

## ALAMEDA CITY COUNCIL

GOOD EVENING. MY NAME IS SAM MORIANA. I AM A MEMBER OF AMERICAN LEGION POST 647 WHICH IS ONE OF THE VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS THAT USES THE VETERANS' MEMORIAL BUILDING FOR ITS MEETINGS. I AM ALSO A MEMBER OF THE ALAMEDA VETERAN'S GROUP (AVG) COMMITTEE WHICH REPRESENTS SEVERAL OTHER VETERANS' GROUPS IN ALAMEDA AND INCLUDES A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ALAMEDA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.

THE MAJOR GOAL OF THE COMMITTEE IS TO HAVE THE CITY IMPROVE THE CONDITIONS THAT EXIST IN THE VETERANS' MEMORIAL BUILDING (VMB) AND TO ENABLE THE CITY TO USE THE BUILDING AS A SOURCE OF REVENUE BY LEASING IT OUT FOR SOCIAL EVENTS. THE POTENTIAL REVENUES COULD BE USED TO OFFSET THE COSTS OF THE UPGRADES AND ULTIMATELY CONTRIBUTE TO THE GENERAL FUND. THE VMB HAS A LONG HISTORY OF PAST SOCIAL EVENTS WHICH NO LONGER ARE HELD THERE DUE TO THE EXISTING CONDITIONS.

FOLLOWING ARE THE VMB UPGRADE PROJECTS IN PRIORITY ORDER:

1. UPGRADE THE EIGHT MEN AND WOMEN'S REST ROOMS.
2. UPGRADE THE HEATING SYSTEM.
3. UPGRADE THE LIGHTING SYSTEM USING LED TECHNOLOGY.
4. REPLACE THE CARPET IN ROOM 260 WHICH IS WHERE WE ALL MEET.
5. REFINISH BY SANDING ALL AUDITORIUMS AND ROOMS WITH HARDWOOD FLOORING.
6. PAINT THE ENTIRE INTERIOR OF THE BUILDING.
7. INSTALL AN INDUSTRIAL KITCHEN.

WITH THE HELP OF A LOCAL ARCHITECT ON A PRO BONO BASIS WE HAVE DETERMINED THE ESTIMATED COSTS FOR THESE PROJECTS COME TO ABOUT TWO MILLION DOLLARS. WE SUGGEST THESE PROJECTS BE DONE OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, WHICH MEANS THE PROJECTED COSTS WOULD COME TO ABOUT 400K PER YEAR.

SINCE I AM NOW 94 YEARS OLD I PLAN TO RENT THE DINNING AND KITCHEN AREA OF THE BUILDING FOR MY 100TH BIRTHDAY. UPON YOUR APPROVAL OF THE FIVE-YEAR PLAN, I INVITE ALL OF YOU AND YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHERS TO ATTEND AS MY GUESTS. THIS WILL SERVE AS A NOTICE TO YOU TO SAVE THE DATE MARCH 9, 2029.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS I AM MORE THAN WILLING TO RESPOND.

*Submitted by Sam Moriana  
6/6/2023 Over Comm*



# Alameda Veteran Groups

2203 Central Ave  
Alameda CA 94501



June 10, 2023

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and Councilmembers,

The Veteran Groups of Alameda, American Legion Post 9, American Legion Post 647 and the Vietnam Veterans of America Ch. 400 want to thank you for your attention to our opening of the discussion at the June 6th, 2023, City Council meeting about the needs of the Veterans Memorial Building.

I presently chair the Veterans Memorial Building Advisory Commission which consists of myself, four members of the local Veterans groups and Mike Billington, Facilities Manager for the City of Alameda PWC. This restored committee had been abandoned in the early 2000's and recently reorganized under the direction of the former City Manager Eric Levitt.

A quick history of how we got to this point in time. In February of 1996, the City took over the management and care of the Veterans Memorial Building from the County of Alameda. Upon the transfer, Resolution 12737 was passed. This Resolution committed to several things, two of which I am concerned with moving forward is the forming of the Advisory Commission mentioned above, and two is "the City of Alameda will not unduly interfere with the continued access too and reasonable use of the building by Veterans."

When the City took possession of the building from the county, Veterans had use of a functioning kitchen of which we held many events such as pasta feeds, crab feeds, pancake breakfasts and the facility was also used by the community for events such as weddings, birthday parties, graduation and many other events. Now the kitchen has been stripped of all its cooking and cleaning appliances, no hot water and is left to just a shell of what it once was. There was a functioning bar that is still in place but hardly functional. In addition, the following items are also in need of maintenance, care and updating:

- Heating system, including repair of the wainscoting that has been chopped up over the years.
- Lighting system, the historical chandeliers in the main auditorium in need of repair before they fall on a member of the community.
- Electrical system.
- Plumbing system which should include hot water in all bathrooms, bar area and kitchen area.
- Refinishing of wood floors before they are past that possibility.
- Replacement of carpeting in the Veterans meeting room.
- WIFI in the building
- Painting of the interior of the building.
- Restoration of the bar area.
- Restoration of the kitchen area.
- Restoration of all bathrooms

These issues all need to be dealt with at this time and a plan to get the necessary work completed.

The Advisory Commission appreciates the presence of the Facilities Manager for the City of Alameda. He has been patient, informative and has educated us as to the way the city budgets repairs, maintenance and capital improvement items. Though Mr. Billington we feel has been very transparent and helpful in many ways his limits are set by the budget he has to work with for the building.

Some of these issues are beyond his budget reach and will need capital expenditures of approximately two million dollars which is why we are bringing these issues to you, the City Council and the City Manager.

The Veterans Memorial Building located at 2203 Central Ave is on the National historical list, the State of California Historical List and the City of Alameda Historical List. The Architect for the County of Alameda Veterans buildings was Henry Meyers of Alameda and resided at the Meyers Historical Home on Alameda Ave. Why have we let this great landmark deteriorate to this condition with local history so close to home?

I am including a link to the Hayward Veterans Memorial Building maintained and managed by the County of Alameda for comparison to our neglect of our beloved building.

<https://www.acgov.org/veterans/hayward/>

We are looking forward to meeting our elected officials at the Veterans Memorial Building for a guided tour of the building. It will help when you realize how the building has deteriorated over the years as to why we seek assistance and the urgency that is needed to restore this beautiful landmark to the building we can all enjoy. Our Veterans deserve it.

Respectfully,

*Joseph C. LoParo*

Joe Loparo  
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