

VETERANS FOR PEACE

Veterans Working Together for Peace & Justice Through Non-violence. Wage Peace!

VFP National Board Meeting Minutes April 5 & 6, 2002

David Cline, National President of Veterans For Peace, called the meeting to order at 9:00AM on Saturday April 6, 2002. Members present in addition to David were Ellen Barfield, Vice President, Lincoln Grahls, Treasurer, Frank Houde, Recording Secretary, Woody Powell, National Administrator, John Amidon, Bob Heberle, John Kim, Barry Reisch, Gideon Rosenbluth, Lee Vander Laan and Wayne Whittman. Members absent were Fredy Champagne and Paul Brailsford. The Meeting Agenda was reviewed and approved with two additions. David Cline requested addition of the Military Topics Projects and John Kim requested addition of the Global Action Organization.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lincoln Grahls Gave the Treasurer's report. After reviewing the numbers he stated that the VFP National Organization is solvent and indeed has a current surplus. He expressed a desire to invest that surplus in CDs or some such suitable interest-bearing instrument. He also asked for guidance as to a limit amount of operational expenditure for unbudgeted items that may be made by the National Administrator without having to get specific approval by the board—such expenditures to be made only with concurrence of the Treasurer. It was noted that our CPA (Ruth Flannery's daughter Kay) who is setting up the National Office accounts is working far harder than is warranted by the fixed fee being paid her for the job. Lee Vander Lann had some concerns: 1) that it is understood that VFP takes its management cut on project funds (such as the Iraq Water Project) when it disburses those funds. 2) That telephone service available on Digital Subscriber Lines that can be obtained through the internet can save us a very significant percentage of our telephone costs. 3) That certain telephone expenses should be "split out". The report was unanimously approved.

1. Wayne Whitman, with Bob Heberle's second, moved that the Treasurer be empowered to invest surplus funds in six month CDs. The motion was carried unanimously.

2. Later on in the meeting Gideon Rosenbluth, with Ellen Barfield's second, moved that expenditure for unbudgeted items costing over \$250.00 must be specifically approved by the VFP board. The motion was carried unanimously.

NATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Woody Powell gave his report as National Administrator. He noted that since the September 11 tragedies paid memberships have grown from less than 800 to significantly over 1500 and are still continuing to climb. There were discussions of dues policies, at least some of which had been approved at previous meetings. As a result David Cline asked that Woody write up our dues policy including coverage for new members in their first year. Woody agreed to do so. Lee Vander Laan noted that it would be a good idea if our Policy Manual were on the web. Pay and medical coverage for our full time employee, Kim, was discussed. Woody and Lincoln will investigate Medical Insurance for her. Other items of concern were outreach and use of mailing lists. The report was unanimously approved.

MEMBERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Lincoln Grahls made the report of the Membership and Development Committee. He reiterated Woody's current membership figures and recommended that we outreach to like minded organizations as one way of getting more members. Life memberships, their pros and cons and the development of

life membership endowment funds were discussed. David Cline noted that, "Joining Veterans For Peace is in itself taking a stand". Lee Vander Laan suggested that we develop a link ad that will attract interest (of potential members and like minded organizations). The report was unanimously approved.

STRATEGY COMMITTEE REPORT

John Amidon reported for the Strategy Committee, noting that it is essentially not functioning. Few members had completed the detailed questionnaire designed for committee use. The report was approved.

NEWSLETTER

In the absence of Peter Shaw, editor of the newsletter, David Cline spoke on the importance of the newsletter and urged everyone to send material to Peter and get the word out to others that its needed.

CONVENTION COMMITTEE

In the absence of Andy Anderson, chair of the Convention committee, Wayne Whittman noted that initial plans for the 2003 convention should be readied for presentation at the 2002 Convention in Duluth this August. People experienced in setting up conventions will be needed as advisors and as workers to make the 2003 and subsequent conventions go.

3. Wayne Whittman moved, Gideon Rosenbluth seconding, that we solicit proposals for sites for the 2003 Convention and identify people in those localities willing to take responsibility for the setup work. This task should be completed not later than July 4, 2002. The motion was carried unanimously.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE CHAIR

Wayne Whitman noted that a Nominations Committee Chairperson should be appointed, whereupon President, David Cline, appointed him to that post. Wayne agreed to serve in that capacity. It was noted that the normal 4-5-4 expiration pattern of board member terms in office has been disrupted and the pattern in currently 3-6-4. Ways of correcting this problem were discussed. It was further noted that with the exception of Fredy Champagne there are currently no national board members from the southern or western United States. We need to seek nominations to the board from these parts of the country.

4. John Kim moved, with John Amidon seconding, that the membership be notified of vacancies opening up on the national board and that those that have an interest in running be invited to notify Nomination Committee Chairperson, Whittman, of their interest. The motion was carried unanimously.

ZONES OF CONCERN & STRUGGLE (ZOCS)

Lee Vander Laan gave the overall report on Zones of Concern and Struggle (ZOCS) activities. He covered the Martin Luther King Discussions held earlier this year then turned the floor over to John Amidon who spoke on the progress of the Peaceful Village Project sponsored by Albany, NY's Chapter 10. Lee then spoke on Alan Pogue's proposal to prepare 34 of his photos, taken during his VFP sponsored travels in Afghanistan, for a traveling photo show. The costs of show preparation and presentation at several locations are estimated at \$5500

5. At this time Lee Vander Laan moved with Lincoln Grahlf's seconding, that Veterans For Peace provide \$5500 to purchase two (2) special shipping cases and reimburse other expenses for Alan Pogue's 34 picture traveling photograph show. The motion was carried unanimously.

Continuing the ZOCS report Lee spoke about the success and good effect of the Peace Poetry Project sponsored in their local area schools by the members of VFP Chapter 45. He then moved, Gideon Rosenbluth seconding, that VFP fund the Peace Poetry Project sponsored by VFP Chapter 45 in the amount of \$750. The motion was carried unanimously.

IN MEMORIAM

President David Cline called for a minute of silence in respect and thanks for our departed brothers John Lavender, George Mizo, Joe Powers and Myron Fossum.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15PM for lunch.

KOREAN PROJECT

After the meeting reconvened at 1:15PM, John Kim reported on the Korean project that he is developing and which he wants VFP to sponsor. The project is educational in nature and will employ workshops and possible trips to North and South Korea of about ten days duration and costing \$2000 to \$2500. John expressed strong concern about President Bush's naming North Korea as one of the nations on his "Axis of Evil" and very strong concern about Bush's call to create mini-nukes for use in subduing these "evil" countries. The consensus was that he should investigate further and further develop project plans before it's appropriate for VFP to endorse it.

John Kim, having other commitments, left the meeting and returned to New York City after his presentation.

SPEAKING OUR PEACE

In response to David Cline's suggestion that each of us speak briefly on how we're responding to the "War on Terrorism", we each expressed our feelings and views about the current state of affairs.

WASH DC PROTEST, APRIL 20, 2002

Ellen Barfield, who was a member of the coalition organizing committee for the April 20 protest actions in Washington, DC gave some firsthand information on plans for that gathering. VFP members are to meet at the Sylvan Theater on the south side of the Washington Monument. "Look for the Veterans For Peace banner". Ellen mentioned that there is cost connected to such an action and suggested that we should carry a share of them.

7. John Amidon, seconded by Lincoln Grahls, moved that we donate \$100 to the A20 Organizing Committee. The motion was carried unanimously.

POLICY

The meeting moved on to discussions about needed policies. The first issue was whether or not to resume use of the Executive Committee (Board President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) in the decision-making process as provided for in the bylaws. Some liked the ease of decision-making under those conditions others preferred the more unweildy, but more democratic involvement of the whole board. We decided by consensus to stay with involving the whole board, at least in the near future, given the speed and availability of E-mail. One board member is, however, without E-mail capability.

The policy on limits for funds disbursed for unbudgeted expenditures was discussed and resulted in the carried motion listed as #2, near the beginning of this document and in the appended summary of motions.

By consensus the policy on use of the membership list is that it is only for use within VFP. It will not be sold, traded or given to other organizations or individuals. Any other use of the membership will require approval of the National Board. After consensus was reached the following motion was made to clarify and solidify the policy:

8. Wayne Whittman moved, John Amidon seconding, that membership lists will not be sold, traded or given to other organizations. They may only be used internally within the Veterans For Peace organization. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Board, by consensus, decided to break the Membership and Development Committee into separate entities. The Development Committee chaired by Barry Reisch and with Fredy Champagne and Paul Brailsford (should they be willing to accept the honor) as members. Wayne Whitman will chair the Membership Committee.

There was discussion as to policy on linking our website to other websites

9. Wayne Whittman moved, Ellen Barfield seconding, that Veterans For Peace will accept no commercial links on its webpages, but that links to author's websites are permitted on the VFP book page(s). The Board must approve requests for links. The motion was carried unanimously.

VFP REPS TO THE UN

There was some discussion about selection of primary and secondary VFP representatives to the United Nations.

10. Barry Reisch moved, John Amidon seconding, that Ellen Barfield be elected as the Veterans For Peace primary representative to the United Nations. The motion was carried unanimously.

11. Frank Houde moved, Gideon Rosenbluth seconding, that the term of service of VFP representatives to the United Nations shall be one year in length. The motion was carried unanimously.

The consensus of those present was that more information was necessary before naming an assistant UN representative. Ellen will interview Harold Burbank further and find out more about his alleged connection to the Bush family

ICC

Ellen Barfield reported on the progress of the International Criminal Court. The assent of sixty nations is required to write the ICC into law. That will happen in this month of April. David Cline has signed VFP on to the letter listing organizations demanding United States support of the ICC.

The meeting was adjourned for the day at 5:30PM.

President David Cline reconvened the meeting at 9:15AM, Sunday, April 7, 2002. All members present on April 6 were still present with the exception of John Kim.

PERSONNEL MATTERS

In closed session (Woody Powel absent) Wayne Whittman proposed re examining Woody's salary since it's obvious that he is working far more hours per week than he agreed to work for that level of pay. After the discussion was opened Kim's pay and benefits also came up and it was noted that in the name of equity one had to acknowledge that Kim's need for some sort of medical insurance really should come first. Besides, lack of medical insurance might cause Kim to feel she had to leave our employ and that would further increase the work and stress loads on Woody by a great deal. Lincoln Grahlf's reiterated that he held Kim's need important and would look into medical insurance for Kim. The consensus of those present regarding Woody's salary was that we will re-examine the matter when his contract comes up for renewal on Sept. 1, 2002. Wayne Whittman requested that, "We remain seized of the issue".

ISREALI REFUSENIKS

The Israeli Refuseniks and their organization, Yesh Gvul, were mentioned as being very worthy of our support. The Refuseniks are soldiers, refusing as a matter of conscience to take part in actions against the Palestinians. They presently number about three hundred and fifty. Consensus of those present was to begin supporting them by putting information about them and their goals on the VFP website and by establishing contact with them by letter and/or E-mail.

Adam Shapiro, an American Jew, is in Ramala with Yasser Arafat's organization to show the solidarity of peace loving Jews with the Palestinians in their plight. Adam is doing what he can to help end the strife between Palestinian and Jew non-violently and to bring about peace. The reaction of some members of the Jewish community in this country to Adam's actions has been violent. His family in Brooklyn, NY who are in support of what he is doing, have been forced to go into hiding by death threats. We of Veterans For Peace applaud his courageous efforts and those of his family and propose making him an honorary member of VFP if he will accept our offer. Adam is, technically, not a veteran.

12. Bob Heberle moved, Ellen Barfield seconding, that Adam Shapiro, if he concurs, be granted associate membership in Veterans For Peace. This membership will be funded by donations from the Board. He will further be presented to the Annual Convention in August 2002 for adoption as an Honorary Member of Veterans For Peace. Ellen Barfield will write the letter stipulated for this purpose in the bylaws and she and David Cline will sign it. The motion was carried with one abstention.

WRIT OF DECLARITIVE JUDGEMENT

David Cline addressed the background and progress of the Writ of Declarative Judgment that VFP proposed to file as a legal tool to deal with our government's failure to recognize the Geneva Convention in dealing with alleged Taliban/Al Qaida captives. It seems that such a writ filed by a tangentially interested organization like ours would in all probability have little chance of succeeding. One filed by a directly interested organization or individual (such as a member of a captives family) might succeed. Then we or others could

then file Amicus Curiae (Friend of the Court action) in support of the writ.

IRAQ WATER PROJECT

The third Iraq Water Project is now called The Leon White Brigade in honor of Candy Lovett's son, Leon. Candy is a Desert Storm veteran who suffers from Gulf War Syndrome and is confined to a wheelchair. She was a member of the second IWP team. Leon was diagnosed with a brain tumor in the summer of 2001 and seemed to be overcoming it. He died suddenly this February 7th. The Leon White Brigade will leave the US in Early May. The old management company (LIFE) will not lead the project team into Iraq this time, but will perform all other functions. It has been paid \$17000 to date. Barry Reisch made sure the VFP website URL was on the IWP brochure this time. There was some discussion of the advisability of sending the third project team into what might again become a full fledged war zone should the Bush administration have its way. Consensus of those present was that this is the most important of all times to press on with IWP and that we should go on record to that effect.

13. Frank Houde moved, Ellen Barfield seconding, that Veterans For Peace go on record as being in support of the Iraq Water Project without exception. Support of this project is deemed more timely than ever in light of the attitude of the current administration toward Iraq. The motion was carried unanimously.

JAPANESE PEACE CONSTITUTION

John Suchard is carrying a \$500 check to Yumi Kikuchi in Japan in support of the effort to keep the Japanese Peace Constitution from being compromised.

EL SALVADOR ELECTION MONITORS

14. Ellen Barfield moved, Lee Vander Laan seconding, that Veterans For Peace send a delegation to El Salvador in 2003 and 2004 to act as election monitors. The motion was carried unanimously. (Suggested by Wayne Whittman)

VIEQUES

There is a movement underway to get a signed executive order to stop the bombing, gunnery and similar uses of the Vieques Island, Puerto Rico range in Spring 2003. This executive order is to replace the verbal statements to that effect by President Bush.

15. Ellen Barfield moved, Bob Heberle seconding, that Veterans For Peace endorse and support the effort to obtain an executive order to stop the bombing and similar uses of the Vieques Island, Puerto Rico ranges by Spring 2003. The motion was carried unanimously.

STONEWALK

Lee Vander Laan reported that plans are being made to bring the Stonewalk stone back to the United States from Ireland and then walk it down to Washington, DC. There is a place for it in Arlington, VA after the walk.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM, Sunday, April 7, 2002.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank L. Houde
Recording Secretary
Veterans For Peace

Summary of Motions
And their Disposition

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