



**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
FINAL OFFICIAL MINUTES
Miami-Dade Military Affairs Board**

Fire Fighters Memorial Building Corp.
8000 NW 21 Street
Miami, FL 33122

June 10, 2015
As Advertised

Harvey Ruvin, Clerk
Board of County Commissioners

Christopher Agrippa, Director
Clerk of the Board Division

Mary Smith-York, Commission Reporter
(305) 375-1598



MILITARY AFFAIRS BOARD
Monthly Meeting
June 10, 2015

The Military Affairs Advisory Board (MAB) convened in a meeting on June 10, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. at the Fire Fighters Memorial Building, 8000 N.W. 21st Street, Doral, Florida, 33122.

The following voting Board members were present: Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz, Chairman; Alex Acosta; Mario Alvarez; Rose Brito; Thomas Davis; Diana Gonzalez; Kevin Humes; Charles Johnson; Eduardo Lombard; Phil Lyons; and Jorge Sibila.

The following voting members were absent: Dr. Anthony Atwood, David Blake; Mark Blumstein; Councilman Timothy Daubert; Manuel Gonzalez; Sergei Kowalchik; Joseph Martory; and Keith Vail Whitbeck.

The following non-voting members present: Captain Peter Vach; Marco Giron, representing City of Doral Vice Mayor Sandra Ruiz; Paul Russo; Joanna Sandstrom; and Miami-Dade Police Officer Victor Milian.

The following non-voting members were absent: Glorianne Amor; Capt. Benjamin Davis; Col. Lisa Garcia; Ed Haynes; Leandra McCommas; Leandra Padron; Col. Elwin Rozyskie; Ray Sarracino; Sgt. Jeremiah Scott; Nury Soler; Lt. Col. Son Vo; and Debbie Zimmerman

In addition to the MAB members, the following staff members were present: Gustavo Cruz, Director Military Affairs Board; Antonio Crawford, Commission Auditor’s Office; Assistant County Attorney Miguel Gonzalez; and Deputy Clerk Mary Smith-York

❖ **WELCOME**

Chairman Diaz called the meeting to order at 6:18 p.m. and welcomed everyone to tonight’s (6/10) meeting.

❖ **Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance**

The Military Affairs Board observed a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

❖ **Comments or Presentations from The Public**

Chairman Diaz opened the floor and called for anyone from the public wishing to speak before the Military Affairs Board, and the following individual(s) appeared:

- 1) Ms. Lyse Cuellar-Vidal, former Chair, Miami-Dade County Hispanic Advisory Board, presented members of VAREP organization to make a presentation.
- 2) Mr. Sergio Rebollo, 15725 SW 77 Court, Miami, presented a brief overview of the VAREP (Veterans Association of Real Estate Professionals) organization, highlighting the following points:
 - VAREP was a nonprofit organization, established in 2011 and new to Miami;

- currently operating nearly 30 chapters within approximately ten states;
- primary mission to increase homeownership, education, and economic assistance for veterans; and
- Board members attending Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. and met yesterday with members of Congress regarding proposed future programs.

Mr. Rebollo introduced other members of his group who would provide additional information pertaining to the VAREP organization.

3) Mr. Tim Haynackie, Treasurer, VAREP Miami Chapter, 2540 SW 22 Terrace, Miami, noted he was also a realtor and a veteran. He provided additional information about VAREP's lobbying efforts in Washington, D.C., stating that the primary issue was for financial stability for veterans. Mr. Haynackie indicated the goal was to provide annual consultations to veterans during active duty to prepare them for transitioning out of the service. He advised that, upon separation from the military, an additional financial consultation to prepare and inform the veterans regarding the resources available to them, including VA loan opportunities. Mr. Haynackie explained that a monitoring process would continue, after the veteran's discharge, to determine if additional assistance was needed and if they were able to stay on track. He noted the VAREP was in the process of creating a Fair Lending Act in response to the frequent reports of lenders discouraging or not mentioning the VA Loans opportunities. Mr. Haynackie explained efforts to identify whether the applicant ever served in the military on FANNIE MAE or FREDDIE MAC loan applications, and the process that would ensure lenders provided veterans with all the choices available. He further noted the VA currently did not provide home counseling services; however, the VAREP was attempting to implement that service, as well as offering incentives to veterans to utilize their VA loan benefits, and asked that MAB support these efforts.

4) Ms. Andrena Dimitrijevic, 2899 Collins Ave, Miami Beach, VAREP Government Affairs Director, indicated that the VAREP's goal was to ensure that veterans viewed Miami as the place they wanted to reside, based on the love, support, and benefits available. She announced the recent award, at the National Convention, of mortgage-free homes to two veteran families in Texas.

Pertaining to the mortgage-free homes, Mr. Haynackie explained that this was done in partnership with Bank of America, which provided the assets for rehabilitating the homes and noted additional information could be found on the VAREP's website.

Chairman Diaz emphasized the importance of ensuring veterans received information and stated that the MAB was privileged to have the director of the Veterans Administration and representatives of Chambers of Commerce as members.

Responding to Mr. Hughes' inquiry as to what the VAREP organization's initiative was in relationship to homeless veterans, Mr. Haynackie advised that the organization's goal was to

work with existing veteran services organizations in Miami-Dade County. He noted representatives volunteered their services at the recent Veteran Stand Down event.

Chairman Diaz requested the VAREP representatives to remain after the meeting ended to answer additional questions from MAB members.

❖ **Board Member Roundtable**

Military Affairs Board members made the following introductions and reports:

Officer Victor Milian, Miami-Dade Police Department, liaison to the Board

Mr. Charles Johnson, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, introduced Lt. Col. Harold Miller and report on recent events, including the Memorial Day Observance event at the Woodlawn Park Cemetery with Chairman Diaz as one of the speakers, and noted upcoming events included the annual Trustee Luncheon in July with Major General Joseph Salvo (phonetic) scheduled as speaker;

Ms. Joanna Sandstrom, State Attorney's Office, Miami-Dade County;

Mr. Jorge Sibila, Retired Marine Corps Member;

Major Brooke Cortez, Homestead Air Force Base, reported that an Air Show was being planned for November 5-6, 2016; and a Meet-and-Greet event was scheduled for this Friday, June 12, 2015. Major Cortez noted, on behalf of Rosa Brito, South Dade Chamber of Commerce would host its HOA Task Force Meet-and-Greet event on June 20, 2015;

Ms. Diana Gonzalez, Beacon Council, announced on June 30, 2015, the First Regional Conversation on the Military, working with the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) and reaching out to the Broward Alliance; to be held at the SFRPC facility in partnership with Former County Commissioner Katy Sorenson's Good Government Initiative as moderator. She informed members that everyone at today's meeting would receive an invitation and that the event would again be funded by the State of Florida's Defense Reinvestment Grant. Ms. Gonzalez noted the forthcoming Air Show was being included on the list of items the Beacon Council would be advocating for in Washington, D.C. later this month;

Mr. Mario Alvarez, representing Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez;

Ms. Mary Smith-York, Deputy Clerk, Clerk of the Board Division, Clerk of Courts;

Mr. Eduardo Lombard, representing District 11 Commissioner Juan Zapata, provided information regarding the Retirement/Discharge Ceremony of the PFC. Bruce W. Carter Young Marines Program on May 30, 2015, for six Young Marines who were recent high school graduates;

Mr. Kevin Humes, representing District 1 Commissioner Barbara Jordan, reported that the American Legion Post 29 deal had been secured and \$3.8 million had been deposited into the

bank; in the process of forming a strategic collaboration, just created a Business Development and Employment Committee and would request Commanders to contact Chairman Diaz to discuss outreach initiatives in the Veterans Administration to fast-track economic development job creations for veterans;

Mr. Jesse Marzano (phonetic) noted he was appointed by U. S. Congressman Carlos Curbelo and looked forward to working with the Board;

Mr. Marco Giron, Legislative Analyst, representing Vice Mayor Sandra Ruiz, City of Doral;

Mr. Paul Russo, Director, Miami-Dade Veteran's Administration Healthcare System, reported that the Homestead Public Expansion was progressing well; recently opened the Government Center Fund Standard Rehab Clinic in Key West, which was a joint project with the Navy; have accomplished 99 percent completed outpatient appointments in less than the 30-day goal;

Mr. Phil Lyons, representing the Chamber South;

Mr. Thomas Davis, representing District 8 Commissioner Levine Cava, informed members that he just returned from a six-month deployment, where he served as Chief of Strategic Communications Planning for the NATO Mission;

Mr. Miguel Gonzalez, Assistant County Attorney, Miami-Dade County;

Mr. Gustavo Cruz, Director, Military Affairs Board, Miami-Dade County;

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Chairman, Military Affairs Board;

Lieutenant Commander Valerie A. Boyd, United States Coast Guard, Commanding Officer of the Miami Military Entrance Processing Station;

Lieutenant Colonel Harold Miller, Special Forces Officer, Green Beret;

Ms. Lacy Elmange, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, advised that she was appointed Economic Liaison to the new "Veterans Economic Communities Initiative" initiative in Miami-Dade County;

Mr. Andrew Lopez, Miami-Dade County Mayor's Office, and Army Reserve Sergeant;

Mr. Antonio Crawford, Budget Analyst, Miami-Dade County Office of the Commission Auditor;

Honorable Judge Mendez, Associate Administrative Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit

❖ **Old Business**

➤ **Committee Updates**

- **Veterans Court**

Officer Victor Milian, Miami-Dade Police Department, provided pertinent information regarding the Veteran's Court issue, highlighting the following points:

- ✓ Changes were incorporated into the "A Form" to indicate the individual's military status on the printed form to help identify veterans during the booking process and provide needed services/referrals;
- ✓ 340 veterans had been arrested from 12/2014 to date; however, this number only reflected the number of veterans who identified themselves as veterans during the booking process, 137 of those were arrested by MDPD;
- ✓ 97 veterans were arrested within Miami-Dade County in 2015, 49 of those were arrested by the MDPD, which was more arrests than in any other month;
- ✓ Working with the County's Information Technology (IT) staff and the Veteran Administration's (VA) IT staff to develop a compatible database system that would provide a list of the number of veterans booked within a 24-hour period; and
- ✓ Judge Mendez volunteered to initiate the Veterans Court.

Officer Milian emphasized the importance of streamlining the process and helping the VA in identifying and recognizing the number of veterans in this County to provide them services and resources they need.

Discussion ensued among MAB members on the differences between the low number of veterans identified in the system and the large number of approximately 500 veterans reported by the Public Defender. Discussion also included the need to implement the proposed mentoring program, which should be spearheaded by an individual or entity neutral to the criminal justice system.

Chairman Diaz concurred with Mr. Lombard's suggestion that staff consult with Judge Resnick, who initiated the "Drug Court" Program, for input on establishing the mentoring program. He requested MAB members to submit their suggestions to Mr. Cruz pertaining to this issue.

Assistant County Attorney Miguel Gonzalez advised that Commissioner Heyman sponsored new legislation for the County Commission's approval, that would provide police officers with the authority to arrest or cite individuals for possession of marijuana and other minor offenses.

Chairman Diaz indicated that, with the new camera system, police would now need to take action on these issues, which along with the newly proposed civil citation authority, veterans would benefit more from the legal system.

In response to Mr. Humes' question regarding the proposed mentorship program, Officer Milian stated the program would pair the arrested veterans with mentors; however, the criteria for this process would need to be worked out and individuals would need to be trained. He noted this type of program existed in other areas of the country, but need to be tailored to fit Miami-Dade County's demographics.

Further discussion ensued regarding the type of individual/entity that should be sought to initiate the mentoring program, with emphasis on the MAB not having to pay for their performing this service.

Mr. Russo noted he would present the need for volunteers for the mentorship program to various organizations, such as The Red Cross, explaining that he would not actually provide the mentors.

MAB members and attendees regarding Florida International University's ROTC Program and the Veterans component of the County's Human Resource Department being potential resources for volunteers as veteran mentors. Members also addressed the importance of vetting the individuals who served as volunteers and identifying the expectations of the individual mentors.

Mr. Milian recommended obtaining the Standard Operating Procedures Manual from the Buffalo Mentorship Program for reference and stressed the need to establish parameters to address the issue of the possibility for mentors to be killed.

Chairman Diaz expressed his support for the creation of a 501(C)3 entity by the MAB to accomplish the goal and requested members to provide Mr. Cruz with their suggestions.

➤ Housing

Ms. Diana Gonzalez reported the Housing Committee had a meeting and after a review of the list of County properties, only two sites were chosen from the selected parameters. She stated further review was needed since two sites would not be sufficient.

Chairman Diaz questioned the site containing several acres near 88th and Town and Country and after stating many properties were allocated to Community Based Organizations, he asked Ms. Gonzalez to remove the parameters and revisit the list.

Mr. Mario Alvarez, Office of the Miami-Dade Mayor, noted that on June 21, 2015, he would attend the housing component of the Association of Defense Communities Conference in Washington, D.C. He stated County Administration was scheduling appointments with members of Congress to present the idea of using Documentary Surtax dollars for developing military housing development.

Ms. Gonzalez informed members that, during the Conference in Washington, D.C., she would introduce, to the army representative in charge of privatization, the idea of a local source of funding for housing.

Chairman Diaz asked Mr. Alvarez to provide the MAB with a full report on the results of the meetings at the Conference at the MAB's July 2015 meeting.

In response to Mr. Humes' inquiry regarding a strategy to ensure housing developers adhere to the federal mandate to provide affordable housing, Chairman Diaz clarified this involved a separate issue from that of Documentary Surtax dollars. He noted the need to place emphasis on identifying funding to provide housing for veterans that was centrally situated.

➤ **Special Events**

Mr. Gustavo Cruz reported, on behalf of Mr. Timothy Daubert, the 2015 Veterans' Day Parade would be held on Miami Beach. He advised the current status of the organization process and logistics and described some of the activities planned. Mr. Cruz noted he would meet with Miami Beach officials in July 2015, and would provide more information following that meeting.

❖ **Honor Flight at MIA (Commissioner Diaz)**

Chairman Diaz reported 65 World War II and Korean War Veterans participated in the event in Washington, D.C. He noted he was unable to travel because the flight was overbooked and he surrendered his seat to fellow veterans. Chairman Diaz expressed his appreciation to the volunteers from the Miami-Dade Aviation and Police Departments, who helped make this a success and stated he hoped to present this event every year.

❖ **Memorial Day Services at Woodlawn Cemetery (Commissioner Diaz)**

Chairman Diaz reported on the successful Memorial Day Service held at the Woodlawn Cemetery and noted the speakers delivered very moving speeches. He indicated he planned to present information to MAB members on the history of Woodlawn Cemetery at the next meeting.

Chairman Diaz stated he was scheduled to attend the Air Show in Paris, France, with the Miami-Dade County Mayor, the Miami-Dade Aviation Department Director, and representatives of several other entities, including approximately nine governors. He indicated the delegation's goal was to bring the Paris Airshow to Miami-Dade County and requested Ms. Diana Gonzalez assist in this effort. He asked MAB members to reach out to their contacts in the military and to work with the Beacon Council and the County Mayor to make this happen.

➤ **Korean War Vet Recognition (Commissioner Diaz)**

❖ **New Business**

➤ **US Army Lt Col. Harold Miller**

Lieutenant Colonel Harold Miller stated he was a Special Forces Officer in the Green Beret and was in charge of Specialized Troops to recruit America's brightest and best. He indicated his area of operations was in Southern Florida and described the recruitment process his team of Specialized Troops performed.

➤ **Veterans Economic Communities Initiative**

Ms. Lacy Elmange, Economic Liaison, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, reported that a new initiative was launched in Miami called Veteran Economic Community Initiative (VECI). Referencing the January 2015 Economic Report by the Veterans Administration and noted one out of every two service members transitioning out of the military would face period of unemployment. The report also revealed that only 40 percent of transitioning service members utilized the GI Bill or other available education benefits. The VECI was designed to ensure

veterans were tapping into all the resources available to them, to get the information out to businesses about these veteran resources, and to ensure Miami was a prime location for veterans. Ms. Elmange advised that she was a primary contact person for veterans' economic issues and distributed handouts highlighting important points. She mentioned that she was working to build a partnership with The Red Cross to create programs, services, and resources for veterans.

Chairman Diaz concurred with Ms. Elmange's comment that promoting the information regarding programs that were available to veterans was very important.

Ms. Gonzalez inquired as to whether the video regarding the VECI could be sent to members as a hyperlink online.

Ms. Elmange advised that the video was not yet available on the official website and was also too large a file to send via email.

❖ **Next Meeting Date:** July 8, 2015; Location TBD

Mr. Cruz stated because the first Wednesday in July was close to the Fourth of July/Independence Day Weekend; therefore, he asked if members would be willing to meet on July 8, 2015 instead.

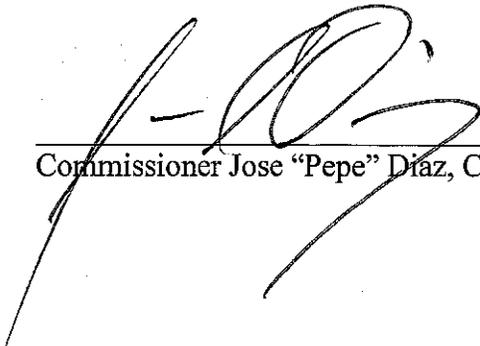
It was moved by Mr. Sibila that the next MAB meeting be scheduled for July 8, 2015. This motion was seconded by Ms. Gonzalez, and upon being put to a vote, passed by a vote of 11-0, (Members Anthony Atwood, David Blake, Mark Blumstein, Councilman Timothy Daubert, Manuel Gonzalez, Sergei Kowalchik, Joseph Martory, and Keith Whitbeck were absent).

❖ **Discussion Items For The Next Agenda**

Mr. Cruz requested MAB members to either contact him or send him an email regarding items to be placed on the agenda for the July 8, 2015 MAB meeting.

❖ **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Military Affairs Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.



Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Chairman



Miami – Dade Military Affairs Board June 10, 2015

Prepared by: Mary Smith-York

EXHIBITS LIST

NO.	DATE	ITEM #	DESCRIPTION
1	6/10/2015		Military Affairs Board Agenda
2	6/10/2015		Discussion Items Presented by Eduardo Lombard Entitled “Retirement/Discharge Ceremony – May 30 th , 2015 – Uniform of the Day
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*MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE CHAIR
MILITARY AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD
MONTHLY MEETING
WEDNESDAY, June 10th, 2015
6:00 PM*

*FIRE FIGHTERS MEMORIAL BUILDING
8000 N.W. 21st Street
Doral, FL 33122
AGENDA*

- ❖ **Welcome**
- ❖ **Moment of Silence / Pledge of Allegiance**
- ❖ **Comments or presentations from the public**
- ❖ **Board Member Roundtable**
- ❖ **Old Business**
 - **Committee Updates**
 - **Veterans Court**
 - **Housing**
 - **Special Events**
 - **Honor Flight at MIA (Comm. Diaz)**
 - **Memorial Day Services at Woodlawn Cemetery (Comm. Diaz)**
 - **Korean War Vet Recognition (Comm. Diaz)**

❖ **New Business**

- **US Army Lt Col. Harold Miller**
- **Veterans Economic Communities Initiative**

❖ **Next meeting date is scheduled for July 8th, 2015 site to be determined.**

❖ **Discussion items for the next agenda**

❖ **Adjournment**

From: Eduardo A. Lombard <elombard47@aol.com>
To: mariaangeles119 <mariaangeles119@aol.com>
Subject: Retirement/Discharge Ceremony Uniform of the Day *PLEASE PRINT** THANKS!
Date: Tue, Jun 2, 2015 5:04 am

MR Eduardo A Lombard
Representing - DISTRICT II
Commissioner - MR. JUAN ZAPATA.

-----Original Message-----

From: PFC Bruce W Carter Young Marines <youngmarinesmd@gmail.com>
To: Marine Eduardo <elombard47@aol.com>
Sent: Thu, May 28, 2015 9:56 pm
Subject: Retirement/Discharge Ceremony Uniform of the Day

PFC Bruce W Carter Young Marines Important Information

[View this email in your browser](#)



From: PFC Bruce W. Carter
To: YMs, YMRs, Parents & RALs
Subj: Retirement/Discharge Ceremony - May 30th, 2015 - Uniform of the Day
Good evening parents,

① As a reminder, six of our Young Marines will be retiring/discharged from the program this Saturday. The National Director of the program and other staff will be in attendance to recognize the achievements of these young people .

We encourage everyone to attend to celebrate this exciting time in their lives.

Please RSVP Krystal Gonzalez if you have not done so as refreshments will be purchased based on this.

Uniform for Young Marines:

Camouflage uniform - WHITE shirt, black shined boots, proper haircuts

Color Guard must meet at 9:00 AM for practice

Color Guard (Charlies - White T-Shirts):

- GySgt Miles
- SSgt Gordillo
- SSgt Gandara
- Sgt Villalobos

Registered Adult Leader

Black/Tan Shirt, Black 'Staff' Shirt, Black ALC Shirt and Khaki pants

Retiring/Discharged Young Marines

Alpha Uniforms

The ceremony will start at 10:00 a.m. We are requesting that attendees (Young Marines) respond at least at 9:30 if not earlier to assist with the setup.

Thank you again!

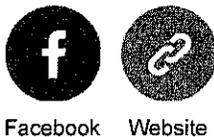
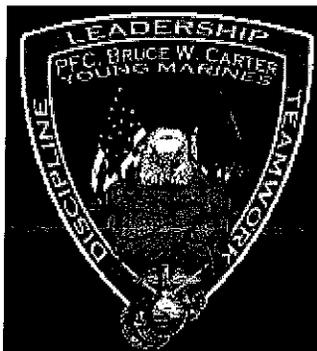
Daniel W. Hannah

PFC Bruce W. Carter

Young Marines

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Facebook Website

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