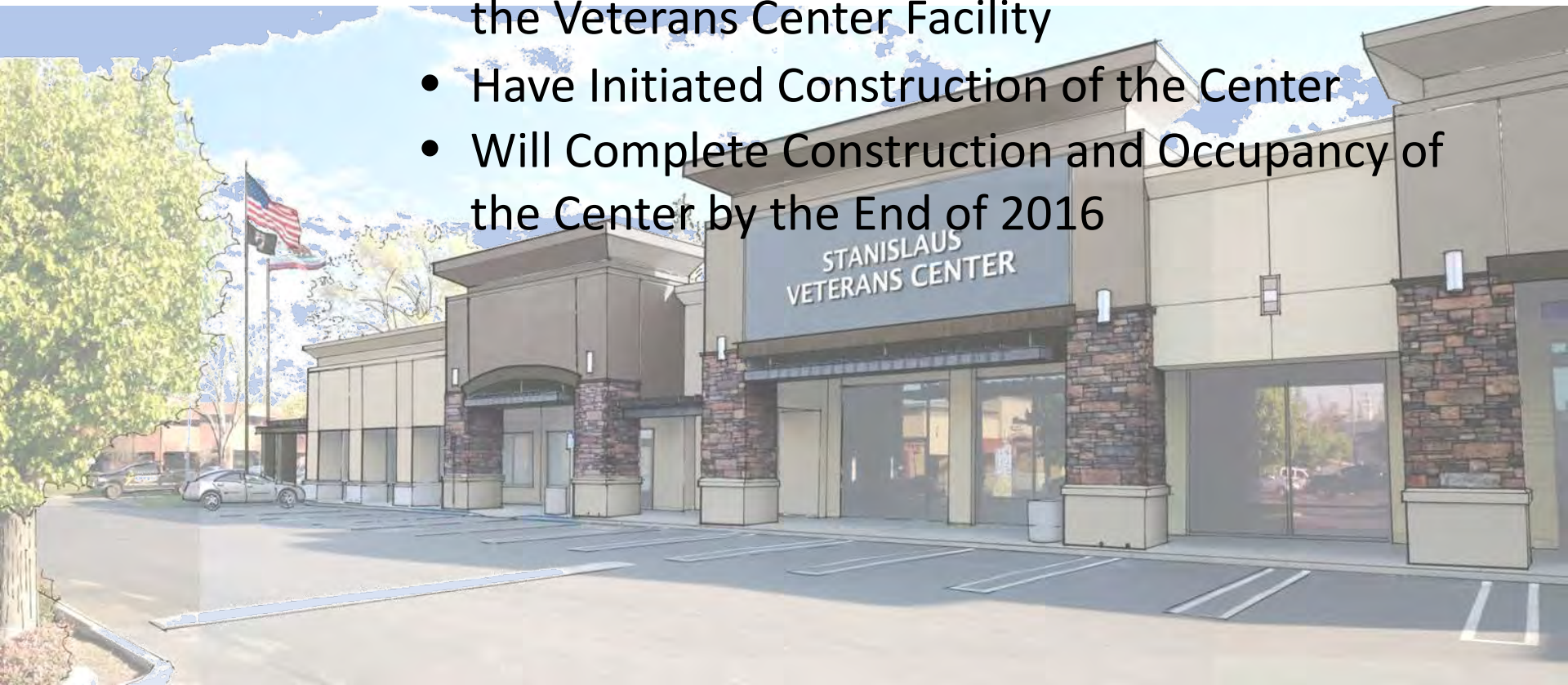
- 2013-2014
- Developed an Implementation Strategy
 - Sought Fundraising and Grant Funding Opportunities and Funding Partners
- 2014-2015
- *Veterans Foundation of Stanislaus County* was established to benefit the Veterans facility
 - A Sustainable Financial Model was created with Stanislaus County, the City of Modesto and the Veterans Foundation as partners

■ **Facilities Committee**

- 2015-2016
- Issued a Request For Proposals for a Veterans Center Lease
 - Received 7 Proposals and Conducted an Extensive Review and Negotiation Process
 - With Board of Supervisors Approval, a Lease Agreement was Signed with Sylvan Square, 3500 Coffee Road, Modesto
 - Developed and Secured Funding, a Sublease and Use Agreements with the Project Partners

■ Facilities Committee

- 2015-2016
- Developed a Design for the Construction of the Veterans Center Facility
 - Have Initiated Construction of the Center
 - Will Complete Construction and Occupancy of the Center by the End of 2016



▪ **Outreach Committee**

Commissioner Richard Gaytan, Chairman

Commissioner Joe Madden

Commissioner William Johnson

- Collaborated with Oakdale, Patterson, Newman and Modesto to Assesst Homeless Veterans to Secure Shelter or Housing
- Participated in *Focus on Prevention* Initiatives
- Attended Job Fairs to Connect Veterans to Benefit Providers
- Worked with the Veterans Employment Committee to Assist in Finding Employment Opportunities for Veterans

■ **Transportation Committee**

Commissioner Joe Madden, Chairman

Commissioner Richard Barboza, Vice Chairman

- Collaborated with MOVE and the County Department of Aging and Veterans Services to Provide Transportation to Eligible, Home-bound Veterans to Medical Appointments Throughout Northern California

▪ **Transportation Committee**

- Operated by Four (4) Volunteer Drivers in 2015-2016

Veterans Transportation to Medical Appointments (2015-2016)

| | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Modesto VA Clinic | 20 Trips |
| French Camp VA Clinic | 3 |
| Livermore VA Hospital | 63 |
| Palo Alto VA Hospital | 17 |
| Menlo Park VA Hospital | 8 |
| Other Destinations | 2 |
| Total | 113 Trips |

■ **Transportation Committee**

- 71 Veterans were Denied Transportation Due to a Lack of Drivers Qualified Through a Stringent VA Certification Process
- In a Separate Board of Supervisors' Agenda Item, the Commission is Seeking to Transfer the Vehicles From the Veterans Administration to the County and Operated by MOVE. The County Aging and Veterans Services Office would Provide Volunteer Assistance.

Richard Edgecomb, Chairman
Veterans Advisory Commission



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