

**From:** Peter Haslund [<mailto:haslund@cox.net>]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 02, 2013 12:15 PM  
**To:** Wolf, Janet  
**Subject:** Re: Schism: Veterans Memorial Building

Hi Janet

Though painful, I support the decision recommended by County General Services.

I think it would have been far better if the Vets themselves could have crafted a long-term solution to their -- terribly ongoing -- internal dispute, but my understanding is that the wounds are so deep, and the conflict has been so intense, that neither reason nor a clear sense of inclusive mission have survived. Thoughtful people who might have made a difference have gone away.

With the county in charge of the actual administration of the building, I would hope that an advisory committee could be formed that would be committed to the long-term needs of the veterans, particularly those now returning from foreign engagements who will truly need our help. I speak as a Vietnam Vet who remembers a time in the early 1970's when that era's veterans returned, often severely damaged. Many of us who were not so damaged found it healing to be helpful to our fellow veterans. It was a process designed to be mutually beneficial...and it worked. I spent many hours with young, confused veterans whose return was met with public scorn, both blamed for starting that war and for losing it. We had a Vets Center at that point, and some public funding, but much good was accomplished by volunteers. Our Veterans Memorial Building could certainly serve such a function.

I would certainly be willing to help. Our veterans -- none of them -- deserve to be neglected! Our focus should be on them, not on glorifying war or searching for heroes. It seems to me that our efforts would be better directed toward a simple mission: creating a safe place where veterans could assemble for the purpose of healing so as to make re-entry into ordinary civilian life both manageable and effective.

Peter

PS. You are free to use these thoughts in any way you choose.