

**TESTIMONY of James B. Musson before the  
LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION  
Thursday June 22, 2017**

**BACKGROUND**

Military Service: Special Agent US Army Intelligence Corps, 1963 to 1966  
Yountville California Veterans Home Member 2004 to present  
Allied Council 2005 as office staff and 2007-2010 as Delegate and 2014 to present as Treasurer.

**REVISE ADMISSION STANDARDS**

Only non-employed Veterans (Vets) over 55, or disabled, who qualify for medical treatment at the federal Veterans Administration (VA) and have resided in California at least six months should be admitted to the Home. Income and asset limits similar to the VA's should be set so that the financially needy Vets are admitted. If a Vet cannot financially qualify for VA Medical Care, why is the state subsidizing his/her residency at the Home? Priority should be given to Purple Heart Vets and Vets with a VA compensation rating of 70% or higher as the VA will pay all of the nursing costs for 70% Vets regardless of financial status.

**INDEPENDENT LIVING**

The Domiciliary (Dom) level of care must be continued, though not at the current 2/3 of the Yountville Home's population. A reduction to 1/3 could be accomplished by limiting admissions to Vets requiring assisted living or nursing care which would result in every Dom level Vet receiving a private room. Attrition would bring the ratio down to 1/3. The continuation of Dom level of care is crucial to the Member Helper (MH) program at Yountville. Over 200 Home Members volunteer either 16 or 32 hours per week for a token stipend of \$200 or \$400 per month. This program saves the General Fund almost million dollars yearly and provides the MH self esteem and sense of worth and accomplishment. The MH program provides a multitude of quality of life programs/activities (with staff supervision) available to all Home Members. Together with the magnificent setting, Yountville has the potential of setting the standard of care for PTSD and TBI. *[see paragraph below: serving a broader range of veterans]*

With the opening of the new Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) existing two floor buildings could be repurposed for Dom on the second floor with Residential Care Facility (RCFE) - Assisted Living - on the first floor. The Yountville Home is

operating Truman Hall in this fashion - Section F (RCFE) on the first floor and Section M (Dom) - where I reside - on the second floor. With this repurposing and reduction of population, smaller buildings could be repurposed for employee housing and temporary housing for visiting professionals in training.

### **ENGAGING WITH RESIDENTS**

The Home Members would best be engaged in planning processes by well marketed Town Halls. In preparation for these Town Halls, the Allied Council should first be engaged in the process in a collaborative effort for ideas and best turn out.

### **SERVING A BROADER RANGE OF VETERANS**

Expansion of the Home's mission to encompass treatment of Vets returning from current conflicts with PTSD and/or TBI would serve a broader spectrum of Vets most in need of help. Currently, Madison Hall is vacant (since 2010) and could be repurposed to serve these Vets. This would incur significant costs, but perhaps federal moneys could be obtained and staffing provided by the VA.

The Home has abundant space and has the potential to host a federal VA CBOC (Community Based Outpatient Clinic). This would also require significant funds as a parking structure would be required. A Public Private Partnership (PPP) with federal collaboration is a possibility as the CBOC would serve all of Napa Valley, not just home members.

### **WHERE'S THE IG?**

Approximately 15 years ago CalVet had an Inspector General. There are now eight California Veterans Homes and no IG. The events of recent years more than justifies the reestablishment of the CalVet IG, and one is surly needed for all CalVet operations.

### **PROBLEMS ABOUND**

CalVet gives insufficient efforts to establish a Home centric operation. It seems that those in CalVet headquarters feel that they know the needs and wants of the Home Members better than the Members themselves. They also seem to feel they know the Home better than the Home's staff. A PPP should be considered to replace the Home's deteriorated, unrepairable infrastructure.

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