

**VFP Convention Business Meeting Minutes - University of Maryland, College Park, MD
August 8, 2009**

Called to order by President Ferner 10:00 AM

Present: Ferner, Adams, Mayers, Collins, Foster, Williams, Kufeldt, Goldshlag, Bolger, Uhl, McCann, Viges, May and McPhearson

Statement of Purpose--Kufeldt

Introduction of BoD--Ferner

Treasurer's Report--Mayers--PowerPoint presentation (on file)

Question: Member--what's the procedure for notifying members of dues? Anniversaries?

ED--procedure outlined

McCann--chapter leaders should monitor member status

Foster--consider establishing a credit card account with National Office for dues

Question: Member--what's the status of the fundraising efforts?

Foster--The Development Committee is working to identify and contact donors... establishing a donor database. Also, planned giving program being developed.

Bolger--we should discourage members from paying local dues only.

They should also pay national dues. Chapters should arrange to support members how aren't able to pay national dues.

Comment: Member--(Sandy Kelson) pledges 10% of up to \$5,000 donated by new sources.

Goldshlag--affirms primary BoD role is to raise \$. We need to do better in this role. Volunteers should contact Goldshlag to help.

Comment: Member--more electronic communication v. hard copy would be helpful.

Mayers--salaries & benefits account for greatest expense of National Office. Some large mail outs have utility and will be continued.

ED--if you want to opt out of getting the newsletter via USPS, contact National Office to be removed from the mailing list.

Collins--members should understand that the first \$25 of any contribution from members is counted toward dues.

Kufeldt--chapters get chapter rosters from National Office regularly, chapters should help monitor status of local members.

Comment: Member--previously, BoD hired folks to follow up.

Comment: Member--joined VFP when organization was in \$ trouble. Very pleased with progress that has been made.

Motion & second to approve the Report--Passed.

Ferner--presented Plaque of Appreciation to Ken Mayers for his exemplary service to VFP.

Approve Minutes from 2008 Annual Business Meeting--Passed.

Announcements:

Monday (August 10) Action--march to Democratic National Committee to protest wars. Assemble for action @ 9:00 AM (see Bolger for details)

Solicitation for suggestions for VFP in lobby.

Sign up sheets for Committees--see Williams

ED Report: Slide Summary of Report (on file)

Kudos to Uhl for excellent newsletter.

We print 10K newsletters

Merchandise sales--down slightly

Membership 2009--total 8300

Bolger--what do we do to remind veteran members that we don't have documentation for veteran status?

ED--we do send out solicitations for documentation.

Summary of chapter actions--Congratulations!!!

Questions/Comments: Mayers--Case Statement has been developed for high value donors. Foster--case for support summarizes national priorities, was sent to top 50 donors in VFP--good reception

Williams--concerned about membership, age, disenfranchisement, chapters should become more diverse.

Question: Member--what happens to the documents that get sent in to prove veteran status?

ED-documents get scanned and held securely.

Comment: Member--consider sending plastic, more durable membership cards. Will reduce costs.

Comment: Member--phone follow up by local chapters to local members is ok, but National needs to do more

Kufeldt--reminder that local members could/should volunteer for national initiatives/committees

Consider establishing a "chapter" for VFP members who have died.

Comment: Member--encourages face-to-face meetings for reigning in lapsed members

Foster--consider publishing a list of chapters who've been most effective at 1) getting new members; 2) retaining current members. Suggest March as National Membership Month for all chapters.

Questions: Member--do we have sufficient membership applications for conference attendees to take home? Betsy: yes, if not, we'll mail them.

Question: Member--are appeal letters more effective during the end or year holidays?

Foster--yes. We are trying to capitalize on that.

Comment: Member--where are the Latino/Native American members we had last year?

Mayers--two Native American members who were on the BoD have resigned from the BoD.

Comment: Member--suggest consider establishing "Official VFP Recruiter" role.

Comment: Member--have any efforts been made to reach out to supporters (e.g., local businesses, etc.)?

Mayers--need to be cautious to ensure that supporters are truly supportive of the philosophy of VFP.

Comment: Member--are we doing the Credo phone cards again this year?

ED--phone cards have been supplanted by cell phone access.

Comment: Member--if members volunteer to call lapsed members, will we call only local members? Answer: yes

Comment: Member--ED should collaborate with other progressive/peace groups to arrange a visit to the White House to move agenda items (health care, war, etc.) forward.

Ferner--we'll break for lunch at noon. Get lunch and bring back to the auditorium.

Ferner--Plaque of Appreciation presented to Elliott Adams for his exemplary service to VFP.

Ferner--introduced Sandy Kelson who announced Military Rape Awareness Campaign (October 12 - 16). Encourage local chapters to pick up on campaign and engage interested others in the process.

Distributed bumper strips and literature to support campaign.

McPhearson--we have an obligation to end oppression in all areas of our work

Announcement:

Bylaws consideration protocol presented (BoD ratified yesterday). Moved & seconded to adopt by law consideration protocol. Passed.

Uhl--next newsletter deadline September 20 for chapter reports

Recess for lunch 11:59

Reconvene 12:43

Speak Out!

Bylaw change proposals:

Ferner: All proposed bylaws amendments will be voted on as they are submitted, there will be no amendments or changes to proposed amendments. Each speaker will have two minutes to speak. Speakers will be called on alternating between those speaking for the amendment and those speaking against the amendment. A vote will be called on any amendment after 15 minutes even if there are more who want to speak.

Strike the last sentence of the first draft re: if no one opposes the amendment, no one for the amendment will be heard.

Bylaws:

Add Associate Member to BoD (submitted 2009)

Moved & seconded to consider resolution

Pro--Bolger--associates are vital to our organization. They need to be represented on the BoD.

Con--Forman--#102, Milwaukee, WI; Chapter trying to get a seat on the County Veterans BoD. Effort would be compromised if this passes.

Pro--question for clarification--thought to conflict with bylaws. Clarification--it doesn't.

Con--Kelson--we must remain a veterans group, integrity critical--not critical of value of Associate Members.

Pro--Baltimore chapter support in name of unity and coalition building to offset a divide & conquer strategy of our detractors.

Con: Goldshlag--Associates joined with knowledge that they would be at the Associate level, with attendant limitations on participation. Need to remain veterans organization.

Pro--chapter #152--non-veteran perspective will strengthen BoD. We have other allies who aren't veterans (e.g., MSFO)

Motion & second to call the question. Passed

BoD recommendation--Reject the proposal (2/3 vote of membership required to override--only veteran members may vote)

Vote to pass resolution: 24

Vote to reject resolution: clear majority

Proposal to adopt Failed

Chapter Restriction and Expulsion of Member from the Organization (submitted 2009)

(submitted

Moved & second to call the question

BoD rejected the proposal.

Membership voted to reject the proposal.

Trademark & Copyright Protection (submitted 2008)

BoD voted to reject the proposal

Moved & seconded to call the question. Passed

Membership voted to reject the proposal.

Parliamentary Authority (submitted 2008)

BoD voted to reject

Move & second to call the question. Passed.

Membership voted to reject the proposal.

Due Process & Misconduct (submitted 2008)

BoD voted to reject

Moved & second to call the question. Passed

Membership voted to reject the proposal.

Grammar Change for Mission Statement (submitted 2008)

BoD voted to approve

Move & second to call the question. Passed.

Membership voted to adopt the proposal.

Ferner: All proposed resolutions will be voted on as they are submitted, there will be no amendments or changes to proposed amendments. Each speaker will have two minutes to speak. Speakers will be called on alternating between those speaking for the amendment and those speaking against the amendment. A vote will be called on any amendment after 15 minutes even if there are more who want to speak.

Moved & seconded. Passed Voice Vote

Resolutions:

Resolution 2009-1. Veterans Outreach--Committee recommends pass. BoD Passed.

Con--Bolger--opposes resolution--Statement of Purpose directs us to more than veterans' care

Pro--Williams--resolution will heighten VFP's profile with other VSO's.

Con--Johnson, Chapter # 69--smacks of "reinventing the wheel".

Pro--Kufeldt--chapters are capable of making wise decisions. Resolution simply encourages chapters to consider the option.

Con--Chapter # 10--we have limited resources to promote peace. That should remain our focus. Benefits aren't there. This reaffirms a lie.

Pro--Uhl--resolution honors our identity as Veterans For Peace. We can show others how to navigate the system. Will help increase membership.

Con--Seattle # 92--we are a 501 (c) (3) educational organization, not a service organization. We need to spend our energy on prevention of war damages.

Pro--Foreman #102--not reinventing the wheel, but part of the wheel. This will permit our voices to be heard.

No more opponents--supporters remain.

Supporters will be heard.

Pro--Perry--many veterans don't get good benefits help. We need to be a part of the solution.

The time for debate has expired.

Move & second to extend time for debate. Passed.

Con--unidentified--we need to be focus and limit our scope. Recommend table pending further research.

Pro---unidentified--resolution doesn't compel anybody & it is educational.

Con--Ellen's husband, Larry--to vote for is to vote for the system as it is.

Motion & second to call the question. Passed.

Membership vote: Divide the house

Favor Resolution--42

Oppose Resolution--30

Resolution Passed.

Resolution 2009-2. Colombian Elections Delegation--Committee recommends pass. BoD Passed.

Membership vote: Resolution Passed.

Resolution 2009-3. Support National Security Investigations--Committee recommends pass. BoD Passed.

Move & second call the question. Passed.

Membership vote: Resolution Passed.

Resolution 2009-4. Stop Aid to Israel--Committee recommends pass. BoD Passed.

Moved & second call the question. Passed.

Membership vote: passed.

Resolution 2009-5. IAW Funding--Committee recommends no pass. BoD declared the resolution inappropriate as an unfunded resolution and to not bring it to the body for a vote. Passed.

(Inappropriate proposal not presented for membership consideration.)

Resolution 2009-6. Youth Promise Act--Committee recommends pass. BoD Passed.

Membership vote: Resolution Passed.

Resolution 2009-7. Jobs for Afghans--Committee recommends pass. BoD Rejected. Foster & Adams call for hand count--Didn't pass.

Move & second call the question. Passed.

Membership vote: Resolution Rejected.

Resolution 2009-8. Resolution to Sanction Israel--Committee recommends no pass. Motion & second to call the question. Passed. Motion & second. Passed. Adams--divide the house. Committee's recommendation stands.

Pro--Oliver--Baltimore Chapter--Israel has been used by a pawn by U.S. gov't. Personal experience teaches that Israeli's don't want to continue the status quo.

Con--Goldshlag--important components of the resolution have already been passed.

Pro--Perry--we must stand up and do what's right.

Con--unidentified--poorly worded, especially points # 4.

No other supporters.

Move & second to call the question. Passed.

Membership vote: Favor Resolution: 48

Oppose Resolution: 29

Resolution did not get 2/3 of member vote. Resolution Rejected.

Resolution 2009-9. One-State Solution--Committee recommends pass. BoD Rejected.

Member question: what were the BoD views?

Goldshlag--arrogant to consider a prescribed solution when the Palestinians haven't spoken on the issue.

Pro--Perry--called attention to the language of support from others in the resolution.

Con--unidentified--Vermont--doesn't believe it's achievable.

Pro--Uhl--this is the principled decision per Noam Chomsky.

Con--Tacoma Chapter--we shouldn't tell them what their solution is.

Con--unidentified--

Pro--Carlisle, chapter --Einstein supported a one state solution.

Con--McPhearson--citizen's should determine what type of state they choose to live in. unless we're prepared to go there and help them make the one state solution, we have no business in this matter.

Con--Wong, S.F. Chapter--another express of U.S. hegemony.

Move & second to call the question. Passed.

Membership vote: Resolution did not get 2/3 required Resolution Rejected.

Resolution 2009-10. Impeach Obama--Committee recommends pass. BoD Rejected.

Pro--Recino, Central Florida #136--passed by the chapter as a principled duty as VFP.

Con--unidentified--objection has to do with timing.

Pro--Almadon--war in Afghanistan is illegal. Prosecuting it is a war crime. If we don't do this, we're copping out.

Con--Alderson, Baltimore--distinguish between persuasion and tone. Timing is not right.

Pro--Carlisle, Chapter # 99--Obama has committed war crimes (e.g., drones, expanding war in Afghanistan) and needs to be held accountable. More time will only result in more deaths.

Con--Baltimore Chapter--war crimes are in the nature of the American Empire, all presidents were culpable. Now is not the time to pass this resolution.

Con--unidentified--Nancy Pelosi is the one who should be impeached for not putting impeachment of BushCo on the table.

Con--unidentified--oppose on basis of timing and credibility. It also impinges on our image re: reasonableness.

The allotted time has elapsed.

Move & second to call the question. Passed.

Membership vote (2/3 required). 2/3 requirement not met. Resolution Rejected.

Resolution 2009-11. Agent Orange--maker withdrew the resolution. (Committee kept as a placeholder for formatting expediency)

Resolution 2009-12. Agent Orange-Blue Water Navy--Committee recommends pass. BoD Passed.
Move & second to call the question. Passed.
Resolution Passed.

Resolution 2009-13. Agent Orange-Parkinson's Disease--Committee recommend pass. BoD Passed.
Motion & second to call the question. Passed.
Resolution Passed.

Resolution 2990-14. Malfeasance--Committee recommends no pass. BoD Rejected.
Pro--PA chapter--8 VFP members have filed criminal complaints against officials. Encourages chapters to follow suit and to reference the 13th amendment, as was done in the original.
Con--Mayers--the referenced amendment is not fruitful. Ferner--there was also a procedural issue re: timeliness and format. Resolution maker didn't conceded to make necessary changes.
Resolution Rejected.

Resolution 2990-15. Medical Marijuana Awareness Week--Committee recommends pass. BoD Rejected.
Move & second to call the question. Passed.
Resolution Rejected.

Resolution 2009-16. Piñon Canyon--Committee recommends pass. BoD Passed.
Move & second to call the question. Passed.
Resolution Passed.

Resolution 2009-17. Cease Fire--Committee recommends no pass. BoD Rejected.
Move & second to call the question. Passed.
Resolution Rejected.

Wittman proposed resolution submitted today. The Peaceable Assembly Campaign

The proposed resolution did not meet the requirements for resolutions. It is not an emergency condition or world occurrence that meets the established standard for emergency resolution.

Ferner--Executive Committee will consider the resolution at its next meeting.

Announcements--Ferner

Feedback from breakout sessions on Thursday is available in the Hoff Theater lobby.

Move & second. Annual meeting draft minutes may be approved by the BoD v. awaiting approval by membership a year hence. Passed.

Adjourned. 4:15 PM

Draft Respectfully Submitted by
Gary E. May, Secretary
August 10, 2009

Draft submitted after BoD comment period by
Gary E. May, Secretary
August 17, 2009
(no BoD comments)