

## VETERANS ASSOCIATION LEASES

### INTRODUCTION

The Humboldt County Grand Jury reviewed five existing veterans building management agreements between veteran associations and the County of Humboldt. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of Division 6 of the California Military and Veterans Code and California Senate Bill 544, the County of Humboldt may provide space which may be used as a meeting place by the "veterans associations." Whenever a county has provided space for a meeting place to be used by the veterans associations, its acceptance by the veterans associations constitutes a dedication for public purpose. The County of Humboldt may provide for structural maintenance and improvements. Whenever a county has provided space, along with structural maintenance and improvements, and this action is accepted by the veterans associations, it constitutes a dedication for a public purpose.

In all five of the veterans building management agreements that were reviewed, the County of Humboldt has agreed to provide utilities. The County of Humboldt can use these buildings as disaster care centers or other emergency facilities during any state of emergency declared by the Board of Supervisors. The veterans associations are required to submit budget reports to the Board of Supervisors.

### FINDINGS

F-1 The county has failed to provide sufficient funds for all maintenance and upkeep of veterans buildings, pursuant to current law.

F-2 The County of Humboldt has failed to provide sufficient funds for utilities pursuant to the agreements between the veterans associations and the county.

F-3 Some veterans associations have failed to provide budget reports to the county as required in the agreements.

F-4 The Eureka Veterans Memorial Building has been used as a courthouse for approximately three years with no written agreement.

F-5 The Board of Supervisors had not declared a state of emergency pertaining to the Eureka Veterans Memorial Building.

F-6 The Family Law Court's operations are interfering with the veterans' use of the Eureka Veterans Memorial Building; the court uses almost all the space, and the veterans have been moved out of their office.

F-7 The veterans associations continue to expend more money from their limited budgets to pay for the upkeep of veterans buildings; this action takes away funds from their worthwhile projects.

F-8 Whenever a county has provided and maintained any building, memorial hall, meeting place, memorial park, or recreation center for the use or benefit of one or more veterans' associations, pursuant to 1262 of the Military and Veterans Code, the provision of that facility and its acceptance by the veterans' associations constitutes a dedication of that property to a public purpose.

F-9 Some veterans associations have performed their own maintenance projects on their buildings without fiscal support from the county.

### CONCLUSIONS

C-1 The county has not met its maintenance and upkeep obligations, pursuant to current law.

C-2 The county has not met its contractual obligations of paying utilities or providing sufficient funds to pay utilities.

C-3 Some veterans associations are not meeting their contractual obligations.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

THE HUMBOLDT COUNTY GRAND JURY RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING:

R-1 The Board of Supervisors budget sufficient funds for veterans buildings.

R-2 The Board of Supervisors ensure the veterans associations have sufficient space until the Family Law Court moves out of the Eureka Veterans Memorial Building.

R-3 Veterans' associations submit required budget reports to the Board of Supervisors.

### **RESPONSES**

THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES TO REPORT 01-15 ARE REQUIRED PURSUANT TO P.C. 933 AND THE STANDARD FORMAT FOR RESPONSES.

- The Board of Supervisors respond to all findings and recommendations.
- The Veterans associations may respond to all findings and recommendations.