Veterans For Peace Board of Directors Saturday, January 20, 2024 Minutes

Present: President Susan Schnall, VP Mike Wong, Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (minutes), ED Mike Ferner. Board Members: Josh Shurley, Enya Anderson, Gerry Condon, Ellen Davidson, Ellen Barfield, Nick Mottern, Kelly Wadsworth, Stehen Zollman, Matt Southworth. Staff: Shelly Rockett, Chris Smiley, Casey Stinemetz

Members: Alice Slater, Al Glatkowski, Anthony Donovan, Adam Toohaker, Bob me, Carole Baraldi, Chuck T!, Chris Antal, Daniel Guy, David Ransom, David Cooley, Denny Riley, Don Kimball, Doug Rawlings, Elsa, Frank Campbell, Gary Ghirardi, Gerald Hassett, George Jiracek, Jack Gilroy, Jim Rine, James Brown, Jane Huntington, Jeff Gray, Jeff Roy, JeTina Jayroe, John Amadon, John Vail, Kathleen Michele Gilberd, Ken Embers, Ken Mayers, Larry Meisgeier, Munjo Yu, Nancy S., Paul Edward Gingras, Phil, Regina Sneed, Robert Williams, Roger Erlich, Scott Alexander, Sal Jimenez, Sammy Jones, Stan, Susan Lamont, Taylor, Thomas Leonard, Tom Larsen, Tom Wilber, Vince Dijanich, Woody Powell, Zool Zolowicz.

Open Meeting Convened: 12:44 pm ET with Video of Statement of Purpose and poem by Jennie Pacanowski

Member Comments:

Jack Gilroy plugged the Ban Drones efforts to put out PSAs to expose war industries. He has been working with Nick Mottern and encourages people to contact them.

Chuck Ti expressed thanks to VFP, and wants to revive legislative and lobbying group **Nancy S:** We should add "ending Colonialism" to our Statement of Purpose

Alice Slater: the news about Boeing's recent airplane skin failure is the result of them buying off safety rules through Congress, and we could use that corporate corruption to change policies

Anthony Donovan: This monday is the 3d anniversary of the TPNW, and encourages chapter activities. Encourages people to come to DC for action. Encourages people to invest in non-military banks.

Board Meeting Convened: 1:08 pm ET

Introductions and swearing in of board members: new Board members: Kelly Wadsworth and Stephen Zollman-veteran VFP members and Ellen Davidson-VFP's first associate board member. Paul Cox and Susan Schnall were re-elected. "I, <state your name>, will uphold the Veterans For Peace Statement of Purpose, and fulfill my responsibilities and obligations to the organization as a national Board of Directors member to the best of my abilities. I will work together with other Board members to foster the growth, integrity, and well being of the finances, membership, and chapters so that we may fulfill our mission of abolishing war."

President Schnall expressed thanks to Michael Dempsey and Ken Mayers for extraordinary years of service and dedication to Veterans For Peace.

Checkins/self introductions by board members

Minutes for December 16, 2023: Motion Shurley, second Wong to approve. Passed **Agenda:** Motion Wong, second Barfield to approve: Passed

Board election of officers: President Schnall passed gavel to VP Emeritus Mike Wong

President: Susan Schnall only nomination Vice President: Josh Shurley only nomination Secretary: Paul Cox only nomination Treasurer: Mike Tork only nomination All positions filled unanimously

REPORTS:

Finance, Mike Tork:

Cash On Hand: \$156k
Savings: \$31k
Ed Jones: \$35k CDs mostly
Restricted Funds: \$22k
Zinn Fund: \$27k
TOTAL: \$271k
P&L: 2023 Income: \$523,177.62; 2023 Expenses: \$400,118.67; finished with \$123,058.95 excess.
Budget 2024, Mike Tork: Motion Tork, second Shurley, to add line item of \$5k to the 2024
budget for assistance with members' travel costs. Approved. Secretary will change Policies and
Procedures to reflect application procedures as proposed and passed. Proposed Budget for 2024
Projected Income \$482,809; Expenses \$434K; Expected \$54,367 excess. Motion Barfield, Second
Shurley to approve budget as submitted. Approved.

Communications/Youtube, Chris Smiley: reported social media growth across all platforms. In Youtube, we now have the ability to sell ads, and a test program made \$10. If we had used ads for the Ann Wright video a few months ago that got more than 100,000 views, we could have made \$5k-ish. We will not have control over which ads get shown with our videos but do decide when videos get set up for ads. We decided to give the process a chance.

National Director's Report, Mike Ferner: He welcomed Casey Stinemetz back on staff as our membership organizer on an initial three-month contract. Casey is working to rejuvenate several chapters. He also thanked the other staff–Shelly, Chris, Becky, and Gail for their hard, smart work. Thanked Ken Mayers and Michael Dempsey for their time on the Board. He discussed membership numbers and set a goal of 1,000 new members this year. Last year we got 372 new members, but lost 987 for a net negative 615. With this 1,000 new-member goal we will have a net gain of 13, so need 84 per month. Urged us to undertake various organizing efforts to recruit new members. In that vein, the National office has wallet-size cards available with our contact information and a QR code directly to the "Become a Member" page on our website. They can be found on the Downloadable Resources page on our website (<u>https://www.veteransforpeace.org/take-action/downloadable-resources</u>) and can be printed up as business cards on Avery stock. Or you can design your own at one of the online vendors.

Spring organizing opportunities for chapters and indy members. <u>See this document</u> for details and "how to" suggestions:

- April 4: anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination. Many cities have public readings of his "Beyond Vietnam" speech he gave at Riverside Church, exactly one year before his murder. VFP chapters and independent members need to join those efforts that are already being planned and organize ones where there aren't any. <u>Keep your QR code</u> <u>membership card on you!</u>
- 2. If we want to recruit younger members, the ongoing ceasefire rallies are where we'll find them and many are post 9/11. Keep your QR code membership card on you!
- 3. We've started circulating VFP's <u>30-second "Climate Crisis PSA"</u> to members with <u>these</u> <u>instructions</u> on how to get it aired on local TV stations
- 4. An excellent indy documentary, "<u>What I Want You to Know</u>," is available for chapters and members to show for very reasonable rates. One chapter has done so and more should. The vets in the film are all post 9-11. The interviews are stunning.

2023 Endorsements: This document lists them all from April 1 to December 31.

Convention: This year's convention will be virtual again, with an in-person convention for sure in 2025. Be sure to see the great job Becky Luening did on the program book for this year's convention. Mike sent one to Ralph Nader and they're good for sending to major donors.

Development Committee, Matt Southworth: First meeting is this coming Monday, Jan 23, 2024. They will create a development calendar. Expects to be running full speed by summer.

Summary of Board's Accomplishments for 2023, Susan: We have been successful in stabilizing VFP. The only way that has been possible was due to teamwork and members stepping up. Yurii Sheliazhenko, peace activist in Ukraine, is our new member of the advisory board. We will not have an in-person convention for 2024, but wants to have one in 2025–need a chapter to step up to host. Please let national know if you want to be on either 2024 and/or 2025 convention.

VFP Board Member Expectations: The collective responsibilities of the Board are described in the VFP Bylaws and Policies; the following expectations are a guide to individual member responsibilities:

- 1. Be familiar with the VFP Bylaws and Policies
- 2. Attend monthly VFP Board meetings
- 3. Support and participate in fundraising efforts for: Funding the organization. The board is responsible for the continued funding and financial health of the organization. Maintaining fiscal accountability. The board approves and closely monitors the organization's expenses and income. The board oversees the organization's resources (including the time of volunteers and staff) are used appropriately, and ensures that the organization has enough money to operate.
- 4. Participation in board activities. The board has monthly zoom meetings. Please let the President of the Board know when you are unable to attend.
- 5. Chair and/or actively serve on Board committees
- 6. Participate in the planning for the VFP National Convention
- 7. Be available to membership for questions and concerns about VFP
- 8. Be a strong voice in promoting VFP at the national and local level
- 9. Actively participate in financial oversight
- 10. Support Board decisions

11. Acknowledge the Code of Conduct

VFP National Board Committees and chairs

- 1. Communications Committee–Gerry Condon
- 2. Convention Committee–Susan Schnall and Everybody!!
 - a. Convention Committees (Program committee, workshops, outreach, communications, etc.)--TBD
 - b. Bylaws–Josh Shurley
 - c. Resolutions–Josh Shurley
 - d. Nominations-Ellen Barfield
 - e. Awards–Josh Shurley
- 3. Delegations Committee–Ellen Davidson
- 4. Development Committee–Matt Southworth
- 5. Executive Committee–Susan Schnall
- 6. Finance–Mike Tork
- 7. Membership & Chapter Support Committee–Josh Shurley
- 8. Personnel Committee–Paul Cox
- 9. Recruitment and Retention–Gerry Condon
- 10. Strategic Planning Committee–(on hiatus)
- 11. Transformative Justice Committee–Kelly Wadsworth
- 12. Ad Hoc Advisory Board Committee–Paul Cox

Liaisons with National Projects / Working Groups: (to be assigned)

1- National Projects:

Climate and Militarism Courage to Resist Deported Veterans Advocacy Full Disclosure: Toward an Honest Commemoration of the American War in Vietnam Golden Rule Iraq Water Project Korea Peace Campaign Save Our VA (SOVA) VFP Peace Walk (new) Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign (VAORRC) Vietnam Full Disclosure Campaign

2- Working Groups

Be the Change Book Club China Democracy and Peace DU, Cluster Bombs, and Landmines Homeless Veterans No Drones Nuclear Abolition Russia SOAW/Latin America

Descriptions of Committees

Communications Committee: Charged with promoting VFP and bringing visibility and recognition to VFP actions and principles. Involved in oversight of VFP communications as well as monitoring the publication of VFP materials (e.g., VFP Newsletter, VFP papers, etc.).

Convention Committee: Charged with the planning and organization of the annual convention. The membership of the Convention Committee changes with each convention but will include at least representatives from the previous year's convention, the current year's convention, the upcoming year's convention, the Executive Director and the President.

Awards Committee: Charged with developing the annual award categories, criteria and nominating procedures, found in Awards section, plus recommending award recipients to the Board.

Nominations Committee: Charged with identifying qualified members to run for election to the Board of Directors, as required by VFP Bylaws and will perform its duties as described therein.

Bylaws Committee: Charged with ensuring that the bylaws meet the evolving needs of the organization. To this end, and in accordance with our Bylaws and Policies, the committee will:

1. Receive proposed amendments or suggestions from a member, a chapter, or the Board.

- 2. Study, draft, or redraft proposed amendments as appropriate.
- 3. Make a recommendation to the Board as to their disposition.
- 4. Periodically review the bylaws to identify needed amendments, or rescissions.

Resolutions Committee: Charged with facilitating the resolutions procedures as described by the bylaws and developing any other necessary procedures, found in the section on Resolutions.

Delegations Committee: Charged with assisting our members in organizing and applying for Board approval of all VFP U.S. sponsored delegations, and making a recommendation to the Board regarding approval.

Finance Committee: Charged with creating strategies that will develop the financial strength of the organization (e.g., major donors, foundations, mailings, planned giving and special events), and supporting and assisting the treasurer by reviewing professional accounting reports and giving advice on investments and disposition of endowment. The committee is chaired by the Treasurer and consists of at least that position, the President and Executive Director.

Development Committee: New committee split from Finance, Policies require some revision to separate charges.

Membership and Chapter Development Committee Charged with supporting individual members and chapters. <u>Membership support</u>: building an outreach campaign and supporting new and existing members to include orientation of independent members and connecting members to local chapters. <u>Chapter support</u>: assist in the chartering, formation, and ongoing support of VFP chapters and providing support and assistance to reinvigorate inactive chapters. Staff provide direct assistance to the committee by verifying veterans' status, providing reports, and issuing charters and related paperwork. Due to the intense workload of this committee, it shall include a steering committee made up of two members of the

Board of Directors (chair and co-chair of the committee), two members of staff (the executive director and membership coordinator) and one member at large as appointed by the President of the Board of Directors. Additional members can serve to help support the committee's goals as needed.

Transformative Justice Committee: Charged with overseeing the internal health of the organization, to include continued exploration of Transformative and Restorative Justice, updates to the Code of Conduct based on member input, and investigating complaints and grievances about members and chapters. Because of the sensitive nature of this committee's work, this committee will be composed of members with a specific background in restorative justice, misconduct/harassment investigations, social work, or other applicable areas. The committee shall work to ensure that our Code of Conduct and Misconduct/Harassment policies and procedures are transparent and serve the needs of our community.

Personnel Committee: Charged with hearing grievances (see Grievance Procedures), and making recommendations to the Board regarding personnel policies and staffing. The committee is also charged with developing evaluative criteria for the Executive Director and ensuring that periodic evaluations are completed. The Personnel Committee shall be composed of 2 or more board members.

Strategic Planning Committee: Charged with developing, overseeing, and updating VFPs national strategic plan and evaluating its effectiveness. The strategic planning committee shall be comprised of members of the Board of Directors, staff, and VFP members, and will elicit input from the broader Board, staff, and membership. The strategic plan will be subject to the approval by the full Board of Directors and the Full Board will review the committee's recommendations at least twice a year, if not quarterly. This committee does not replace working groups or national projects, or the activities of chapters, but will be the guiding document for national VFP activities.

Executive Session to discuss personal behavior of a member, 3:05 pm ET to 3:57 pm ET. Action: The board appreciates the member's offer to seek counseling. Member will be allowed to resume participation in working group emails with the understanding that any additional violations of the Code of Conduct may result in expulsion from VFP.

Next Board meeting: February 17th, 2023