

Public Comment
on G.2

From: Lisa Music <lisamusicwriter@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 10:33 PM
To: COB
Subject: John Haynes Memorial Veterans Hall

Caution: This email was sent from an EXTERNAL source. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments.

Dear Humboldt County Supervisors, especially Supervisors Steve Madrone and Mike Wilson,

As someone who regularly reports on county matters, I generally refrain from weighing in publicly with personal opinions. My role requires critical observation, and I strive to maintain objectivity by considering every angle. That said, there are moments when silence feels complicit, and Tuesday's vote on the John Haynes Memorial Veterans Hall in Southern Humboldt is one such moment. I feel compelled to speak—not just as a reporter, but as a resident and a witness to what this building has represented to our community.

I understand that Humboldt County is in a precarious financial position. Revenues are down, expenses are up, and difficult decisions loom. I also understand that the proposed rebuild of the veterans hall comes at a higher cost than it might have in years past, and that Southern Humboldt—while rich in heart—is not large in population. Viewed strictly through a narrow fiscal lens, voting "no" may seem like the responsible choice.

But this is not just a matter of money. This is a matter of debt, of honoring commitments, and of institutional integrity.

The community built that hall decades ago for its veterans—on land donated by the mother of a local soldier killed in World War II. It was a gift born from sacrifice, an offering of gratitude and healing. When the County became involved, it accepted a responsibility—to maintain the building and provide suitable space for veterans as outlined in California Military and Veterans Code §1262. That obligation wasn't just symbolic; it was contractual.

Over the years, veterans kept their end of the agreement. They shared their space, they served the community, and they trusted that the County would do its part. But the County did not. Instead of performing basic maintenance, it deferred and delayed—year after year—redirecting funds elsewhere while the hall deteriorated.

And here's where the analogy becomes unavoidable: the County borrowed from its veterans. Not in dollars, but in deferred responsibilities. It had the means to maintain the hall, especially during the economic high tide brought on by cannabis taxes, rising property values, and the Southern Humboldt revenue that fed the County's coffers. Yet the debt remained unpaid. And like any unpaid debt, interest accrued—not just in the form of rising construction costs, but in eroded trust.

Now, when the bill has come due, the County pleads poverty. But this is not a moment to cry poor when the obligation has existed for decades. This is not a situation where the County was blindsided or the need came unexpectedly. It is the culmination of long-term neglect. The price tag is not a surprise; it's the compounded cost of promises broken.

To reject funding for the rebuild now is to default on a moral and civic debt—one that the County has owed for years. It sends a message that deals made with the public, with veterans, and with history itself can be cast aside when they become inconvenient.

So I ask you plainly: Does Humboldt County pay its debts?

Will you honor a longstanding obligation, or will you continue to benefit from the resources and revenues of Southern Humboldt without reinvesting in the commitments made to its people?

You weren't the ones who made the original deal. But you are the ones who inherited it—and with it, the responsibility to make it right. Leadership is not measured solely by what you build during boom years, but by what you uphold during hard times.

Please, do not let this debt go unpaid a moment longer.

Sincerely,

Lisa Music

Clerk of the Board
825 5th Street, Room 111,
Eureka, CA

Lewis Lester, LCSW
PO Box 692
Redway, CA 95560
May 6, 2025

Dear Supervisor

I'm writing in support of the veterans in Southern Humboldt and the importance of rebuilding the Veteran's Hall.

After retiring as a counselor at the Eureka VA, I worked as a counselor in Garberville for the Redwood Vet Center between about 2009 and 2012.

During my work in Garberville, in addition to seeing veteran's individually, I ran a support group for veterans. This was mostly Vietnam veterans but also a few veterans who served in WWII, Afghanistan and Iraq.

As I recall, it was a time when the roof of the old Vet's hall badly needed repairs. This was one of the biggest triggers to the Veterans.

A trigger is a reminder of the trauma which results in reexperiencing the trauma . This was one of the major issues in the group at the time.

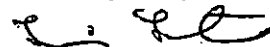
It brought up issues of neglect and betrayal, bringing up emotions that triggered many of their traumatic memories. They expressed anxiety about the deteriorating condition of the hall and the roof and the feeling of powerlessness to do anything about it as the county had control.

Ultimately the hall was ruined by the county's neglect. This brought up similar issues related to betrayal and neglect from their military service.

As the years went by and the hall was destroyed, there were constant threats to the hall being rebuilt but during every debate, the promise to rebuild was supposedly kept, only to be threatened to be cancelled time and again, This brought up strong feelings of betrayal again.

Let's not repeat the trauma. Please do not betray these veterans again. They have experienced enough trauma and betrayal.

Sincerely,
Lewis Lester, LCSW



From: Marcia Mendels <sohumgirls@asis.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 10:48 AM
To: COB
Subject: Comment on rebuilding John Haynes Memorial Veterans Hall in Garberville

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Dear Supervisors,

I am a longtime resident of Miranda. I have done everything this county has requested of me: built a permitted home, paid my taxes, supported county projects, and yet, I see very little coming back to the Southern Humboldt area, and by that, I mean Myers Flat and south of that.

You are now faced with paying to rebuild the building that you and your predecessors allowed to deteriorate, even though you had legally promised to maintain it. You are faced with having to spend more to do so, even though you could have built it years ago for less. Kicking the can down the road does not make things less expensive. Ever. If you do not build it now, you are saying you will never honor your promise to build it, because there will always be reasons not to. When you did have more money at your disposal, you chose to spend it on things other than this promise, and you are still choosing to spend what you have on projects in other areas of the county.

The reason to build it now is to honor your promises to our community and veterans. What do we have, without the value of our word? You might also consider that Michelle Bushnell is your colleague, and you have also made this promise to her. You will need her to vote on things that are important to her, and I would hope that she remembers how you vote on this.

Thank you for your consideration,

Marcia M Mendels
7650 Thomas Road
Miranda, CA 95553
707-943-1913

Sent from my iPad


FW: So Hum Vets Hall

From Damico, Tracy <TDamico@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Date Mon 5/5/2025 10:11 AM

To COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Cc Mattson, Tom <TMattson@co.humboldt.ca.us>; Hayes, Elishia <ehayes@co.humboldt.ca.us>

 1 attachment (11 KB)

Vet Hall letter BOS.doc;

Hi All –

Please see attached public comment.

Do not reply all.

Printed for the file.

Thanks

Tracy

From: Patte Rae <patte_ca@hotmail.com>

Sent: Monday, May 5, 2025 8:23 AM

To: COB <COB@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Cc: Bushnell, Michelle <mbushnell@co.humboldt.ca.us>

Subject: So Hum Vets Hall

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PRae for peace

- ~ We are what we think
- All that we are arises with our thoughts
- ~ With our thoughts we make the world.
- ~Buddha

G.2

May 5, 2025

C.O.B

Mike Wilson

Steve Madrone

Re: Garberville Veterans Hall

I am addressing this letter to our Supervisors Mike Wilson and Steve Madrone.

What was taken from our Veterans on the promise of replacing is what is in question here. I can only assume this is a fiscal issue with you both as I know you were elected as our county representatives to watch over the well being of our communities. I respectfully ask that you vote yes on replacing our So. Humboldt Veteran's Hall. This decision will allow our Vets to continue to be of service in their own space. They deserve that dignity being shown to them.

What I will close with is that when you do the right thing, all else works out, including the fiscal issue behind this decision.

Sincerely,

Patricia (Patte) Rae,
Community Service Volunteer and
45 year land owner and resident of Garberville

707 223-1560