
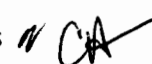

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board of County Commissioners

THRU: Robert S. LaSala, County Administrator 

FROM: Gwendolyn C. Warren, Bureau Director, Health and Human Services 

SUBJECT: Fallen Soldiers Memorial Recommendations

DATE: May 1, 2013

Per your request from the March 19, 2013, Board of County Commissioner's Meeting, the Department of Health and Human Services has reviewed various memorial tributes to families of fallen soldiers from the Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom wars.

The Department contacted Hillsborough, Hernando, Highlands, Manatee, Pasco, and Polk Counties to see if they had a policy. Hillsborough County is the only one that has developed a policy for honoring fallen soldiers. Most counties rely on local National Service Organizations, such as the American Legion or Veterans of Foreign Wars, to honor fallen soldiers.

Recommendations:

We recommend the Board of County Commissioners develop a policy for recognizing fallen soldiers from the Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom wars whose military service members have either been a resident of Pinellas County or who have immediate family members residing in Pinellas County at the time of the military service member's death.

Recommended guidelines for this policy:

- As Pinellas County becomes aware of the death of a military service member, the staff of the Health and Human Services' Veterans Services Unit will confirm with the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs that the fatality occurred in the line of duty, confirm that the deceased military service member was a resident of Pinellas County at the time of his or her death, or that immediate family members resided in Pinellas County at the time of the service member's death, and begin the process for a memorial proclamation to be read at a Board of County Commissioners Meeting.
- Within 90 days, the Veterans Services Unit Manager will contact the family of the deceased military service member to ascertain their wishes for the memorial proclamation, establish a date for the presentation of the memorial proclamation, and discuss any potential survivor benefits available to the family through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

- Health and Human Services will schedule the presentation of the memorial proclamation through the Communications Department at a regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners. The Communications Department will make a public notification of the memorial proclamation and presentation.
- The Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners will be notified of the death of the soldier and pending memorial proclamation through the County Administrator's office.
- The Fallen Soldier presentation at the Board of County Commissioners Meeting will include the Presentation of the Colors and a reading of the memorial proclamation honoring the fallen soldier. A copy of the memorial proclamation will be given to the family at this ceremony or taken to the family by the Health and Human Services' Veterans Services Unit staff.
- The Board may hold more than one Fallen Soldier memorial at a regular Board of County Commissioners Meeting.