

## 2024 Current Fiscal Year Report: Advisory Committee on Cemeteries and Memorials

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### 1. Department or Agency

Department of Veterans Affairs

### 2. Fiscal Year

2024

### 3. Committee or Subcommittee

Advisory Committee on Cemeteries and Memorials

### 3b. GSA

### Committee No.

1328

### 4. Is this New During Fiscal Year?

No

### 5. Current Charter

05/16/2023 05/16/2025

### 6. Expected Renewal Date

### 7. Expected Term Date

### 8a. Was Terminated During Fiscal Year?

No

### 8b. Specific Termination Authority

### 8c. Actual Term Date

### 9. Agency Recommendation for Next Fiscal Year

Continue

### 10a. Legislation Req to Terminate?

Not Applicable

### 10b. Legislation Pending?

Not Applicable

### 11. Establishment Authority

Statutory (Congress Created)

### 12. Specific Establishment Authority

38 U.S.C. 2401

### 13. Effective Date

06/18/1973

### 14. Committee Type

Continuing

### 14c. Presidential?

No

### 15. Description of Committee

Non Scientific Program Advisory Board

### 16a. Total Number of Reports

No Reports for this Fiscal Year

### 17a.

Open

0

17b. Closed

0

17c. Partially Closed

0

Other Activities

0

17d. Total

0

### Meetings and Dates

No Meetings

Current Next  
FY FY

<b>18a(1). Personnel Pmts to Non-Federal Members</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>18a(2). Personnel Pmts to Federal Members</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>18a(3). Personnel Pmts to Federal Staff</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>18a(4). Personnel Pmts to Non-Member Consultants</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>18b(1). Travel and Per Diem to Non-Federal Members</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>18b(2). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Members</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>18b(3). Travel and Per Diem to Federal Staff</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>18b(4). Travel and Per Diem to Non-member Consultants</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>18c. Other(rents,user charges, graphics, printing, mail, etc.)</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>18d. Total</b>	\$0.00 \$0.00
<b>19. Federal Staff Support Years (FTE)</b>	0.00 0.00

**20a. How does the Committee accomplish its purpose?**

The Advisory Committee on Cemeteries and Memorials is authorized by title 38 U.S.C. § 2401 and charged with providing advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the administration of national cemeteries, the selection of cemetery sites, erection of appropriate memorials and adequacy of Federal burial benefits. The Committee also submits reports and recommendations to the Secretary and Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, as appropriate, that may call for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) operational changes and/or other measures designed to positively impact the burial benefits program, cemetery administration, and the delivery of benefits. The Secretary takes such

reports and recommendations under advisement for possible action. The Committee is comprised of members from diverse backgrounds and Ex-Officios from the National Park Service, American Battle Monuments Commission, and Army National Military Cemeteries. To accomplish its goals, the Committee holds two, semi-annual meetings (open to the public), and monthly/bi-monthly meetings to discuss administrative items. For Fiscal Year 2023, the Committee focused on Unclaimed Veterans Remains, Outreach, and issues impacting the utilization of tribal cemeteries. The Fall meeting was held November 2-3, 2022 in St. Louis, Missouri. The Honorable VA Deputy Secretary Donald Remy provided remarks to the Committee and formerly recognized outgoing Chair, Heather Braatz by presenting a Certificate of Appreciation. Deputy Secretary Remy discussed key priorities for the VA. In alignment with the President's mission of caring for all Veterans, the VA has developed a vision focused on four key attributes -advocacy, access, outcomes, and excellence. The committee received remarks from Mr. Matthew Quinn, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs who discussed the Vision for NCA and shared two of his top priorities as the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs: Information Technology and Utilization. Mr. Artis Parker provided an update on the HR 7105 Urn/Commemorative Plaque Benefit was provided by the Office of Memorial Products. Mr. Donn Owens provided an operational overview of Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery Complex, Briefings were provided on the National Training Center, National Cemetery Scheduling Office operations, Veterans Cemetery Grants Program updates and an update from the Veterans Benefits Administration about the unclaimed Veterans

remains process. The committee reviewed and discussed recommendations to present to the VA Secretary. The Spring meeting was held in person at the Department of Veterans Affairs Headquarters building in Washington, D.C., June 15-16, 2023. The Committee received remarks from Mr. Matthew T. Quinn, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs. The Committee received briefings from the Integrated Project Team on Unclaimed Veterans Remains which included representatives from the Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration. Additional briefings were presented by Barbara Morton, Veterans Experience Office, and Deyo Johnson, on the Pre-Need Eligibility Automation. The committee met at Quantico National Cemetery, and received a briefing on its operations and tour from Assistant Director, Damian Jacobs.

**20b. How does the Committee balance its membership?**

This Committee is uniquely qualified to provide guidance and advice to the National Cemetery Administration management and staff. Its composition includes representatives of Veterans' Service Organizations, military retirees, and business and community activists. The Department strives to develop a Committee membership that represents members with diverse professional and personal qualifications; experience in military service, military deployments, working with Veterans; committee subject matter expertise; and working in large and complex organizations. The Committee shall represent to the extent possible, Veterans of diverse eras and branches of service, as well as diversity in race/ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, and geographical background. Ex-officio

members represent Arlington National Cemetery, National Park Service, and the American Battle Monuments Commission and are familiar with administering cemetery operations and Federal government service.

**20c. How frequent and relevant are the Committee Meetings?**

The Committee usually meets two times per year at the call of the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs and in accordance with its charter. Committee members receive timely updates and briefings at each meeting from the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, the National Cemetery Administration's senior leadership, and VA management. Agenda items are reviewed by the Committee Chair and Designated Federal Officer to ensure their relevance to current and emerging issues. In FY 2023, the Committee met November 2-3, 2022 and June 15-16, 2023.

**20d. Why can't the advice or information this committee provides be obtained elsewhere?**

The Committee is required by section 2401 of title 38 U.S.C. The Committee assists the Secretary in ensuring that plans and programs are meeting the needs of Veterans and their eligible family members and meeting the mandate to maintain our national cemeteries and national shrines. Committee members also provide outreach by providing information about burial benefits to the public. It is the only public body in which all federal agencies charged with administration of a national cemeteries program are represented.

**20e. Why is it necessary to close and/or partially closed committee meetings?**

The Committee meetings are open to the public unless except when the Committee is conducting

tours of VA facilities. Tours of VA facilities are closed, to protect Veterans' privacy and personal information.

## 21. Remarks

The Committee developed five recommendations at the June 2022 meeting. In November 2022, the Committee developed 11 recommendations.

These recommendations were combined and submitted to the VA Secretary. The VA Secretary concurred on 8 of the 16 recommendations. In FY 2022, member Karen Durham-Aguilera was erroneously not reflected and should have been reflected. She did not have a break in service.

## Designated Federal Officer

Faith Hopkins Program Analyst/Outreach

Coordinator

Committee Members	Start	End	Occupation	Member Designation
Adkins, Paul	09/17/2021	12/31/2024	Chairman, Riverside NC Support Committee	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Brown, Eric	03/17/2022	03/31/2024	Former Texas State Cemetery Executive	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Callahan, Amerophan	09/17/2021	12/31/2024	Former NCA Senior Executive	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Duncan, Alvin	10/11/2022	12/31/2024	Dir, State Cemeteries Kentucky Dept. Veterans Affairs Executive	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Durham-Aguilera, Karen	05/09/2017		Director, Army Arlington National Cemetery	Ex Officio Member

Farrisee, Gina	07/20/2022	09/30/2024	Former NCA Executive	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Hernandez, Thomas	09/17/2021	12/31/2024	Branch Developer, Merendino Cemetery Care	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Hoplight, Michael	12/09/2020	12/31/2024	American Red Cross	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Kennedy, William	09/17/2021	12/31/2024	Chair, Yellowstone NC Support Committee	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Mohindra, Monica	06/30/2023	06/30/2025	Director, Veterans History Project, Library of Congress	Regular Government Employee (RGE) Member
Peatman, Jared	10/11/2022	10/11/2024	President, Four Score Consulting, LLC	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Sole, Thomas	10/01/2016		American Battle Monuments Commission	Ex Officio Member
Wagner, Gia	07/20/2020		National Park Service	Ex Officio Member
Watson, Floyd	12/09/2020	12/31/2024	Disabled American Veterans	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member
Wheeler, Candace	10/11/2022	10/11/2024	Senior Advisor, Tragedy Assistance Program	Special Government Employee (SGE) Member

**Number of Committee Members Listed: 15**

## Narrative Description

The Committee provides advice to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs on the VA's administration of national cemeteries and

makes recommendations to the Secretary on issues related to the selection of cemetery sites, erection of appropriate memorials and the adequacy of Federal burial benefits for all eligible veterans.

**What are the most significant program outcomes associated with this committee?**

Checked if  
Applies

Improvements to health or safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trust in government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Major policy changes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advance in scientific research	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effective grant making	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved service delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Increased customer satisfaction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of laws or regulatory requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Outcome Comments**

NA

**What are the cost savings associated with this committee?**

Checked if Applies

None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to Determine	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Under \$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$100,000 - \$500,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$500,001 - \$1,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$1,000,001 - \$5,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
\$5,000,001 - \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over \$10,000,000	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cost Savings Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Cost Savings Comments**

NA

**What is the approximate Number of recommendations produced by this committee**



**for the life of the committee?**

132

**Number of Recommendations Comments**

This is a total of recommendations for FY 2003 through FY 2023.

**What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Fully implemented by the agency?**

96%

**% of Recommendations Fully Implemented Comments**

Subject to budget constraints, NCA attempts to implement committee recommendations.

**What is the approximate Percentage of these recommendations that have been or will be Partially implemented by the agency?**

4%

**% of Recommendations Partially Implemented Comments**

**Does the agency provide the committee with feedback regarding actions taken to implement recommendations or advice offered?**

Yes ☒ No ☐ Not Applicable ☐

**Agency Feedback Comments**

The feedback is provided in written format that is mailed to the members and discussed as a part of the agenda during each advisory committee meeting. The Committee's report are located and can viewed at:

[https://www.va.gov/ADVISORY/Advisory\\_Committee\\_on\\_Cemeteries\\_and\\_Memorials.asp](https://www.va.gov/ADVISORY/Advisory_Committee_on_Cemeteries_and_Memorials.asp).

**What other actions has the agency taken as a result of the committee's advice or recommendation?**

Checked if Applies

Reorganized Priorities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Reallocated resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Issued new regulation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved grants or other payments	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other

☐

**Action Comments**

NA

**Is the Committee engaged in the review of applications for grants?**

No

**Grant Review Comments**

NA

**How is access provided to the information for the Committee's documentation?**

Checked if Applies

Contact DFO

☒

Online Agency Web Site

☒

Online Committee Web Site

☒

Online GSA FACA Web Site

☒

Publications

☐

Other

☐

**Access Comments**

N/A