



County of El Dorado Meeting Minutes Veteran Affairs Commission

Todd Smith, District I – Alternate John Poimiroo
Chris Cockrell, District II – Alternate Roger Reynolds
Kurt Raffetto, District III – Alternate Stephanie Carlson
Ken Welch, District IV – Alternate Tim Thompson
Daniel Browne, Jr., District V – Alternate Phillip Houseworth
Terry Thomas, VSO, Secretary Ex-Officio
Lauren Odell, Recording Clerk of Veteran Affairs Commission

Department of Veteran Services
130 Placerville Drive, Suite B
Placerville CA 95667
www.edcgov.us/veterans
Telephone: 530-621-5892
Fax: 530-621-2218

**Thursday, January 13, 2022 @ 1200 hours
Veterans Memorial Building
East Room
130 Placerville Drive
Placerville, CA 95667**

Due to increasing numbers of Covid cases in El Dorado County resulting from the Omicron variant, this meeting will follow masking and social distancing protocols per California Department of Public Health directions. All persons attending the meeting are required to wear masks.

Veteran Affairs Commission Agendas and Minutes are available for viewing in the Veteran Memorial Building lobby at 130 Placerville Drive, Placerville CA 95667 and online
<https://www.edcgov.us/Government/Veterans/Pages/Commission-Agendas-and-Minutes.aspx>

I. CALL TO ORDER - PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

Meeting called to Order 12:00pm. Terry Thomas, VSO, led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. ROLL CALL

District	Present	Absent
I	Todd Smith, John Poimiroo	
II	Chris Cockrell, Roger Reynolds	
III	Kurt Raffetto, Stephanie Carlson	
IV	Ken Welch, Tim Thompson	
V	Daniel Browne, Phillip Houseworth	

III. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME OF GUESTS

Introduction of Stephanie Carlson, District III Alternate Commissioner.
Terry Thomas, El Dorado County VSO; Tim Whalen, Citrus Heights Vet Center, MFSG/EDVR; David Zelinsky, American Legion Service Officer

IV. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND APPROVAL OF CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion to adopt the agenda made by Chris Cockrell. Second by Todd Smith. Motion passes 5-0.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Changes to minutes – note the absence of Daniel Browne. Motion to approve minutes made by Ken Welch. Second by Roger Reynolds. Motion passes 5-0.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR

No action items

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR

VII. GUEST SPEAKER - VETERAN SPOTLIGHT – Ken Santoro, Air Force Veteran and owner of Café Santoro

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

IX. EX-OFFICIO REPORT – RECEIVE AND FILE (Thomas)
Terry Thomas, VSO, presented his report. Report is attached.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS – RECEIVE AND FILE

- **TOT (Transient Occupancy Tax)** (Raffetto/Houseworth)
Report presented by Kurt Raffetto. Meeting was held between members of TOT Committee and members of HHSA (Veteran Services, Contracts and Finance) to discuss the process for funding Annual Grants.
Mini-grant contracts have been sent out by the El Dorado Community Foundation. Three of the mini-grants require additional review prior to funding.
- **RULES** (Poimiroo/Houseworth) None
 - **SPECIAL COMMITTEE – HOUSING** (Welch)
Housing report presented by Ken Welch. State government did not extend the assistance program that was in place for help with rent, utilities, and other expenses. Program ends Jan. 20th. VFW Poppy sales will still contribute to the special fund used to assist Veterans in emergency relief. Attachment included regarding Tiny Home project.
- **LEGISLATIVE** (Smith/Raffetto) None
- **TRANSPORTATION** (Browne/Thompson)
For transportation needs in the South Lake Tahoe region, refer all calls to Dan Brown and the Lake Tahoe Veterans Alliance.
- **BUDGET** (Houseworth/Reynolds) None
- **EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT** (Cockrell/Browne) None
- **SOCIAL MEDIA** (Reynolds/Poimiroo) None

XI. COMMUNICATIONS' REPORTS – RECEIVE AND FILE

- **VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING – VETERANS HOUSE COUNCIL** (Reynolds)
House Council Meeting Minutes attached
- **AMERICAN LEGION SERVICE OFFICER** (Zelinsky)
Report attached
- **EDC VETERANS ALLIANCE** (Poimiroo)
Memorial Day event being planned. New officers have been elected.
- **EL DORADO VETERAN RESOURCES** (Whalen)
Tim Whalen presented report. Continuous and consistent requests for firewood and supplies are coming into EDVR. Funding is available to help cover costs due to the power outages after the storms. Still working through dispersement of donations made for Caldor Fire victims.
- **REGIONAL VETERAN EVENTS**
Thrive 1035 event being planned for March 12, 2022 at the EDC Fairgrounds. Dinner in honor of Josh Tasabia.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

None

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. El Dorado County Veteran Owned Businesses (Cockrell)

Chris Cockrell has worked on a project to recognize Veteran Owned Businesses in El Dorado County. Benefits for Veteran Owned Businesses include: reduced business license fees, recognition by the Commission on Facebook and other social media, sticker in the window, and more. The draft of a letter was presented and will be reviewed and edited prior to sending to businesses. More discussion to take place. Request for approval to spend \$101.89 for the cost of the stickers to provide to the businesses. Motion made by Tim Thompson to approve request. Second by Todd Smith. Motion passes 5-0.

XIV. GOOD OF THE ORDER (Additional Commission and HHSa Staff Comments)

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

D. Wolfson

J. Connolly (submitted attachments)

XV. NEXT MEETING LOCATION, DATE & TIME

Thursday, February 10, 2022 @ 1200 Hours (E16 Winery, Somerset)

ADJOURNMENT 1:33pm

Veterans Services – January 2022 Report Terry Thomas, County Veterans Service Officer

1. **Claims Update:** Total claims and forms filed Dec 2021: 128

Including:

- 20 claims for Disability
- 23 statements in support of Claim
- 5 Supplemental Claims
- 3 requests for Higher level review
- 38 Appointment of Veteran Service Organization POA
- 14 Intent to File
- 3 VA Healthcare applications

2. **2021 Year in Review**

- 1,854 phone calls to front desk
- 844 scheduled appointments
- 1,276 walk in visitors

3 employees resigned, 1 retired, 4 hired

Office improvements:

- Front desk is fully staffed so every phone call is answered and every visitor is greeted and helped
- Established procedures to streamline the process to file claims for Veterans:
 - Appointment scheduling by front desk staff for Monday, Wednesday, Friday
 - Tuesday/Thursday walk in hours staffed by multiple Vet Reps
 - Redistribution of caseloads among Vet Reps
 - Internal training to best utilize the software for managing claims
 - Collaboration and cross-training of staff to allow for better coverage on cases

3. **SLT Office Update:**

On January 11 a representative from the EDC Veteran Service Office went as scheduled to the S. Lake Tahoe office. There were a total of seven veterans assisted for various issues, concerns or inquiries:

- 6 claims submitted
- 1 DMV Verification to have Veteran stamped on driver license
- 3 Veteran Representation Applications submitted
- 2 Intent To File.

4. VA Updates:

According to Dept of Veteran Affairs/Veteran Services Division

In the fiscal year 2020-21, CVSOs brought approx. \$402 Million into the States' economy EDC CVSO; in-person contact 1,081 and calls/emails 1,832, workload units 1,124, filed claims 524, Value of new payments \$3,835,402, number of VA Health Care Claims 44.

5. Food Insecurity & Nutrition Services For Veterans and Their Families:

VA and USDA have several programs available to assist Veterans with needs related to food insecurity, nutrition, and wellness.

In support of Veterans' whole-health and well-being, the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Nutrition and Food Services (NFS) and the U.S Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) work together to address Veterans' nutritional needs and food insecurity.

Food insecurity means access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources. Some of the programs available to Veterans and their family members include:

- USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Helps low-income individuals and families buy nutritious food with an electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card, which appears similar to a debit card.
- USDA SNAP Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) - SNAP recipients can receive services through the SNAP E&T Program which helps participants gain the skills, training, or work experience they need to increase their ability to obtain regular employment and meet the needs of employers.
- VA MOVE! – A Weight Management Program that is available to every Veteran receiving VA health care and provides Veterans with a variety of ways to participate in a comprehensive lifestyle intervention.
- VHA Healthy Teaching Kitchen - A VA program through which Veterans learn to prepare, cook, and eat healthy dishes that support nutrition and self-care.
- VHA Whole Health - A VA program that empowers and equips Veterans to take charge of their health and well-being. Health care team will get to know the Veteran and develop a personalized health plan specifically for them, taking into account their values, needs, and goals.

Note: Veterans do not need to be enrolled in the VA system to participate in SNAP. For more information, please visit: www.fns.usda.gov/snap/recipient/eligibility.

6. On December 21, 2021, President Biden signed the **“Responsible Education Mitigating Options and Technical Extensions Act”** or the **“REMOTE Act”** into law.

This law extends the various COVID-19 protections for GI Bill students from December 21, 2021, to June 1, 2022. In part, this means that students who were attending a course that was **converted to online training because of COVID-19**, and were getting paid the resident rate, **may continue to train online, and will continue to receive the resident housing rate until June 1, 2022.**

If you have questions about this change or your GI Bill benefits, please contact the Education Call Center (ECC) at 888-442-4551. The ECC is open Monday through Friday, from 7am to 6pm CT; it is closed on all federal holidays.

7. VA Suspension of Central Office and Travel Board Hearings January 2022:

This is due to health and safety concerns and this does not suspend all board hearings just in-person and the VA Board ask that claimants consider switching to virtual tele-hearing. Rescheduling can be done by visiting bva.va.gov and update the request through the hearing branch coordinator.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **John Poimiroo** <poimiroo@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Jan 3, 2022 at 11:24 AM

Subject: Fwd: A very good video on tiny houses for homeless Veterans

To: John Hidahl <john.hidahl@edcgov.us>

Cc: Ken Welch <K.Welch@comcast.net>

John,

Some background for you and the BOS on veterans housing:

The Veterans Affairs Commission has established a sub committee to gather information on veterans housing, headed by Commissioner Ken Welch. The sub committee will eventually suggest a way of estimating the number of homeless vets in the county.

Fortunately for vets, unlike other segments of our society, veterans can qualify for housing through the Veterans Homes program. Nevertheless, several vets in this county lack housing because there isn't an available room at a veterans home, they don't want to move to a veterans home because it may be too far away from friends and family or is in an undesirable location, don't qualify to live in a veterans home, or have drug or alcohol addictions which exclude them from living in a state veterans home.

Additionally, there are vets who are dealing with PTS and other service-related issues, or are of a younger age and cannot afford the high cost of housing in parts of our county (vets attending Lake Tahoe Community College) or who see veterans homes as only for the elderly. These are the kinds of issues our committee will explore, eventually.

The Vet Affairs Commission met with one vet housing developer to learn more about what he proposes. That involved a site inspection of John Conforti's Pollock Pines School site, where Conforti envisions a potential center for veterans training with vets living there in tiny homes (similar as to those seen in the following video) while attending the school. Conforti's concept is intriguing, but needs a relationship with an educational/vocational training institution (will it be technical, automotive, dental, medical?) or CalVet, as neither we (the Vet Affairs Commission) nor the VSO's office (HNSA) oversee or manage veterans housing or training programs. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gfk3F28u7GQ&t=74s>

I expect the issue of veterans housing to be one of continuing concern for the commission and wanted you and the BOS to know how we're approaching it.

Regards,

John Poimiroo, Chairperson (CAPT, USN-Ret)
El Dorado County Veterans Affairs Commission
(916) 801-1013

Attachments area

Preview YouTube video This Tiny Home Community Gives Homeless Veterans A Chance - Working To End Veteran Homelessness



**MINUTES OF THE 1/6/22 MEETING OF THE EL DORADO COUNTY
VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING COUNCIL**

Officers and members – 7/1/21-6/30/22: Chairman – Mac McAdams, VFW Post 10165; Vice Chairman – Bud Sweet, FRA Branch 275; Treasurer – Bud Sweet; Secretary – Dave Sauvé, VFW Post 10165; Trustees- Joe Young, FRA Branch 275 and Victor Mansfield, MCL Branch 697; At Large members – Bill Fiedler, VFW Post 2680, Mike Raffety, American Legion Post 119, Allen Amaro, DAV Chapter 63.

Chairman McAdams opened the business meeting with the flag salute and pledge of allegiance at 6:05 PM with 9 total in attendance. All officers were present and all organizations represented. No guests.

The minutes of the 12/2/21 meeting were accepted as published on a motion by Trustee Victor Mansfield and a second by Treasurer Sweet. The Treasurer's report was accepted as presented by Treasurer Sweet, subject to audit, on a motion by Secretary Sauvé and a second by Trustee Mansfield.

Organization events schedule for building use:

VFW Post 2680 – Monthly meeting 1/14/22

FRA Branch 275 – Breakfast 1/2/22, monthly meeting 1/22/22

MCL Detachment 679 – Monthly meeting 1/12/22

VFW Post 10165 – Monthly meeting 1/4/22, Breakfast 1/9/22

Veterans Commission – Monthly meeting 1/13/22

CAP – Meeting every 2nd and 4th Thursday – 6:00 PM in the East room

DAV Chapter 63 – Dark

American Legion Post 119 – Monthly meeting was 1/5/22 at their facility

Building Manager's Report: Dave Sauvé reported that he had no luck recruiting a less expensive custodial service to replace Pro-Line, and since it has been confirmed that the Council is responsible for funding the janitorial/custodial service for the building, he made a motion to request that the expense be funded via the \$15,000 annual stipend earmarked for the VMB out of county TOT funds. Trustee Mansfield seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. He will send a letter requesting this action to El Dorado County Facilities tomorrow (1/7/22). All of the many holiday events at the VMB went well – no problems. He will be sending a letter to Pro-Line janitorial service reminding them of their responsibilities in the VMB according to the newly renewed contract with El Dorado County.

Veterans Service Office report: No representative, therefor no report. There was no unfinished business tendered.

New Business: Tim Whalen of EDVR/MFSG and Citrus Heights Vet Center gave us an update on their activities, including a recent grant intended to assist veterans affected by the Caldor fire, a grant of \$5,000 from the Veterans United Fund through El Dorado Community Foundation. He also mentioned scheduled (Thursday mornings) at the VMB by a Citrus Heights Vet Center representative, and Veterans Voices continuing their meetings in the conference room upstairs on Mondays. With Commander McAdams of VFW Post 10165 and President Sweet of FRA Branch 275 both present, it was decided by mutual agreement and vote on a motion by Secretary Sauvé with second by Allen Amaro, to raise the price of the Sunday breakfasts at the

VMB (1st and 2nd Sundays) from \$6.00 for adults to \$7.00 due to the recent increases in food costs. Change will be effective for the February breakfasts.

“Good of the Council.” Secretary Sauvé moved to adjourn @ 6:30 PM, Allen Amaro seconded and Chairman McAdams adjourned the meeting at 6:33 PM after a final flag salute. Next meeting is Thursday, February 1st, 2022.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Sauvé, Secretary

American Legion Service Officer Report
12/26/2021

Here is what I just wrote to a friend who forwarded an article about Arnold Schwarzenegger buying tiny homes for Veterans:

I like Schwarzenegger for doing this.

I believe in Tiny Homes for all of us! Go minimalism!

Some challenges:

I think our local zoning/ordinances stopped someone from doing this, so we have to clear out those restrictions.

Sharing the house with another person can be problematic, although it is similar to what Victory Village in Jackson does.

And you need a system of supportive services, enforced rules, full mental health services, and a system to deliver other needs, like laundry, food, showers, etc.

Some of the folks I have tried to help would rip the plumbing out the first night.

Heaven is not a lockdown facility. I am handing out get out of hell cards all the time, but lots of people prefer hell. So, they sniff around heaven for a day, and then escape.

Sometimes it takes multiple attempts.

The homeless Vet gets a vote too. And sometimes, no matter what you do, they vote with their feet.

David Zelinsky
Service Officer

<https://nypost.com/2021/12/25/arnold-schwarzenegger-buys-25-tiny-houses-for-homeless-vets>

American Legion Service Officer Report
12/31/2021

Some of you heard much of this already, but the emphasis this time is on the fund raising efforts by, and the award given to Bill Bryant.

Bill would like help getting the word out about why it is a good idea to stick your loose change in those helmets you see at the local stores.

So, here is my take:

From 2008-2016 I took care of a WWII vet.

One of the main things was getting him his Aid and Attendance benefit, worth about \$1700 per month, through the VA.

After a few years, the VA contacted me, saying that they wanted all of the money back.

The reason why?

I had failed to let them know about his income from the Columbia something or others.

Turns out the Columbia something or others was a women's roller derby team in Columbia, South Carolina.

My buddy was in a wheel chair in assisted living in Placerville, California.

The VA was sure that because they had a 1099 with his social security number on it, they had all the proof they needed that he was moonlighting as a transvestite roller derby star, and there was no budging them.

Turns out the American Legion has Service Officers in the same building as the VA in Oakland, CA, where this case was adjudicated.

Turns out the American Legion has Service Officers in the same building as the VA in St. Paul, MN, where the benefits are disbursed from.

Turns out that those helmets support those Service Officers in doing their job.

Turns out that Bill Bryant, of Sons of the American Legion Squadron 119, El Dorado county, is winner of the Golden Helmet award for being the top fund raiser, over \$60,000.

And thanks to his efforts and support, and the efforts and support of the American Legion Service Officers, I finally got a happy phone call from the VA, Stephanie, from St. Paul, MN.

"We finally get it. He is not a transvestite roller derby star!"

Thank you, Bill, and thank you, American Legion.

David Zelinsky
Service Officer

2040 No Name Lane
Diamond Springs, CA 95619

January 10, 2022

El Dorado County Board of Supervisors
El Dorado County Counsel
El Dorado County Chief Administrative Officer
El Dorado County Director of Human Resources
El Dorado County Director of Health and Human Services
c/o 330 Fair Lane
Placerville, CA 95667

Subj: Abuse of Authority and Public Trust by County Commissioner

Dear Board of Supervisors and associated County officials:

This letter of complaint is to bring to your attention abuses of authority by Commissioner Chris Cockrell, who is currently engaged with others in the harassment of local school officials related to public health requirements imposed by the ongoing covid pandemic.

These acts have spilled over to complaints of students and their families being harrassed, and Mr. Cockrell's gathering of alleged school improprieties for apparently political purposes. (See enclosures 2-14 ; see also Go Fund Me account, "Legal Action in Support of Unmasked Boswell Kids," at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/legal-action-in-support-of-unmasked-boswell-kids> [as of January 10, 2022].)

Mr. Cockrell's acts are inconsistent with the County's written standards of civility, respect, and non-political acts expected to be carried out by County employees in the performance of their employment.¹ A County commissioner is apparently not subject to the County's personnel rules, but I would believe they should be *at least the minimum standard of conduct* expected of your appointed commissioners.

If anything, commissioners should be held to an *even higher standard* of responsible conduct and ethics, given that they are appointed by the Board of Supervisors and are

¹ See e.g., Part 3 of the County's Personnel Rules, titled "Code of Ethics, Commitment to County Public Service, and Respectful Workplace, available at <https://www.edcgov.us/Government/HumanResources/Documents/PersonnelRulesResolution018-2019.pdf> [as of January 10, 2022].

subject to the Board's direct supervision. This is supported by the County's Code of Ethics, which charges all "County officials and employees" to "[d]emonstrate the *highest standards* of personal integrity, truthfulness, and honesty in all public activities," and to "[u]phold these principles being *ever conscious that public office is a public trust.*" (italics added.)

Please note that the County's Code of Ethics applies to each of you, regardless of whether Mr. Cockrell adheres to them. Therefore, I'm asking you today, as responsible County officials, to stop coddling Mr. Cockrell's acts. These acts continue to embarrass El Dorado County, as demonstrated by Mr. Cockrell's recent self-aggrandizing Facebook post that includes kudos to four Supervisors for appointing him to the veteran affairs commission. (See Enclosure 1.)

If Mr. Cockrell wants to pursue abusive acts as a private citizen that is his right, which includes being personally responsible for any harm he causes. I strongly encourage you to give him unfettered opportunities to do both, by immediately removing Mr. Cockrell as a County commissioner, thereby relieving the County from any potential liabilities under the imprimatur of your official approval for his acts and their effects.

Mr. Cockrell's actions have nothing to do with the position he was appointed to, but which he continues to debase to the detriment of El Dorado County's goodwill. Please act now, by removing Mr. Cockrell from his appointed position, as your demonstration that abuses of an El Dorado County's public office are abuses of the public trust.

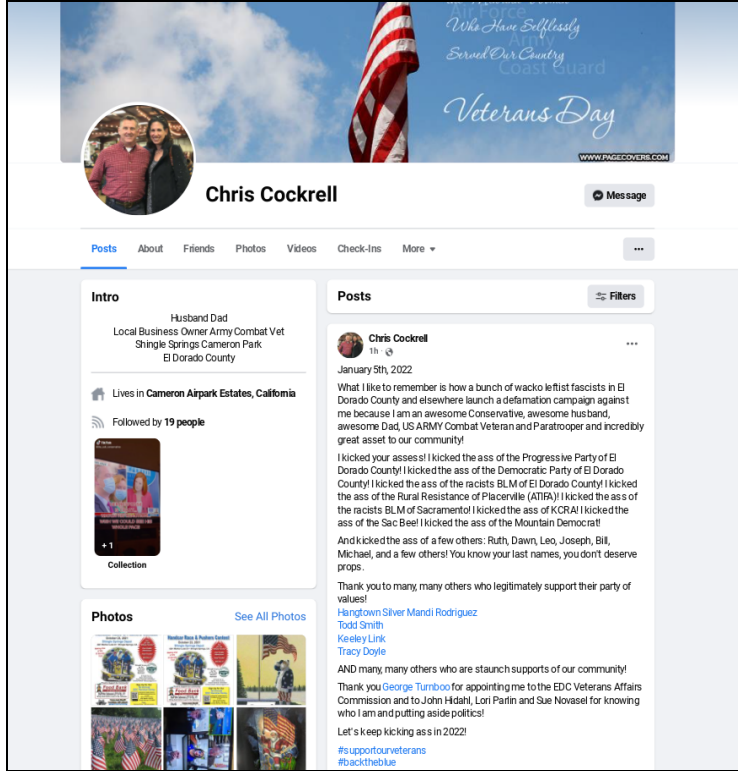
Sincerely,

s/Joseph Connolly

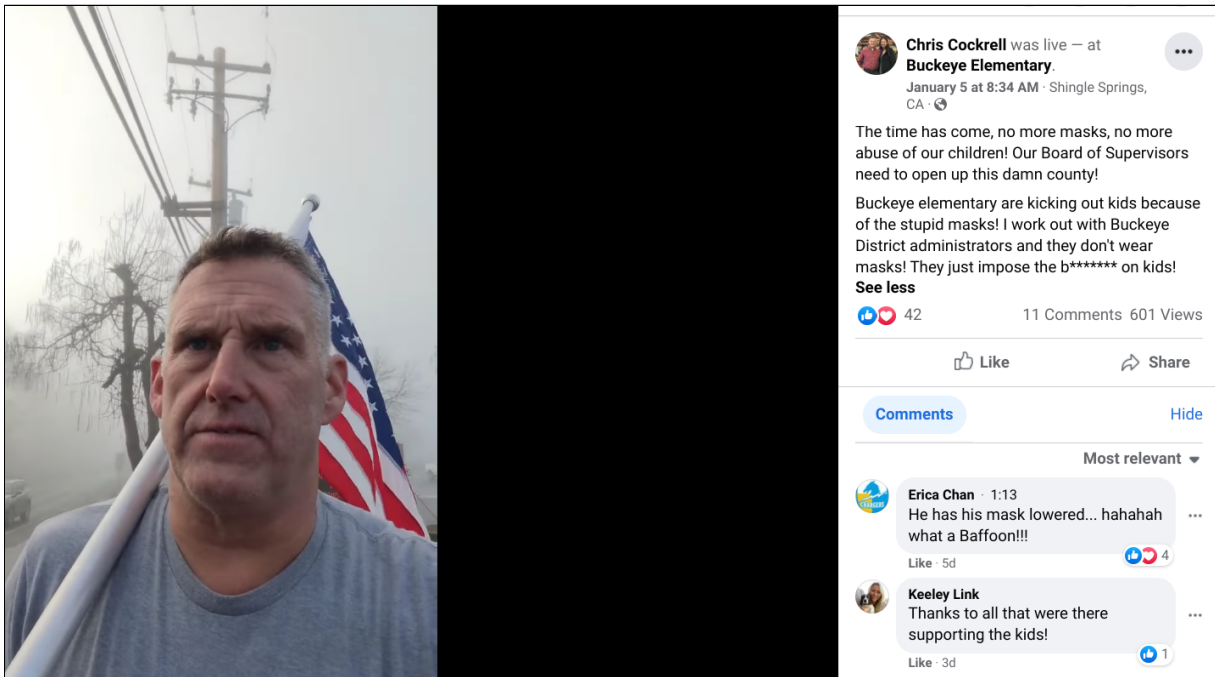
- Encl: (1) Chris Cockrell Facebook post, January 5, 2022
(2) Chris Cockrell Facebook post, January 5, 2022
(3) Image, Buckeye Elementary School protest, January, 2022
(4) Allegations of harassment and threats by protestors, January, 2022
(5) Solicitation of alleged school improprieties, January, 2022
(6) Solicitation of alleged school improprieties, January, 2022
(7) Press Release, p. 1, January 10, 2022
(8) Press Release, p. 2, January 10, 2022
(9) Press Release, p. 3, January 10, 2022
(10) Video transcript, harassment of Buckeye Elementary School principal, January 5, 2022
(11) Jill Boswell Facebook post, January 4, 2022

- (12) Jill Boswell Facebook post, January 4, 2022
- (13) Chris Cockrell Facebook post, January 10, 2022
- (14) Jill Boswell Facebook post, January 10, 2022

Copy: Dr. Ed Manansala, El Dorado County Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Kevin Cadden, Principal, Buckeye Elementary School
Mr. Richard Todd, Program Manager, Veterans Services



Enclosure 1
Chris Cockrell Facebook post – January 5, 2022



Enclosure 2
Chris Cockrell Facebook post – January 5, 2022



Enclosure 3
 Commissioner Chris Cockrell (circled in red)
 Buckeye Elementary School - January, 2022

ElDorado County chat Page

Marybeth Thames
 1h · 🌐

Just got notified TODAY (Saturday) that one of our grandkids was exposed to covid at Buckeye on Tuesday! That's not a typo. It took them all week to notify us. That is shameful.

Also, there were a few incidents at the school as well. Two men were dressed in paramilitary clothes, possibly armed, blocking the driveway and threatening the kids and parents for wearing a mask. It took convincing, but the school reluctantly called the sheriff. Anyone care to guess what happened? That's right. Not a thing. The useless sheriff basically wagged a finger and said go away. Now these guys didn't have kids at the school and had no business being there. The very next day, 2 women literally got in the face of our 9 year old grandkid for wearing a mask. They didn't have kids at the school either and were most definitely on school grounds as they accosted our little. Again, the school reluctantly called the sheriff and again, nothing.

I'm beyond furious and don't know what to do. I used to have respect for law enforcement but not anymore. The sheriff here doesn't give two craps about the citizens of this county unless they agree with his politics and I'm really over it. I'd complain, but what good would it do.

AND, Ponderosa had more than 130 cases but aren't notifying people.

22 Comments

Like Comment

View 5 previous comments All comments

Joined + Invite

Visible
 Anyone can find this group.

El Dorado County, California

General

Recent media

Hospitals are so saturated with a omicron variant that there is not even time to put the arms to the mannequins in the media.

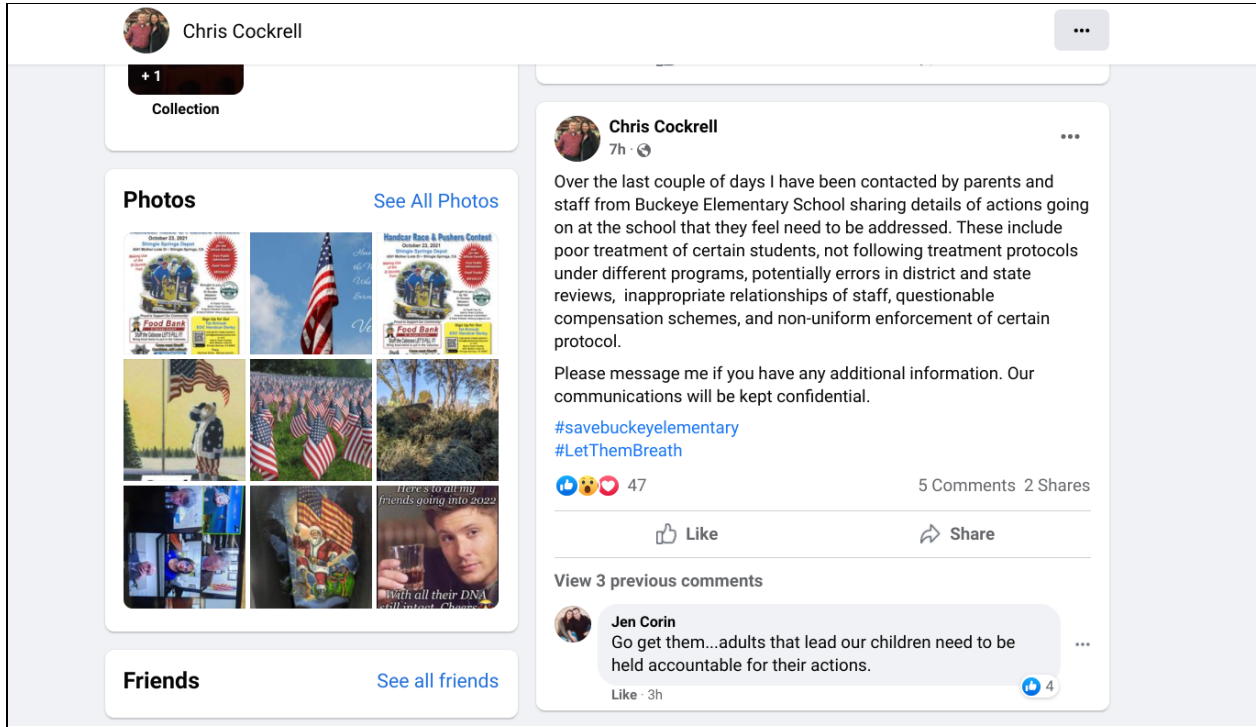
James Moore shared a post.

SHOW ME KEPPALOGA #3 LET'S GO BRANDON & BUTTRICK LEFTIES

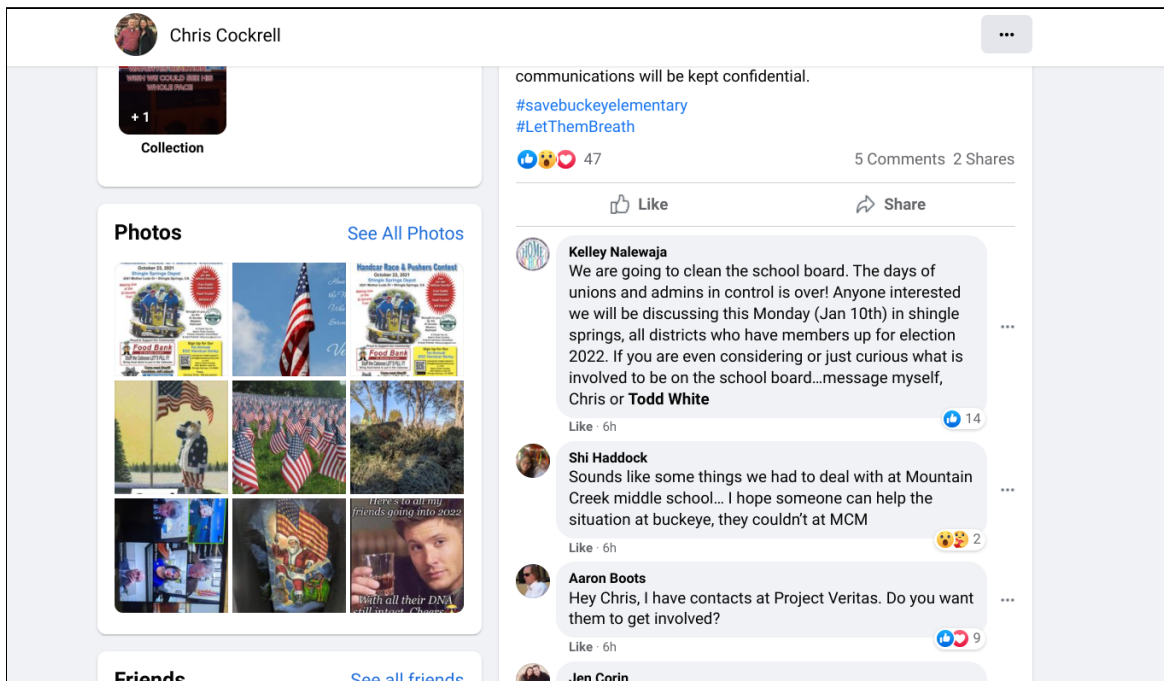
HELLO HELLO

See all

Enclosure 4
 Allegations of harassment and threats by protestors
 Buckeye Elementary School - January, 2022



Enclosure 5
 Solicitation of alleged school improprieties – January, 2022



Enclosure 6
 Solicitation of alleged school improprieties – January, 2022

PRESS RELEASE FOR

January 10, 2022

Children Are Being Denied Their Legal Right to In-Person Instruction at School

On January 4, 2022, the Buckeye Unified School District (BUSD) illegally excluded Leo Boswell and Cassidy Boswell from in-person instruction at Buckeye Elementary School in Shingle Springs, California. The El Dorado County community supports children's rights to an in-person education at schools, regardless of masking or Covid-19 vaccination choice.

Jill Boswell, Mom of Leo & Cassidy:

On 11/18/21 our son Leo decided he no longer would wear a mask at school. He doesn't believe that God wants people covering their faces. When he was attempting to enter the classroom, he was stopped and sent to the office. We were contacted by office staff and told to take him home. On 11/19/21 both Leo and Cassidy (our daughter) chose to attend school maskless. Both of our children were sent home. This has continued every school day, since then. Our children collectively and historically have not missed more than 7 days (for medical reasons) of school ever! They are in 5th and 2nd grade and LOVE attending school. Currently they have missed 21 days of education since 11/18/21, due to retaliation from the school. 1/4/22 (see page 3 attached) the school issued a formal letter stating that they were "Medically Excluding" our children from school.

This violates The 1964 Civil Rights Act Under Title VI. Under Title VI, schools may not retaliate against any person because he or she is opposed to an unlawful education practice or policy or made changes, testified, or participated in any complaint under Title VI. If this does occur, it is considered a

1 of 3



The Boswell Family 1/7/22

violation of Title VI.

My family and I are overwhelmed with the community support! We encourage families to stand together for mask and medical choices. We never imagined we would become the family example for a community movement. We refuse to let our children be harassed by the Buckeye Elementary School Staff and BUSD leadership. We encourage you to stand with your children, with us and SUPPORT FREEDOM OF CHOICE.

We want to work with the school on a policy that would allow our children and all others to have the choice not to mask for "in person" instruction. We will be issuing a legal demand this week. If our children are denied their "in person" instruction, we will have no other option but to pursue alternative legal pathways.

Enclosure 7

Press Release, p. 1 of 3 - January 10, 2022

Sharon McKeeman, Founder of Let Them Breathe:

These children have been courageously, peacefully and persistently standing firm on their right to smile at school. Their school has harassed and intimidated them daily for being bare faced and is now illegally excluding them from in-person education.

Mike Wilkes, Teacher:

With many school districts implementing policies to relax masking enforcement, BUSD continues to harass and bully the Boswell family. We encourage all community members to stand for medical choice with the Boswells.

Jonathan Zachreson, Founder of Reopen California Schools, Assembly District 5 Candidate :

The treatment of these school children and excluding them from in-person education is disturbing. I call on the district to immediately reverse course and to respect the rights of families in their community.

For More Information and to Advocate for Children, Contact:

edcfreedomcoalition@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/edc.freedomtochoose/>

Telegram:

<https://t.me/+tuMXxIWJZadhYTdh>

Signal:

EDC Parents and Teachers United


letthembreathe.net

reopencaliforniaschools.com

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/legal-action-in-support-of-unmasked-boswell-kids>

Enclosure 8

Press Release, p. 2 of 3 - January 10, 2022



BUCKEYE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Brenda Hanson-Smith, Ph.D., Winston Pingrey, Kirk Seal, Gloria Silva, Jon Yoffie

P.O. Box 4768, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762
5049 Robert J. Mathews Parkway, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762
(530) 677-2261 - (916) 985-2183
Fax (916) 934-0920
www.buckeyeusd.org

TO: Mr. and Mrs. Boswell
FROM: Kevin Cadden, Principal
SUBJECT: Notice of Health Exclusion for Leo and Cassidy Boswell
DATE: January 4, 2022

Due to the fact that Leo and Cassidy Boswell have demonstrated an unwillingness to comply with the California Department of Public Health Mask Mandate, the Buckeye Union School District is implementing a Health Exclusion from Buckeye Elementary School campus today.

The California Department of Public Health mandate provides, in pertinent part, as follows:



Wendy A. Harrison, M.D., Dr.P.H.
State Public Health Officer & Director

November 24, 2021

TO: All Californians

SUBJECT: COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California, 2021-22 School Year

Related Materials: 2021-2022 K-12 Schools Guidance Q&A | CDPH Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings | K-12 Schools Testing Framework 2021-2022 | Safe Schools for All Hub | American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools | More Languages

Updates as of November 24, 2021:

- Section 16, School-Based Extracurricular Activities, has been updated.

Safety Measures for K-12 Schools

1. Masks

- Masks are optional outdoors for all in K-12 school settings.
- K-12 students are required to mask indoors, with exemptions per CDPH face mask guidance. Adults in K-12 school settings are required to mask when sharing indoor spaces with students.

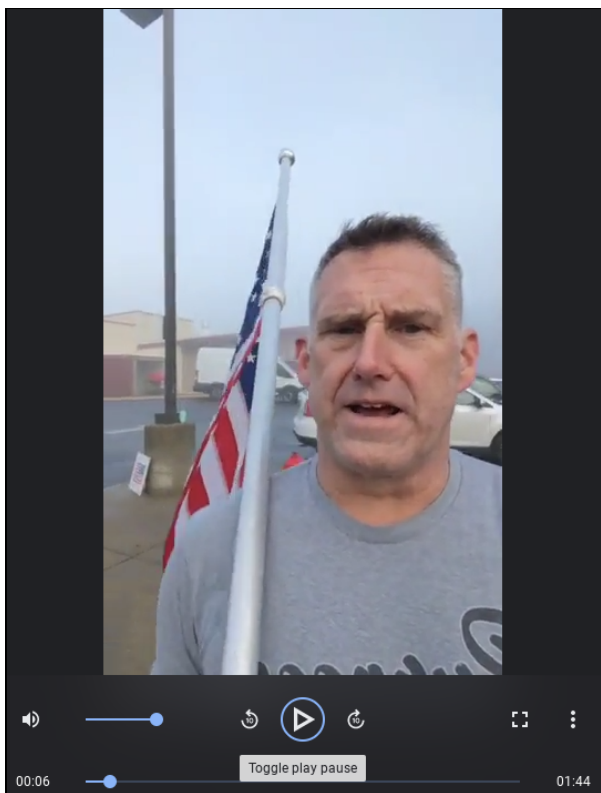


STATE SEAL
CALIFORNIA

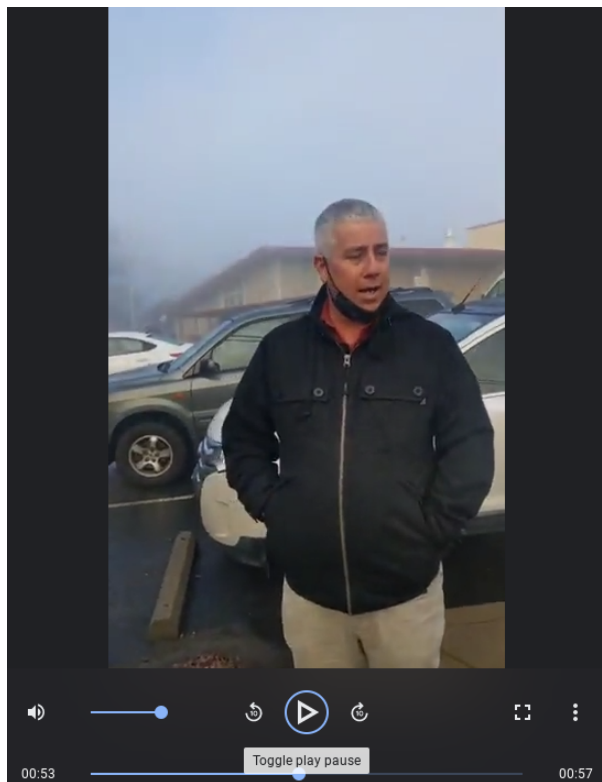
APR 17

Enclosure 9
Press Release, p. 3 of 3 - January 10, 2022

Enclosure 10 is a Facebook Live video posted by Mr. Cockrell, as shown and transcribed below, showing his harassment of Buckeye Elementary officials. The video is attached to the email submission of this letter via the clerk's office for the Board of Supervisors.



Chris Cockrell
Facebook Live video - Jan. 5, 2022



Buckeye School Principal
Facebook Live video - Jan. 5, 2022

TRANSCRIPT OF ENCLOSURE 10

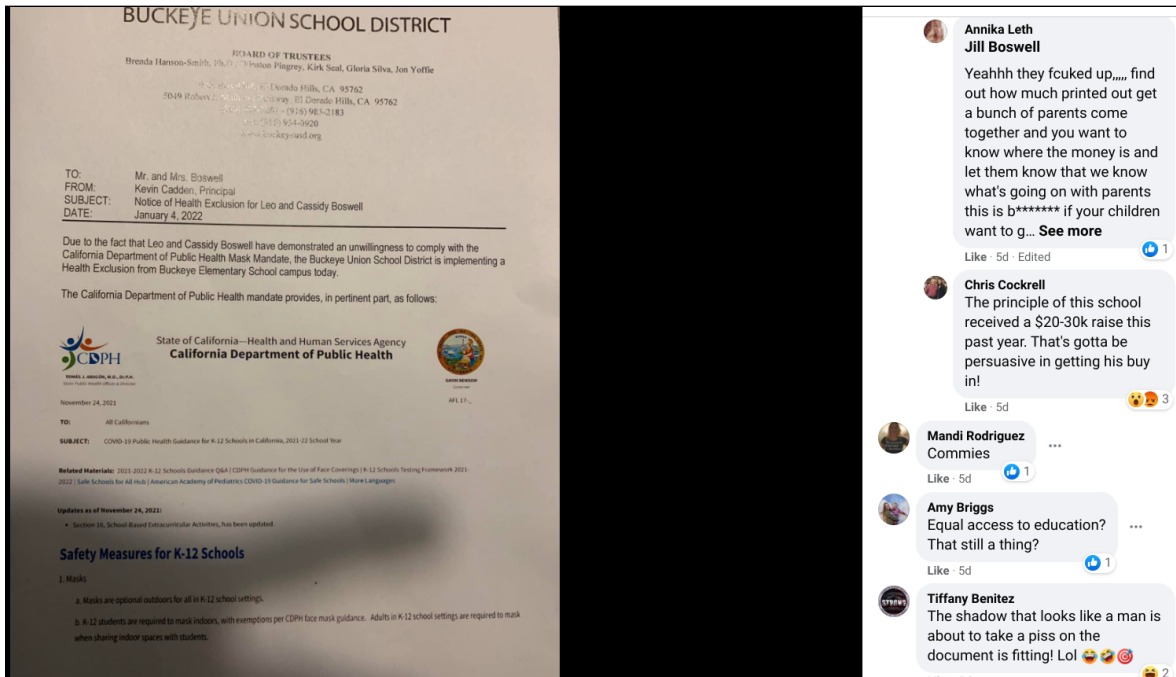
“Hey, good morning. Chris Cockrell. American. Live in El Dorado County. I’m out at Buckeye Elementary. It’s time to protest the bullshit of kicking kids out of schools, etc. The principal’s walking up here.”

[To principal] “We’re going to stay on the sidewalk. Right here. That’s fine, we’re going to stay right here on the sidewalk. Call EDSO. This is what we’re gettin’ at. We met, we talked at the meeting. We’re done. What you’re doing to the Boswell family - you’re live on Facebook, just so you know. You’re being recorded as well. We’re done. No. This is it. You’re done.”

[As principal turns and walks towards the school] “How much was your raise last year? Tell ‘em. How much was your raise last year? How much was your raise? Was it \$30,000, to keep abusing children? Why were you addressing me without a mask covering your face? [NOTE: Mr. Cockrell was not wearing a mask.] Keep laughing. Laugh. Laugh.”

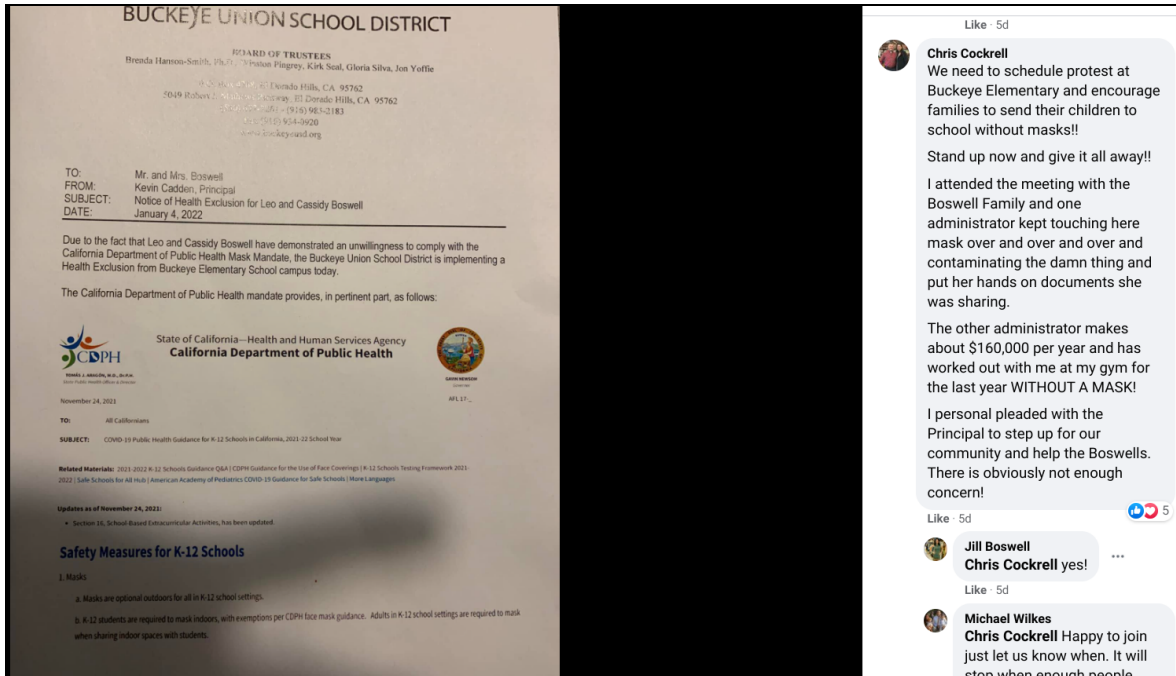
[Turning back to protest] “There you go. No. We’re done. We’re not on school property. We’re standing on the sidewalk, right here on the right of way. This is what they tried to say over at Pondo [Ponderosa High School]. I talked to a deputy, and ... anyway. Get down here folks. We need more support for these families who are tired of administrators abusing their kids.”

END OF TRANSCRIPT FOR ENCLOSURE 10



Enclosure 11

Jill Boswell Facebook post/Chris Cockrell comment – January 4, 2022



Like · 5d

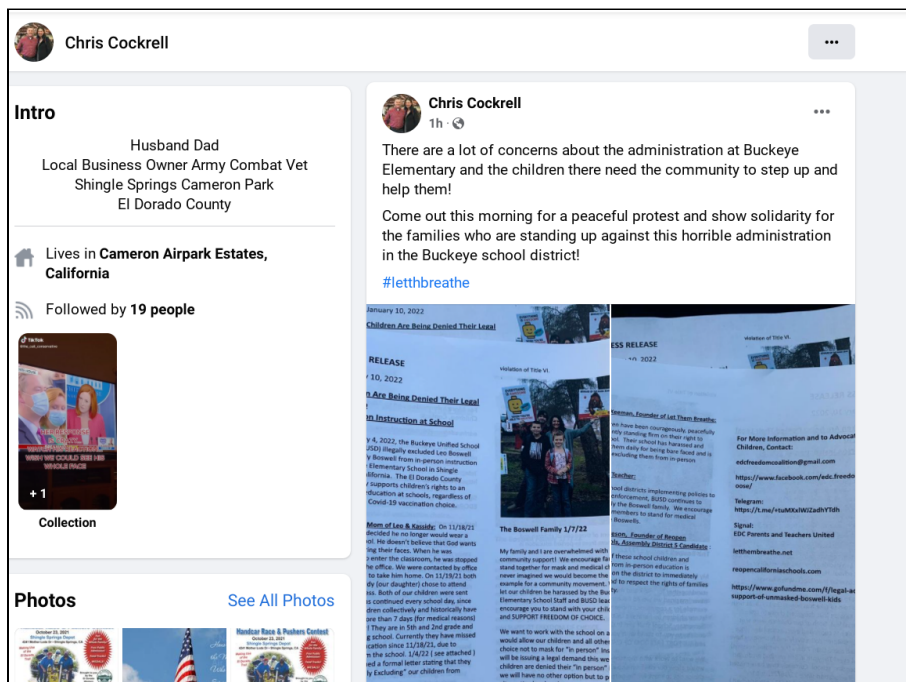
Chris Cockrell
 We need to schedule protest at Buckeye Elementary and encourage families to send their children to school without masks!!
 Stand up now and give it all away!!
 I attended the meeting with the Boswell Family and one administrator kept touching here mask over and over and over and contaminating the damn thing and put her hands on documents she was sharing.
 The other administrator makes about \$160,000 per year and has worked out with me at my gym for the last year WITHOUT A MASK!
 I personally pleaded with the Principal to step up for our community and help the Boswells. There is obviously not enough concern!

Like · 5d

Jill Boswell
Chris Cockrell yes! ...
 Like · 5d

Michael Wilkes
Chris Cockrell Happy to join just let us know when. It will stop when enough people

Enclosure 12
 Jill Boswell Facebook post/Chris Cockrell comment - January 4, 2022



Enclosure 13
 Chris Cockrell Facebook post - January 10, 2022



Enclosure 14

Jill Boswell Facebook post/Chris Cockrell comment - January 10, 2022

January 13, 2022

From: Joseph Connolly, M.A., QMCS, USCG (Ret.)
To: El Dorado County Veterans Affairs Commission
Mr. Richard Todd, Program Manager, Veterans Services

Subj: For the Good of the Order

The agenda item, “Good of the Order,” generally refers to “that portion of the agenda or meeting during which members may make statements or offer observations about the character or work of the organization without having any particular item of business before the meeting.” It is “also the time to offer a resolution to bring a disciplinary charge against a member for offenses committed outside of a meeting.”¹

On January 10, 2022 I submitted a formal complaint to the Board of Supervisors of abuses of power and the public trust by Commissioner Chris Cockrell. The complaint has been submitted to the commission for this meeting, and is also summarized on the enclosed pages.

I sincerely hope you will **act today** to stop these abuses that tarnish the veteran affairs commission in their wake. The disciplinary resolution(s) you pass can include the following:

- Call for Commissioner Cockrell’s immediate, voluntary resignation; and/or,
- Recommend Commissioner Cockrell’s immediate removal by the Board of Supervisors; and/or,
- Recommend to the Board of Supervisors a statement of public apology by the veteran affairs commission to the officials, families and students of Buckeye Elementary School, acknowledging Commissioner Cockrell’s unapproved acts of harassment and improper solicitation; or,
- In the alternative, continue the matter for action by the veteran affairs commission at its next scheduled meeting, to include public comment.

Sincerely,

s/Joseph Connolly

Encl: (1) Summary of Abusive Acts

¹ See e.g., <https://oaedm.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Part-5-Appendix-D-For-the-Good-of-the-Order-1.pdf> [as of January 13, 2022].

**SUMMARY OF ABUSIVE ACTS
BUCKEYE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

1. Ridicule of required mask requirements / Harassment of school principal

On January 4, 2022 Commissioner Cockrell posted online, “We need to schedule protest at Buckeye Elementary and encourage families to send their children to school without masks!” (Enclosure 12.)

In a Facebook Live video on January 5th, 2022, Commissioner Cockrell livestreams his displeasure with mask requirements in place at Buckeye Elementary School, then berates the school’s principal. He complains, for example, that “it’s time to protest the bullshit of kicking kids out of school, etc.” (Enclosure 10) and “Buckeye District administrators ... just impose the b***** on kids! (Enclosure 2.)

Commissioner Cockrell rudely responds to the school’s principal and then harasses him by questioning his salary: “How much was your raise last year? Tell ‘em. How much was your raise last year? How much was your raise? Was it \$30,000, to keep abusing children? Why were you addressing me without a mask covering your face? [NOTE: Mr. Cockrell was not wearing a mask.] Keep laughing. Laugh. Laugh.” (Enclosure 10.) Commissioner Cockrell apparently believes the principal’s salary increase has “gotta be persuasive in getting his buy in!” (Enclosure 11.)

On January 10, 2022, Commissioner Cockrell continued to encourage protests at Buckeye School, to “show solidarity for the families who are standing up against this horrible administration in the Buckeye school district!” (Enclosure 13; see also Enclosure 14 comments.)

In comparison, Buckeye School is apparently being “horrible” for enforcing state masking mandates for K-12 children, which “Leo and Cassidy Boswell have demonstrated an unwillingness to comply with.” (Enclosure 9, page 3.)

2. Harassment of school families and students

At least one person shared complaints online of being threatened by “two men [who] were dressed in paramilitary clothes, possibly armed, blocking the driveway and threatening the kids and parents for wearing a mask.” (Enclosure 4.) The following day, the same person complained that “2 women literally got in the face of our 9 year old grandkid for wearing a kid.” (*Ibid.*)

There's no indication that Commissioner Cockrell intervened to stop the public from being harassed by his fellow protestors, or that he has done anything to apologize to that grandparent, who has been mocked online by Commissioner Cockrell's supporters after the fact. (See **Enclosure 3.**)

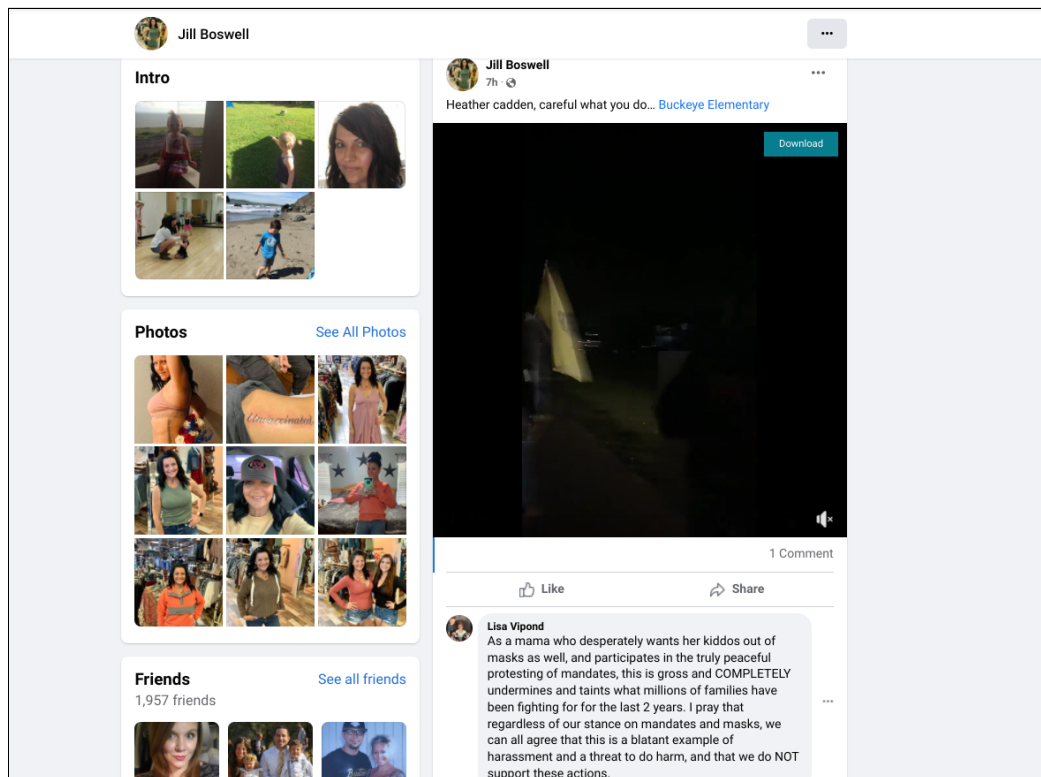
3. Solicitation of alleged school improprieties for legal or political purposes

Commissioner Cockrell is soliciting allegations of school improprieties with the promise of confidentiality, acts without any connection or authority to his appointed position. (**Enclosures 5-6.**)

4. Harassment of school principal and his family at their home

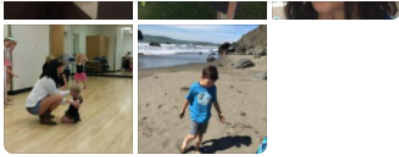
Additionally, on the evening of January 11, 2022, a group of protestors including Jill Boswell, the mother of the family alleging school harassment of her children, harassed the Buckeye School principal and his family at their home. This included a man repeatedly yelling into a megaphone, causing disturbance to neighbors as well.

The following screenshots show Mrs. Boswell's posting of a video documenting her harassment, and immediate condemnations of that harassment by other members of the public.





Jill Boswell



Photos

See All Photos



Friends

1,958 friends

See all friends



Jeff Lee



Connie Melrose



Andrew Jeffery



Lisa Vipond

As a mama who desperately wants her kiddos out of masks as well, and participates in the truly peaceful protesting of mandates, this is gross and COMPLETELY undermines and taints what millions of families have been fighting for for the last 2 years. I pray that regardless of our stance on mandates and masks, we can all agree that this is a blatant example of harassment and a threat to do harm, and that we do NOT support these actions.

Like · 43m



John Dawson

Lisa Vipond well said. ...

Like · 25m



Jill Boswell

You're both cute, move along! ...

Like · 14m



Amanda Rhodewalt

Jill Boswell, I guess I'm cute too because I'm horrified that you think this is ok. I hate masks with a passion and am completely disgusted with the way you are going about the fight. Why not go to someone who has the power to affect real change? Mr. Cadden is just trying to keep the school open.

Like · 9m · Edited



Laurie Teixeira-Morton

Well said Lisa! I am also a mom that would love nothing more than to see kids out of masks, but this was unacceptable! This is my neighborhood and I witnessed this grossly lead protest. What was accomplished is that you scared and upset kids and neighbors. The person on the megaphone spewing obscenities was completely inappropriate, and had nothing to do with your cause. Why are you not in front of the District Office or at the Capital? Trying to disgrace a principal and his family who can not change the mandates is unacceptable.

