



Veterans For Peace 2016 Board Meeting Minutes

- January (Conference Call)
- February (Jacksonville, FL)
- March (Conference Call)
- April (St. Louis, MO)
- May (Conference Call)
- June (Conference Call)
- July (Conference Call)
- August (Berkeley, CA)
 - Board of Directors Meeting
 - Business Meeting
- September (Conference Call)
- October (Chicago, IL)
- December (Conference Call)

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors
Conference Call Minutes
Saturday, January 16, 2016
Kourtney Mitchell, Recording Secretary

Present on the call:

Michael, Barry, Kourtney, Tarak, Mark, Tom, John, Joey, Brian, Gerry

Absent from the call:

Monique, Willie, Dan

Motions and votes in bold

Counter-Islamophobia Campaign Planning Discussion

Barry convenes the call at 4:06 pm EST

Michael

- last board meeting we discussed possibility of addressing islamophobia; some politicians using fear and target people here at home in a very open way; racism strengthens the hand of warmongers to wage war abroad; sentiments that some politicians are using could be on the upswing and who knows where this could go; Michael spoke with Jim Driscoll and Jim proposed to look for money for an islamophobia campaign and have veterans talk about why it is not a good thing for islamophobia campaign to be sweeping through the country; at this point, we have had a call with Ira and developed talking points; have access to major media outlets with media consultants; campaign will introduce us to some funders whom we have not had previous access; we should remember that the campaign is trying to be a broad base and reach out to folks who may not agree with us on all of our analysis on government and foreign policy, but hopefully agree with us on islamophobia in terms of protecting us at home and combating ISIL abroad; meeting with Ira, his idea was that in order to get a kind of bang in the media, since media likes conflict instead of substance, to follow along with caucuses and primaries and showing up with veterans at each one of those states during caucuses and primaries, and have media event to call out the politicians; struggle within Republican party itself over this issue, in case we are concerned with looking like we support democrats; the issue is islamophobia, and it is coming from Republicans, that's their fault, we have to call them out; concentrate on being against islamophobia

Barry

- update on funding, from Jane Fonda; Nader recommendation from a year ago on bringing in other groups, following his lead
 - o Michael: Jim Driscoll secured ten grand from an associate of his and we have received the check specifically for campaign; Fenton media consultants charging ten grand per month to do campaign; developing a budget for travel for participants; another ten grand from Jane Fonda; we have 20 grand so far for the

- campaign; Jim budget calls for 200 grand, a bit overblown; proposal calls for organizers in each other cities; we are paying Fenton because that's how you get media attention; paying organizers otherwise they have to be people who are either retired or who already have money and don't need to be paid; not many young people involved, hoping to find young vets to do the organizing; secondarily is older veterans; in order to do the organizing they have to be paid; to get good organizers, you have to pay them; Nader wanted to develop a secretariat in which not every vet agrees on everything except for direction of U.S. foreign policy; first step in developing that coalition with vets who have the same values against bigotry as we do; that is the minimum with commonality with a lot of other veterans; we can move into other issues after building this relationship
- Barry: cut down cost by going into regions with active VFP chapters to do groundwork so not to pay organizers on the ground; example, Iowa organized McGovern tour and have experienced people; contacting advisory board members to get their buy in on campaign; we have heard back from Swanson, McCloskey, Fletcher, Cohn, Stevens; Ira recommends finding people in our own org who have experience in Afghanistan and Iraq to be spokesperson in campaign; others could be Matt Ho and Paul Chappell, who have experience with speaking out, on panels; others who are Muslim and served in Iraq war
 - Michael: have reached out to IVAW; excited about campaign

Barry opens discussion for comments

Mark

- going back to Michael talking about hiring organizers; who will be in charge of that hiring; concerned about finances and who is watching the finances; do not want to hire more organizers than we have the money for and commit to paying them
 - Michael: Jim is the project coordinator; not hiring until we get the funds; don't need to hire right now; we have ten grand; just like any effort, we monitor what we have and our expenses; telling folks upfront that we are raising money, and what we have right now; it is a short term campaign anyway; we are going to do what we can with the money that we raise; not going to request money from VFP funds; we have to raise that money; no plan to spend more than we bring in
 - Barry: short term campaign; contract states that it runs from January 18 though still deciding; last payment is June 1st of this year; pursuant to the contract, runs through end of June; may turn out that it gains momentum and visibility and we raise funds and can keep it going
 - Michael: campaign not fully relying on us using Fenton; if we do not have money to pay them, we will still move forward as best we can without them
 - Barry: they are not driving force; important for us to use our social media connections to push this out; anyone with social media account can push the campaign for us; important aspect, Fenton believes it will help us be successful; a vehicle for messaging

John

- which advisory board members are attending reception during board meeting weekend

- Michael: two have confirmed, have to follow up with other people; have sent out initial invitation and a follow up

Gerry

- concerns about various details and articulations with good discussions; potentially most ambitious campaign to reach out to public and veterans that VFP has undertaken in several years; likely to be the prevailing issue for internal and external discussion and impact; hastily called board call is the first formal discussion about it; critique of process; lots of questions raised because there was no opportunity earlier on; why the hurry; appreciate the initiative and making things happen; suggesting that there is a process problem here that should be acknowledged and corrected
 - Michael: disagree with Gerry; the nature is such that we have to move quickly; we can stop or change things, whatever needs to be done; we're having the call because we can't move forward without the board; sometimes you have to move fast, have emergency meetings; in a battle or war, sometimes you have to move fast and make stuff happen; if we were moving forward and not communicating, you would be right; if there are problems, let's fix them; if we feel uncomfortable, then we can stop
 - Barry: we have not signed contract with Fenton yet; things need to be changed, more legal eyes on that
 - Gerry: let's agree to disagree on this; don't remember a time in the past that we were so far into a campaign without a board meeting
 - Michael: if we have an attack tomorrow, that could change everything; really afraid, have to move forward

Tom

- Fenton worked with us on Bring Em Home Now Tour; talking about insurance and contracts should be provided to us at meeting next week; regarding exposure and liability; gotta be an updated website, it is antiquated and people can't pull it up on phones; big deal
 - Michael: campaign site will not be the VFP site, one just for the campaign; VFP will not be the branding of the campaign; it will have its own brand; site will be mobile friendly

Joey

- the Republican party has made their decision among the rank-and-file and this is the way they want to go; polls month after month in that direction; their internal war is over; will not find any support within Republicans, but will find support among libertarians
 - Barry: don't think focus of campaign is that we are trying to attract political party or spectrum of politics; really speaking out to most Americans and others; will not characterize it as reaching out to segments of Republicans or libertarians or Democrats; continue a non-partisan approach so that we are not charged with being partisan that would endanger non-profit status; we are not against the Republican candidates, but instead against the current political lexicon that are contrary to our nation's values; the values do not include bigotry and racism of comments that have been made by certain candidates

Tarak

- pretty strong feelings against bigotry and racism; but I totally expect and understand it; in a tradition of U.S. racism and bigotry that is not new, just increasing and more visible; against many populations for many centuries; these are American values; uncomfortable with a few things that are going on with our program; I have same concerns with Gerry, this happened and went forward without the approval of the board; we normally have a procedure but we have already moved forward; critiques of specific wording of proposed copy of campaign, will rewrite with proposed changes and submit to Michael; a mistake to mention candidates by name; attack their content, don't give them credibility
 - o Michael: we will only spend what we bring in; we all know about racism and bigotry; trying to move forward because really afraid of future events happening
 - o Tarak: further events will happen with violence; just the tip of the iceberg; we have to be clear that there are causes and our message has to be deep, radical, honest

Brian

- agree with importance and significance of campaign; apprehension to some of the language being used; do not think small disagreements over wording should delay launch of campaign

Michael

- we have just put things into place to move forward; have not had press conference, just developing campaign; has to happen fast; we were talking about this on the call a month ago; now we have gotten a lot done but have not spent any money; understand being uncomfortable because the campaign is not what each individual wants it to be; do not understand the discomfort of not moving forward; am I not supposed to do the work; we could stop it right now, but not really because we have not started it
 - o Tarak: we cannot do that, we have already talked to IVAW and a lot of other people; not an option to not move forward
 - o Michael: it is an option if we decide that we cannot do it; I work for you all, I need guidance on what I am supposed to do
 - o Barry: had a chance to speak with Jim on his proposal for several hours; seemed like a worthwhile campaign to do further exploration; we have put in place a campaign that has certain parameters and fundraising; but we have not done anything to move forward just yet; the contract has to be looked at very carefully; my initial concern with the proposal and concern with using names of anyone; avoid pointing fingers in case someone turns us off because it looks like we are going after Republicans; I think there are American values that are positive; I do not think that if you ask anyone on the street individually people would say that racism and bigotry and militarism are our values; more likely they would say freedom of religion, speech, press, though probably owning a gun as well; we are trying to hold up an ideal that we all to some degree we have a belief in; we should consider retaining it as part of our messaging

Joey

- Michael has pointed the gun but hasn't pulled the trigger; our actions haven't always lived up to our ideals; have taught ESL and refugee children and I can tell you that America is considered a beacon; I hear their stories about being a refugee and how much better it is here than their countries of origin; our values do need to be included in the wording

Barry

- we should get a sense of the board and whether or not we should move forward with this; proposing to call a vote on proceeding with this program, mindful of the fact that some of us may want rewrites of the campaign proposal and look at the contract again as well as making sure our fundraising is in place

Gerry

- we should go forward; having said that, there's a lot that still needs to be decided; the plan is to go to primary states and oriented towards candidates and is that still something we want to do; who are the veterans orgs that we hope to bring on board and how to do that; having a radical honest articulation but yet reaching out broadly, struggling over language to reach out broadly and yet stay honed closely to our mission and beliefs, major questions; if we vote yes, then those of us who want to engage should do so in an ongoing way

Tom

- point of order: is there something specific that should be determined before the board meeting next week; only fair to look at documents and contract for the entire board
 - o Barry: we suggested that a committee of board members can be in charge of moving this forward and making decisions so that it's not left to just Michael or just the Excom
 - o Tom: couldn't Jim consider the fundraising regardless of what we decide next week
 - o Barry: until we have chance to discuss at meeting next week, we can at least go forward with the things Michael is doing; making contacts with veterans and orgs interested in working on campaign; having Jim continue on fundraising path

Kourtney

- how do we measure success, what are we using to gauge the effectiveness of the campaign beyond simply gaining exposure to more funders
 - o Michael: my intent is the more we are engaging with people to speak out against this wave of racism and stand in solidarity; a blunt or firewall in case an attack happens, so that we can have more of a rise in sentiment against the racism to turn the tide; maybe we can come up with some measurements
 - o Gerry: may be impossible to measure how many minds we change; if we state our goal as creating a counter narrative; can gauge how many people we reach; how much media exposure we get; how many meetings with other orgs and Muslim

Americans, etc; getting out there with our message and measure that, maybe as good as we can do

- Tom: there are analytics available; hashtags are measureable
- Barry: Fenton associates can work with Casey to see how to get this out to social media; certain hashtags, create these kinds of products for us and get it out on social media; we have a huge number of followers on social media; if we can get members on there, it is an essential aspect of the campaign; it is manageable and doesn't cost anything; broad network can be created; Fenton has really good connections with mainline media newspapers and television stations and cable networks; they have worked with Matt Hoh in the past, hopefully he can help be a spokesperson, along with Tavis Smiley and others

Barry

- **roll call vote to determine if we should continue with fundraising, contacts, social media, reviewing contract;** go that far until next week
 - Tarak: yes
 - Mark: yes
 - Tom: yes
 - John: yes
 - Joey: yes
 - Brian: yes
 - Gerry: yes
 - Kourtney: yes
 - **unanimous decision;** we will continue to work on it and monitor it closely and we will move forward until the board meeting

Barry adjourns the call at 5:17 pm EST

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors
Quarterly Meeting
Jacksonville, FL
February 12 – 14, 2016
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary

Meeting sponsored by Veterans For Peace Jacob George Chapter 174, Jacksonville, FL

Motions and votes in bold

Friday, February 12, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary
Monique Salhalb
Brian Trautman
Willie Hager
John Heuer
Tarak Kauff
Tom Palumbo

Board members excused from the meeting:

Dan Shea
Joey King

Guests present at the meeting:

Roger Ehrlich, VFP Chapter 099, Asheville, NC
Frank Bessinger, Coordinator, VFP Chapter 170, Savannah, GA

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Barry convenes the meeting at 1:04 PM EST

Tarak reads aloud the VFP Statement of Purpose

Board member introductions/brief bios

NATIONAL PROJECTS REPORT

- Golden Rule – Gerry
 - Gerry briefs aloud GR report as provided to the board via email; briefs on upcoming programming events; outreach to different communities including boating and sailing enthusiasts, environmentalists, anti-nuke activists, peace activists
 - Gerry opens for questions
 - Willie: clarification on the process of transitioning ownership of the boat
 - Barry: boat is not in VFP's name yet, it belongs to the GR committee; easiest way is to quick-claim a deed to transition; comes with other responsibilities and obligations, takes on their debts and assets; will set up a committee to manage outside of the board
 - Willie: why are we challenging for ownership
 - Gerry: no challenge, just respect for the persons who are currently working on and operating the boat; trust and partnership
 - Barry: the team is working at it very steadily but doing it with a lot of trust
 - Tarak: mutual trust and appreciation from both parties
 - Tom: no budget provided in the report; assets and debts, cash on hand; we are stakeholders for this project, opens us up for greater exposure; concerned about the potential impact and costs to VFP
 - Gerry: two thousand dollars on hand; seven grand on debt, paying that off regularly; budget ranges from \$60-100k; depends on operational costs; reflected in VFP budget that was approved during last board call meeting; expect to raise at least half of that through sailing fundraisers and grants from foundations
 - John: GR newsletter successful and effective
 - Brian: ongoing crowd-sourcing efforts; any other efforts towards crowd-sourcing
 - Gerry: will initiate another Gofundme campaign within the next few weeks; welcome any contributors to build the campaign
 - Brian volunteers to contribute to the building of the Gofundme campaign
 - Willie: Quaker community is very appreciative of VFP carrying on their legacy
 - Gerry: lots of contributions from Quaker community on the left coast
 - Michael: boat team is doing fundraising at each port city; hoping the program itself can pay for itself
 - Gerry: paid its way through each city even without advanced organizing
 - Michael: seeking different organizations to become junior partners with us; marketing package to provide to potential allied orgs, explain what they can get out of it; provides opportunities for

- Korea Peace Campaign
 - o Michael: underperforming as a campaign; how to make it more prominent; more activity; a lot of activity with Korea, and no one is asking VFP what we think because we have not built a reputation on Korean peace issues, but we should; make it more active and more relevant; Korean peace issues ranked high with NATO and Syria
 - Barry: Korea chapter resigned MOU, very interested in being active; U.S. going back on agreements with North Korea; big history of provoking them and not allowing their peace process
 - Tarak: we do have Bruce Gagnon, VFP member who is knowledgeable about Asia Pivot and North-South Korea relations; Jeju locals did not want to see Korea divided; we also have possibility of forming a major chapter in Jeju, many locals there were in South Korean army, Will Griffin will be moving to live there; cementing international solidarity on anti-war/militarism
 - Barry: start talking about Korea Peace Campaign and maybe Bruce and others can use it as a vehicle to make other things happen
 - John: we have connections with Sam Winstead's Ride For Peace and Creative Peace Action who involved Korean peace activists
 - Tarak: Ann Wright is very knowledgeable
 - Michael: we should discuss more how we can approach Korean peace issues; changing the narrative around North, South Korea, and China; change the policies
 - Michael: this is a national project, we have to make it work; maybe have to find new people; too important an issue
 - Barry: U.S. not handled the relationship with North Korea very well
 - Gerry: perhaps if one or more board members would temporarily involve themselves in the campaign meetings, get a sense of what is going on, sense of direction; have had a lot of trouble in the past; hooks onto Jeju strategy, may need to get Korean issues figured out first; maybe actively involve John Kim for discussions into getting more people involved org-wide; augmenting leadership and making it a more collective effort; Gerry volunteers to start speaking with John Kim and Brian to participate
- National Campaign to End the Korean War
 - o Michael briefs report as provided to the board
 - Some kind of coalition that KPC is a part of along with a bunch of other groups
- Brief reports on other national projects (unrestricted): Peace In Our Times; Nonviolence Activist Training; Ferguson Travel Fund
 - o How Is The War Economy Working For You: not a functioning campaign, could move funds elsewhere
 - o Ferguson Travel Fund: Michael and Tarak agree funds could be moved towards different options
 - o Veterans Peace Teams

- Tarak: arose from Occupy organizing; some participating folks went to Jeju/Okinawa; envisioning using this campaign as a nonviolent army for peace; takes money, serious training and commitment; solid members
- Howard Zinn Fund Grant Program
 - Mark: briefs board on report as provided; committee recently sent out statement to membership on how much money is available for grant and how to apply; Iowa chapter last year did not want to follow the committee's process for requesting grant, they went around the committee and called the national board executive committee and we agreed to grant the funds; Zinn Fund committee was upset and threatened resolving the committee altogether; national excom admitted mistake but stated that Zinn fund committee did not give us enough information on how these events occurred; Zinn Fund committee requests a national policy to protect them from this happening again; how we manage the Zinn Fund and its procedures
 - Mark: provides written policy proposal to the board for management of the fund
 - Michael: finding ways to raise money for the fund; we have a relationship with Howard Zinn's family, so we have to follow through with that relationship and figure out how to raise the money
 - Open for questions
 - Willie: VFP-Jax applied for funds; process recommended by committee for chapters was way too stringent; lots of deadlines, we don't need the committee trying to run chapters
 - Tom: not enough info about Zinn on the website; reconcile the policy listed on the site with the proposal presented and what the committee is recommending
 - Gerry: Willie's experience is not unique; steps are so stringent; only doing one grant per year right now; excom raised the same concerns with Ken and the committee; excom agreed to support their path for now and revisit later; stringency has to do with accountability
 - Mark: looking for this to be a model
 - Barry: board can read tonight and vote during Saturday's meeting

Break

Hudson Valley, NY Chapter approval – Tarak

- ready for approval; not quite ten members yet, maybe eight veterans as of now
- Gerry: clarification on bylaw requirement for number of full members to verify new charter for chapter; Barry reads policy aloud
- Barry opens for questions; no questions
- **Tarak motions to accept Hudson Valley chapter approval; Tom seconds**
 - **Barry calls for opposition; no opposition**
 - **Approved by acclimation; Hudson Valley Chapter 177**

Treasurer Report – Mark

- Mark briefs based upon report provided to the board during the meeting; concerns include how to spend net surplus at end of year; not repeating over-estimating revenue and under-estimating expenses
- Michael: the plan for surplus revenue was that it was put in the bank; we had discussions on how to fund various projects such as the Golden Rule, Wealth Engine, and Foundation Search; issue for us is not overspending, it's failure to raise enough funds; if we want to reduce spending, that would come from staff; we don't spend money on a bunch of extra stuff, we have bare bones budget; if reducing spending, then we'll need to change the nature of the national office; asking the board to put more energy into raising extra funds; we have a history of back and forth with raising and not raising funds each year; believe the board has been pretty responsible, we just need to raise more; don't feel like we are in emergency mode, but if it happens again this year then we should be worried
- Tarak: in 2014 remember we received ~\$88k in bequests that we don't normally get; financial situation is actually fairly good; we are here to move forward the mission of VFP; we have to keep the organization going; if we are going to accomplish the mission and build the org, we have to be willing to take some risks; some things will come up and we will have to address it and you can't foresee it; we should get more grants this year depending on the economy
- Barry: fundraising and grants can take a while to get going
- Michael: presents statement of financial position to the board; total assets includes restricted funds, property, and equipment; that's how much we're worth
 - o Mark: how does the board want me to look at funds that are available for report
 - o Barry: restricted funds are included in total assets; we try hard not to use it for general office operations but if we need it to keep the door open, then we can
 - o Michael: we have no liabilities other than rent; we have no accounts receivables

Project RENEW update – Mark

- Mark briefs the board based upon report provided
 - o Tom: anything preventing us from publishing grant requirements
 - o Barry: that's in the future, if something happens and it comes up, we can decide then
- Michael: member sent a letter informing us that he is resigning membership because of approval of RENEW deal
 - o We don't have many members, we should do everything we can not to lose members; what can we do to help shore up people to not leave even though they disagree; his resignation is in the public so there are other members who are feeling the same way; others will quit when we actually get the MOU because they are quitting now and we haven't even done anything with it
 - o Gerry: willing to write letter to member who resigned; have already been in contact with him; inform the membership of exactly where things stand
 - o **Barry: calls for opposition to posting Mark's update on VFP communications; no opposition**

2016 Berkeley Convention – Barry

- discussion to approve the logo and theme proposal from SF Chapter 69; Michael displays logo and theme to the board
- **Gerry presents theme proposal; board discusses; board recommends slight changes to Gerry's proposal; approved by acclamation**
- Board decides to recommend the chapter to revisit the logo proposal
 - o Too dark, needs brighter color and contrast; needs local appeal and flavor
 - o Emphasize that changing the theme implies changing the logo as well

Membership committee report – Tarak

- Tarak briefs based upon report provided to the board
- lost 75 veteran members and 5 associates since last report due to lapses without follow-up; happens on regular basis; we are stressing new young members to join and stay involved
- encouraging board to help fund actions that are well-publicized to help raise VFP awareness; investing in a fund to help young veterans attend delegations and actions; **line-item budget proposal for \$15k**
 - o Gerry: agree with proposal, but we need some discussion; uncomfortable with rushing a vote right now
 - o Willie: clarification on the proposal as a travel fund
 - o Tarak: primarily to enable young veterans to participate in travel outreach events
 - o Barry: individual contributions and matching donations from chapters to supplement the fund
 - o Monique: important to continue our efforts to reach out to younger veterans; Monique is youngest veteran in her chapter; feels like hands are tied reaching out to younger veterans
 - o Kourtney: important for VFP to have big actions to attract younger veterans; many younger veterans will not want to sit through meetings and conventions, but will be interested in big actions; younger veterans are not a monolith, we are all a bit different; recruited a young veteran friend to join who was excited, but cannot attend meetings
 - o Barry: continue to recruit Vietnam and Korean era veterans while we can still get them; have the means and financial ability to support us; agree with supporting younger veterans
 - o Tarak: Full Disclosure program is outreach to Vietnam veterans
 - o Michael: we are talking about adding \$15k to a budget that is already more than what we raised last year; concerned with raising the funds; one of our problems is that we have different wings of the organization, those who want to be in motion all the time, but not connected to a well-thought out plan of how to leverage the motion; motion itself does not change things, it's a part of how we change things; are events are hardly ever well-publicized other than in our small circles; hope we connect our projects to thought out program; three pieces: educational, action, and the policy; when we are spending money for travel, it's part of our specific program and vision on how we plan to move forward; that is how you can explain narrative to big donors; figure out stronger outreach to get people in so we can

- retain them; right about needing to connect to older veterans; figure out how to use Full Disclosure to connect the past with the present;
- Mark: consider that we are adding another expense for paying Helen for Golden Rule work; Michael confirms that the GR budget includes payment for Helen's work
- Tarak: brainstorming with Barry on a nationwide VFP recruiting month; presents Barry's proposal as provided to the board
 - Additionally, providing chapters with materials to publish advertising in local papers and media; national should provide seed money so chapters don't shoulder the entire burden of paying for ads
 - Michael: put this as part of a packet to present to donors and foundations

Okinawa Chapter charter issues

- Tarak: chapter has three U.S. veterans and between 3-5 Okinawan veterans; issue is concerning the difference between chartering as an international or national chapter; ideally, it would be international and independent under same guidelines as UK chapter
 - Gerry: should continue to look at specifics of the differences; **motion to agree that it is an international chapter; John seconds**
 - **Barry: confirms no questions; Barry calls for vote**
 - **no opposition; approved by affirmation to confirm Okinawan chapter as an international chapter**
 - Barry: clarifies specifics of guidelines for international chapter

Guest introduction:

Frank Bessinger, VFP Chapter 170, Savannah, GA

Roger Ehrlich, Swords To Plowshares Bell Tower

- Roger presents photo slideshow of bell tower project; briefs board on project plans for 2018
- Request for board to consider adopting project as a VFP National Project
- Barry briefs on requirements for presenting a project for consideration as a national project
- Board agrees to table discussion on approval

Barry adjourns the meeting at 6:07 PM EST

Saturday, February 13, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary
Monique Salhalb
Brian Trautman
Joey King
Tarak Kauff
Willie Hager
Tom Palumbo
John Heuer

Board members present via teleconference:

Dan Shea

Guests present at the meeting:

VFP-JAX Jacob George Chapter 174:

- Wells Todd, Co-Chair
- Joe Fisher
- Eleanor, associate member
- Tom,
- Elaine Martin, associate member

Frank Bessinger, Coordinator, VFP chapter 170, Savannah, GA

Roger Ehrlich, VFP chapter 099, Asheville, NC

Ellen Barfield, Head VFP Representative to the UN Department of Public Information

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Barry convenes the meeting at 9:12 AM EST

Joey reads the VFP Statement of Purpose

Willie introduces the local Jacksonville chapter

Agenda Review – Barry

- additions to agenda
 - o Tarak: outreach travel fund vote
 - o Willie: borders and immigration committee report

Board Swearing-In – Barry

- Michael reads aloud the swearing-in statement

Executive Committee Officer Elections – Barry

- Barry briefs the board on members running for office; calls for new intentions to run
- Barry reads aloud the bylaws sections on officer duties
- Candidate statements
 - Barry for President: fundraising, membership growth; foundation search to look for grants to support programs; major donor program; getting our message out; established an advisory board with over twenty-five members; developing UN project; international chapter development
 - Gerry for Vice President: five years on board; steady growth and improvement on the board; progress both organizationally and politically; very happy to be a part of the executive committee; PAH-PA concept making links to militarism, Islamophobia, racism; took a position in which board was not able to agree on a key issue, tough time for us, understanding and forgiveness moving us forward; want to see us moving forward on all fronts; as a war resister and supporting war resisters, it remains a major concern of mine; working with Michael to ensure VFP is responding when there is significant U.S. militarism and escalation; providing analysis, important part of the peace movement in U.S.; VFP has stability, an institution; special responsibility to provide leadership; job of Vice President is least defined of all the officer positions; most important responsibility of VP is collaboration on the committee which is often a daily task; we get a lot of endorsements, process for that; Golden Rule work
 - Willie for Vice President: have interacted with Gerry since the 1970s, similar missions and causes; different long-term vision; see VFP as a chapter-based organization, we've lost our emphasis on chapters; have traveled around the country visiting chapters; we don't have many chapters functioning; trying to recruit younger veterans; projects make chapters cohesive; want to encourage more projects; chapters feel disconnected from us, example is Project RENEW debate; want to see our organization grow because issues shift and paradigms shift, but we need to remain steady; actions on the ground in their communities; working with PAH-PA lens on a day-to-day basis; can bring that kind of motivation and organizational skill set to coheso chapters themselves and make those connections between chapters and the national board; don't think the organization should be lead by the executive committee, they should help filter things; all about messaging, getting our messages out; well-connected, democratically organized group; coalition building; want to start now for the future; continue working with Tarak to diversify membership and getting grassroots actions in chapters; continue working with board with immigration and task force issues
 - Kourtney for Secretary: brief on military service and VFP membership; secretary role as responsibility to demonstrate VFP as democratic and open; commitment to taking fairly comprehensive notes and submitting to board in timely fashion; secretary role is an executive committee position that allows full voting and leadership responsibility; empowered to provide a voice for younger veterans and veterans of color
 - Mark for Treasurer: appreciate everyone's trust in me; always fascinated with organizations living within their means; keep a close eye on it; don't report on it

as often as stated in the policy book; there are so many numbers involved; basically the responsibility of the treasurer is to give a sense of where we are at financially; have been doing that fairly well; think I'm doing an okay job, if I'm not then I need to hear from you

- **Barry convenes the vote for executive committee officers; secret written vote counted and confirmed by Michael and Tom**
 - o **Confirmed votes: Barry is re-elected President; Gerry is re-elected Vice President; Mark is re-elected Treasurer; Kourtney is re-elected Secretary**
 - o Gerry: thanks to Willie for bringing up important issues regarding chapter development and outreach; board should commit to putting these ideas into action

Board member expectations – Barry

- Barry briefs the board on expectations of board members based upon the policy manual and bylaws; bylaws and policy manual could be updated, get a committee together to do that; Willie and Monique volunteers to review policies and bylaws
 - John: the board can make changes, important those changes are recorded accurately
 - Mark: clarification on process of adding new items to policies and bylaws; Michael Barry clarifies the process
 - Michael: anything policy oriented that the board votes on during meetings and conventions should be recorded and added to the books
 - Mark: clarification on the newly formed committee's responsibility to update the books based upon votes
 - Willie: the committee just collects the changes and information and presents it to the board
 - Michael: further clarification on various ways policies and bylaws can be updated or changed
- o Gerry: fundraising has been a mantra of all past presidents; we have not really been a fundraising board but that should change; need to give board members tools, give them ability to go out and seek funds from the community
 - Barry: development committee responsible for fundraising, need board member participation for that; current development committee is mostly non-board members plus Barry; need three or four board members to join that committee; Mark chairs the grant writing committee, if board members want to learn how to write grants
- o Joey reminds of the buddy system for new board members
- o Mark: for new board members, don't be afraid to ask questions of your assigned buddies, will likely have a lot of questions during first two years

Sexual Harassment training – Kourtney

- video presentation and discussion among the board and guests
- Barry: possibly update bylaws/policy to include conduct, not just denial of membership based upon social category
- Gerry: could be complicated with bylaws, may not be necessary in order to have a strong policy

Lunch break

Approval of January meeting minutes – John

- **John reminds the board to approve the January meeting minutes**
- **Barry calls for questions and objections to approving the minutes; no questions or objections**
 - o **January meeting minutes of the board of directors is approved**

Borders & Immigration Committee report – Willie

- Willie briefs on the report as provided to the board; Barry attended Tijuana chapter meeting and discussed assisting with chapter development; allying with immigration and deported veterans issues gains us national attention; tightening up relationship with FCNL; committee has been a very effective program; attacking the core issues on immigration; intention to make it a national project and incorporate outside resources for messaging and campaigning
 - o Open for questions
 - o Joey: SOAW event this year is moving to the borders of New Mexico to address related issues; very good chance for that chapter to be helpful
 - o Mark: clarification on who the veterans are who were deported; what has the chapter been able to do for these guys besides building morale; housing, food, etc?
 - Willie: Deported Veterans Support House is a project of VVAW/OSS formed a trust to be nonprofit sponsor; house operation is to be a soft landing when deported veterans are dropped off at the border; helps them get stabilized; assist with finding jobs and gaining their own housing; veterans getting swept up in previous ICE sweeps; working on upgrading discharge status for deported veterans; working with ACLU for immigration claims and veteran benefits; working with VA to access benefits such as going to hospitals in the U.S.; most of these veterans are proud of their service; DVSH is an OSS project; the chapter is VFP
 - o Monique: interest in working with additional border states like AZ and NM? Two additional deported veterans out of those states, is committee contacting other chapters along the border?
 - Willie: haven't done a direct to VFP chapter outreach, but Suel Jones is on the task force committee in that area; haven't used official VFP channels for that purpose but would like to do so
 - Monique: anyone who is interested in being a part of the committee has to submit a request?
 - Willie: not submit a request, just asking that people on the committee be committed to the committee, willing to work on the issue and bring talent and excitement to it
 - o Dan: Hector's story really moved my heart and remember his campaigning about his story on facebook, kept in touch with him and glad to see him working with VFP; think it's important to take this on as a national project; talking doing a caravan from Seattle and Portland to the border, get chapters and members to join

in on the way to SOAW; talking with Becky Luening to get puppeteers and Portland members to go down

UN Representative Report – Ellen Barfield

- Barry introduces Ellen
- Ellen: nice to actually be at the UN; reiterate some parts of the report; major refurbishment of the UN center in Manhattan, NYC; rumors that NGOs weren't going to be let back in, but those are not true, we are receiving more invitations than before beyond weekly meetings Four different ways to connect with UN: Getting someone elected to the Department of Public Information board; ability to weight in on their agendas; present more briefings during the year; many more connections than we have now; pleased that yearly NGO conference continues to be worldwide as supposed to just in NYC as in the past; Gerry and Helen went to event in Germany a few years ago; this year it will be in Seoul, Korea; did have a wonderful workshop with a few Iraq veterans and Palestine veteran from Combatants for Peace; lots of ways we can connect; stepping up the efforts of consultative status with ECOSOC office; could take years after we apply; explore other ways to connect first and see how that goes
 - o Open for questions
 - o Dan: dates for Korea conference?
 - Ellen: across the end of May and beginning of June
 - o Kourtney: clarification on your thoughts about seeking DPI status as opposed to ECOSOC status?
 - Ellen: getting someone elected first to serve on DPI governing board; that would entail someone from VFP devoting their time to the DPI work; if we are wanting to go there, then it's a good way to get in with the other NGOs, get known better, weekly meetings, we could organize or present at one or more of those; well acquainted with the high-ups and people who make things work with the DPI; consultative status refers to being consulted by the UN on issues that are addressed by a given NGO; most NGOs have a position in their permanent office who relate to the UN; their job is to relate to the UN full-time; unless we do that, there isn't a lot of point in gaining that status; several years ahead doesn't mean we would lose our DPI status while we wait; hesitate to even try unless we can give it that much time and money; not necessarily a staffer full time, but maybe part time and certainly more relationship than we have over the years; DPI relationship would give us a lot of those connections, acquaintances, getting further into the information and knowledge; would like to do that first, or maybe even instead of, would give us a lot of what we are actually seeking; not sure if we even qualify for ECOSOC status, entails more responsibility, and they have greater oversight; may not qualify after a year or two after we've done it; what ECOSOC means is economic and social counsel; not necessarily about war and security council but that is actually what VFP is about; they don't really want to hear that in ECOSOC circle; it's the softer side of the UN, such as humanitarian aid around the world; not sure if that would keep us from getting that status;

- election time for DPI board is June, so we are perfectly poised for someone to stand for that election
- Monique: coalition of NGOs organizing for education and VFP contributing to that; what does that look like?
 - Ellen: don't really know because it's very new; attended one in-person and one phone meeting; two months old; it's an initiative by several NGOs and also the Korean mission; a mission is the government's way of relating to the UN; there are many missions around the UN compound; a mission is government-to-UN; the South Korean mission is involved in this education for global citizenship project; the DPI-NGO conference is about themed on education; don't really know the history and won't be able to keep attending those meetings; if someone else wants to do that, would be exciting; a conference call per month and an in-person meeting every few months, lots of back and forth emails; would be exciting if we had a VFP rep to that effort to be focused on counter-recruitment in the schools; these people are clear that they are talking about all kinds of education at all levels
 - Tom: UN website lists VFP as accredited with DPI
 - Ellen: several thousands NGOs accredited with UN; access to meetings, and in exchange the UN gets free advertising; we are supposed to remind our members that UN is organizing events such as World Peace Day; works out well for them and for us; the UN is talking heads and very bureaucratic, but it's a model way to facilitate discussion among warring nations
 - John: what is the actual mechanics of electing a member to the governing board? Could it be a leader, a chapter member in the region, or an advisory board member? How to nominate?
 - Ellen: nomination is fairly informal, should be coming forward shortly, election in June; NGO gets one vote each; last year I circulated a letter concerning the nominees; a lot of people vaguely know who we are and wouldn't be that hard, but probably elected during the second round of votes; someone would have to be located within NYC; would take a lot of attention and would really suck a lot of attention away from VFP and into the DPI; has to be only one person; if we don't do this, it would be foolish to think going for higher ECOSOC status make sense
 - Michael: DPI is the body in which NGOs relate to the UN through, right?
 - Ellen: yes if that's your status; the other way to relate is ECOSOC status; DPI does handle most of these relationship because it's a lot less onerous; that's the primary way NGOs relate
 - Barry: on the 2006 panel with Iraq and Palestinian vets; how were we able to organize that event, what were the mechanics?
 - Ellen: DPI conference, just like the one about to happen at Korea; they solicit workshop proposals at the conference; that was a coalition of NGOs; they look for a broad spectrum related in some way to the theme of the conference; don't know if we have anyone from the U.S. interested in

going; do we still have a connection to Korean VFP? Can some of them attend the DPI conference?

- Barry: I was in South Korea and met with chapter; a young Iraq veteran a member of SD chapter, is moving to Jeju and maybe we can try to get him interested in attending; also have people from Vietnam like Chuck Searcy who could be interested; maybe we can put together a program to present to them
- Ellen: have not yet seen a call for workshop proposals; will likely be a tight timeline for proposals; won't have a lot of time for reviewing and accepting proposals; they have to limit number of people they bring; has often been around six or eight, only so many, no idea how many they are saying this time; will send along the information; can't say if the workshop will be accepted; will assume the DPI board has a lot to say about what is accepted; that is a reason for getting someone on that board for future use
- Barry: try to influence the U.S. mission and the ambassador to the UN; how do we go about that? Can we as a U.S. NGO get access to the U.S. mission folks and get them to take a position that we are pushing as VFP? Is that easy or hard, what steps to influence our own delegation?
 - Ellen: Samantha Power, our head to the UN at this time; missions in general are very welcoming, but our own mission is probably not very welcoming; if we went in informally, than I have no idea
 - Barry: opportunity to voice strong opposition to the reluctance of U.S. to challenge illegal settlements in Palestine, just one example of something we can do, along with many other issues
- Ellen leaves the meeting
- Gerry: experience with UN meeting in Germany; attempted to have impact on governments regarding big environmental statement; no mention whatsoever of military environmental impacts in the document, nothing about war; basically it was self-censorship because they know U.S. and other nations are not happy about that and so you don't say anything; we knew there were other peace activists there, so Helen and Gerry and others stood up and made statements to this effect; meeting then proceeded to include military environmental impact on the first page of the statement
- Tarak: Gerry suggested that Edo may be a good person to represent in June since he is in Okinawa
 - Barry: Will Griffin, Rachel Clark, Chuck Searcy are also possibilities to attend in June; Dan Shea could attend if he were given help with funding the trip; can include this in grant reports for foundations and see if this is something we can sell for funds; relate this to the interests of the donors and maybe they will give us travel funds to send reps
 - John: Margaret Stevens said that when she stepped down from the national board, she wanted to remain active with VFP; she's had unsatisfactory experience with UN but she is willing to explore engaging with UN horizontal structure
 - Barry: student interns from colleges and area schools; can be supervised; utilize their student activities for our purposes

- Michael: we want a rep from the national board for DPI activities; clarification on how we want to involve Margaret Stevens and in what capacity
- Tarak: NY chapter member possible as well
- Gerry: Margaret is a professor and works with inner city school kids as well; would be a very good match, but she's very busy
- Dan: we should look at international chapter members to take part; in the future we can be in the UN to talk about an international combatants for peace and civilians with a social forum scale
 - Michael: the international chapters can be affiliated as a separate NGO and we could increase our impact; their government could pay more attention to them because of that

Islamophobia campaign – Michael

- Tom initiates conversation on the process of launching campaign; campaign page and facebook does not feature VFP logo, does not look like a VFP campaign; why didn't it come in as an endorsement request
 - Michael: we've explained that VFP is initiating this campaign, does not come in as an endorsement
- Gerry: could have been improved in some ways; campaign is the idea that we are starting it but that it would be a broad coalition of veterans, mostly unaffiliated veterans since many orgs may not want to connect on this issue
- Michael: presents the website for the campaign and the Twitter account for the campaign
- Michael briefs the board on recent conference calls with allies in the Islamophobia campaign

Ira Arlook of Fenton Communications and Jim Driscoll join the meeting via phone

- Michael: briefing on costs involving Fenton Comms; idea of airplane banner flyover; once we try connections with media, then the focus will be on organizing on the ground until the next moment presents itself; using Fenton to help with opinion pieces in the media, publicizing chapter events such as the one in Boston; Willie, Mark and Brian were on conference call and volunteered to help form committee to help push the campaign forward; bringing in younger veterans who see these intersections; we are being exposed to funders, put in a \$350k proposal to the Open Society Foundation that we would not have been able to put forward if we weren't doing this work; possibilities within Council on American Islamic Relations; a network being created within the Muslim community about VFP, and giving us chances to work with them; providing opportunities outside of our normal work which we otherwise would not have; working on raising funds, and the coffers are getting low, but we'll do what we always do when the money is low for campaigns, we will get the chapters to do their work and we'll forward the campaign based on what we have
- Jim Driscoll: working on getting media for the campaign; possibility of getting a bigger microphone for this; wouldn't necessarily give up the idea of getting reps on the talk shows for publicity
- Tarak: are they considering alternative media; that's a whole realm that is friendly to us
 - Ira: we have a lot relationships with them, so yes
- Barry: any word from the Open Society; Ira confirms no word yet, we will hear quickly

- Tarak: various sources on the web, progressive publishing sites; more and more people will see it since they are dissatisfied with corporate media
- Ira and Jim leave the meeting
- Michael: the money was raised to partly pay them for the campaign; the system operates in a particular way, and we have to work and live within in these particular ways in order to get by; this is one of those instances that I don't know anyone in VFP who has the relationships that Fenton has; if we didn't have this relationship with Fenton, we would not have been in front of Open Society Foundation which does open doors for the future; we could get there eventually, but it wouldn't have happened now; it's relationships, which are huge
 - o Tom: clarification on where money to pay Fenton if fundraising money drops; Michael confirms we wouldn't be drawing from VFP funds to do so
 - o Michael clarifies specifics of contract and relationship with Ira and Fenton Comms; contract allows an out on either side
 - o Mark: discussion with Jim and Rhonda; Jim felt that \$350k was not a good possibility
 - o Michael and Barry clarifies that the plan right now is just through the end of the month
 - o John: Bridges To Common Ground efforts at Abrahamic ecumenicalism; new translation of the Koran; communications committee report would be good to follow up this with general communications discussion
- Gerry: request to Michael to expound vision of campaign over the next few months
 - o Michael: would like to get the campaign up and running; have to get this campaign moving in addition to the other work of the org; a lot depends on getting the big grant, put organizers in key cities to connect with local actions in those cities; committee would be able to decide on which cities to organize in if there is a presence of this issue there; try to get veterans involved; social media, spreading the word; reaching out to as many Muslim orgs as we can, stronger relationship with the Muslim veterans orgs; building the website more so when people come to it there will be other points of interest beyond the statement; find out what chapters are already doing and supporting their efforts; getting other chapters who are inactive and see if they can start some efforts
 - o Gerry: CAIR is a pretty big org, offices in major cities around the country; may want to further that, possibly match up chapters with their local offices
- Tom: how has the ten grand been spent, what did VFP receive from this expenditure
 - o Michael: some exposure with media; connection with Open Society Foundation; consultation on some of the messaging brought to the board and tweaked to make better
 - o Barry: Fenton people doing research on presidential candidate statements, locations, campaign activities, and how we should respond; when you are looking at the overhead that they are doing for us, they can't really open their doors and do the work for less; they have a profit-margin, are still a business; haven't really asked them to breakdown their overhead costs; but they are doing research and providing us with information
 - o Michael: some of that work we should put on the website; quotes of what Trump and Cruz and others have said; is it worth ten grand? Maybe not, other than the

relationship part which could not have been had otherwise; they could maybe do it for less, or nothing

- Barry: paying for access to open doors to relationships that we would not otherwise have
- Willie: not an either/or situation; this campaign is important, our logo really ought to be on it, it's our mission statement; having worked in pro fundraising, I agree with Michael and Barry, it's not really quantifiable, but the sum is huge relative to what we usually do; the pay scale didn't come to later emails, it's a lot of money
 - Michael: this is a philosophical discussion, this is not a discussion that is impactful for us as VFP; the money would not have come to us if it were not for this campaign; I have the same issues with the campaign as you do, but it does not impact us so we don't have to continue having the discussion
- Tarak: Fenton told us that if we want media attention, we need conflict; creative provocative nonviolent direct action; create a position that the candidates have to expose their negativity; if we created an action where something happens, then we have a platform and the media will listen; not philosophically, but something has to happen
- Roger: Raleigh, NC campaign against Islamophobia, postering campaign; example is a Trump rally, and we design our own posters and get shop owners to put it up, and if a Trump supporter breaks the window, then there is the conflict we need; consider visual signs to place next to VFP logo
- Gerry: given that this is our first in-person meeting of the year, understandable that everyone would express their opinions on the campaign; glad we are moving on with it

Break

Case For Support document update – Michael

- Michael: as a board we have been developing strategic plan and what our work is so when we go out we can talk about specifics of what we are doing; CFS is not all of our work, provides a basis for talking about our work, gives us something concrete to look at and discuss; fundraising tool; stay focused and moves the work; gives national office an understanding of what we should be doing day to day; CFS will be minimally printed, can provide through email; around twenty pages currently, and we can use different pieces
 - Michael briefs on the CFS based upon report provided to the board
 - Mark: could change year to year; question about printing; Michael reminds that we are not printing too many but we will need to change some of the pages year to year
 - Michael: high profile persons, VIPs can receive full color physical copies
- Michael: ideas on changing the national conversation
- Board suggestions for edits to Case For Support
 - Emphasize human cost first, then economic cost
 - Update Paul Chappell title and VFP affiliation
 - Issues with "...change U.S. foreign policy to wage peace."
 - Change: "...to promote peace and diplomacy."
 - Possible change "Korea Peace Campaign" to "Asia Pivot to Peace" or similar

- Change includes various work projects related to military's Asia pivot instead of just focusing on Korea Peace Campaign alone
 - Focusing on being goal-oriented and not just motion on the ground
 - Issues with section "weaponized drone campaign;" clarifying our position on drone use and how to communicate with the public and potential donors
 - Support War Resisters and Whistle Blowers: considerations to include amnesty for war resisters in part of our work
 - "Reclaim Armistice Day" edit to bullet point
 - Kellogg-Briand Pact: possible theme for 2018 convention, and is an educational tool; should be included as part of our work
 - Adding in Moral Injury related to PTSD, veterans suicides, MST
 - Potential to add a fourth category since these profound injuries are extremely important on their own; may require their own category
 - Potential issues with including Chelsea Manning in the CFS since not every potential donor or ally agrees with her story and actions; our principles versus potential controversy
- Joey: this is the kind of thing that is worth checking over in a board meeting setting at least twice per year; consistent look at the work we are doing and editing for errors on a consistent basis

Membership committee – Outreach Travel Fund Proposal – Tarak

- process for bringing young veterans to the convention included a fairly simple form and criteria; can modify it for these purposes and present to the board; will be good to have a committee of three people who we all trust to evaluate travel fund applications
 - **Tarak: motion to approve board setting aside \$15k as a line-item in the budget in order to fund Outreach Travel; John seconds**
 - Open for questions
 - Joey: where is this money coming from; is it a separate line-item; is it fundraising or moving money from the budget
 - Tarak: taking it from the money we have; it's seed money; won't all be spent
 - Michael: clarification that we are adding \$15k to the budget, not building off of it; we are fundraising the entire fifteen grand, not giving fifteen grand and fundraising more; at the end of the year, whatever we didn't raise is a deficit for the budget
- Tarak: Ann Wright offered to donate to the fund; Michael clarifies that we should expand where we get money from instead of going to the membership each time
- **Tarak reiterates motion to include line-item for travel fund at fifteen grand; John reiterates second for motion**
- Joey seeks clarification on specifics
- Gerry: fundraising for the fund can appeal to certain people; could be a basis for a grant or for members to chip in
- Dan: we could get funds from people who never considered funding us; example is Jeju/Okinawa delegation receiving support because of the campaign
- Michael: use the fund for travel that we are real clear about campaign wise
- Willie: how to measure return on this investment from those who participate

- Tarak: not linear; with Jeju/Okinawa, everyone was expected to write and speak about experiences
- Michael: at minimum, event at travel must be sanctioned and endorsed by the board
- Monique: timeline for when the process and measurement of return takes place
 - Tarak: guidelines will be in place
- Mark: don't know if we're dipping into reserves until the end of the year; we have to measure it from fundraising, grants, etc; based on faith at this point
- Gerry: ask the individuals who are applying to help raise funds as well
- Mark: Jeju trip was incredible, event inspires membership; it's a risk, but if we do end up having to dip into assets at beginning of next year because we didn't raise enough, I feel that we still have enough of a cushion to give this a chance; worthy thing to bet on; we do still have ten and a half months left and I will vote no for a lot of future proposals
- **Barry calls for vote:**
 - **Eleven in favor, one opposed; the motion passes**

U.S. Solidarity Delegation to Jeju and Seoul, Korea endorsement – Tarak

- Tarak: July 25 thru August 15; members will come back in time for the convention except for Bruce Gagnon who will stay the entire trip; Bruce organizing with South Korean activists; two parts of the trip, folks can come back whenever they want; Seoul has a lot of anti-militarism activity; they have a right-wing government and lots of opposition; Bruce spoke before ten thousand people when he was there; will engage in action; it will all be well-documented
- Barry: in favor of the event but concerned that some folks won't be able to make it back for the convention; competing interests with the cost for attending the convention, or folks have to return to work
- Tarak clarifies events occurring in Seoul and Jeju; this is not a VFP organized event, can't control the timeline; reads relevant points from the proposal as presented to the board via email
- Mark: how much of the approved fifteen grand will this take?
 - Tarak: depends on how many younger veterans cannot afford to go; could be a max of three grand
- Gerry: date conflicts are inevitable; probably will only be a conflict for just a few people;
- motion for VFP to co-sponsor this delegation**
- Barry: clarify difference between co-sponsor and endorse
 - Gerry: co-sponsorship indicates a higher level of commitment and involvement, rather than just adding our name in support; doesn't entail a financial commitment from the board; includes board weigh-in on decisions; **Brian seconds the motion**
- Joey: are they comfortable with us co-sponsoring; Tarak confirms
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **12 in favor; no opposition; endorsement passes unanimously**

Executive Director's Report – Michael

- provides budget explanation based upon the approved budget proposal provided and voted on by the board; strengthening relationship with membership; thank you communication for associate members, not asking for money, separate from general mailing to all members as in the past

Ralph Nader event planning update – Barry

- Nader contacted Michael that he rented out Constitutional Hall for five days, coincides with the anniversary of his book; third day of event, March 25, will focus on war and peace issues and he wants VFP to take a major role in programming; want to sell-out 3000+ seats at the hall; fundraising opportunity for us; he's already gotten Andrew Bacevich excited about event; Nader asking for additional names who can participate, he will take lead in contacting them; will include other veterans groups, but we'll be the focus; will include musical acts, interactive events; possible idea of getting together a short film that explains VFP, augmented with other audio/visual aspects; will need folks to volunteer for a committee to work on the program for VFP's participation
- Michael: anyone can help on the committee and presentation; during that same time period is Lobby Days event; Sam's Ride arrives weekend before Nader's event; Memorial Day weekend at the end of the week, Full Disclosure at the wall; Roger's bell tower could be there for a couple weeks camping at the mall; have to organize all of these other events that week in DC; please think about attending and helping us make it happen
- Barry: did an interview with Ralph Nader on his radio show, and Nader asked pointed question to Barry about Roger's tower
 - o Open for questions
 - o Willie: JAX chapter/Tijuana deported vets house issues, many will turn themselves in to immigration and customs; if they can manage to adjust their dates for the turn-in, can VFP manage to include this into the legislation lobbying program for Lobby Days?
 - Michael confirms that the national office has been planning to coordinate all of these events with Nader's event

April board meeting planning – Barry

- proposal is for St. Louis during the third weekend of April (15-17); Barry suggests Excom works for a full day before the start of the board meeting (April 14); other possibility is for Excom to meet all day Thursday and board meeting starts Friday morning and meetings end Saturday, folks can leave Sunday
 - o Further clarification determines that we should keep Sunday open in case we need the time for extra work

NATO event in Brussels – Gerry

- suggested that we briefly review U.S. interventions currently during the board meetings, put that further up in agenda
 - o Gerry quickly reviews current U.S. interventions worldwide
 - U.S. troops still in Afghanistan, Obama stopped the troop drawdown and is keeping around ten thousand troops there; situation is deteriorating, Afghan government and NATO/U.S. troops involved; talking about ramping up intervention; one way we are obliquely responding to this is by supporting Bowe Bergdahl
 - Chaos in Iraq; hundreds being killed on an almost daily basis; ISIL is still causing havoc; increasing number of U.S. troops in Iraq

- sending some special forces troops into Syria; but a cease-fire has been called as early as next week; ISIL is not a part of it, neither is Al-Nusra front; depends on how moderate rebel forces respond; if it goes well, it could open more cease fire and a peace process; VFP should issue a statement supporting the cease fire and call for it to be permanent
- already some U.S. special forces in Libya; talk of a major U.S./NATO intervention in Libya
- U.S. ramping up forces for the Asia Pivot and mobilizing allies in region to confront China in its own backyard; part of that is the development of more bases at Jeju and Okinawa; also confronting the nuclear arms race with North Korea; talks of confronting North Korea use of nuclear arms, much room for miscalculation and confrontation
- U.S. is upset that Russia has tipped the scale of the Syria war; U.S. changing its position on bringing down Assad government; U.S. angry with Putin in Russia, have this confrontation ongoing in Ukraine and is seen as the most dangerous right now; U.S. is going to quadruple NATO funding and is pushing NATO to confront Russia more strongly on Russia's own borders; that is seen as tempting nuclear confrontation
- This context is why Faraz Akar who chairs VFP Iran Working Group, has suggested that we participate in actions against NATO event in Brussels; a June conference; European peace movement will likely mobilize, we can participate; NATO has evolved into an international militaristic intervention force; they even have contingency plan for NATO intervention in South America; we have to learn and be prepared to confront it
 - Open for questions
 - Joey: NATO is now going to be rescuing Syrian refugees?
 - Gerry: they say they are intervening immigration smuggler boats; but also aimed at stopping more immigrants from getting into Europe
 - Tarak: appreciates the work Gerry does in keeping the board updated on interventions
 - Michael: NATO web page has a list of facts on Russia; part of their propaganda to garner support for their conflict with Russia; some ways we can counter this

Barry reviews agenda for Sunday meeting

- legislative agenda moved to Sunday
- Gerry to give communications committee report
- Mark reminds to vote on loans/grants policy for VFP; provides written proposal to the board

Barry adjourns the meeting at 6 PM EST

Sunday, February 14, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary
Monique Salhalb
Tom Palumbo
Joey King
Brian Trautman
Willie Hager
John Heuer
Dan Shea (via Skype)

Board members excused from the meeting:

Tarak Kauff

Communications Committee report – Gerry

- committee not functioning as a committee; in the past we talked about defining what the scope of it is; talk about including social media within the scope; office staff involved in social and external media; could be more productive if we had more writers and editors on the committee; so that we are not relying on one or two people to get out every letter or press release; help make the committee a real functioning committee with regular communications and sharing of the work
 - o open for questions
 - o Joey: in the past three of us would write a circulate a press release, submit to excom/board for editing, and then get it out; can get out a press release usually 24 hours after writing
 - o Tom: we're not using data like we should; we could tell site visitors by category and what they click on and what pages they visit; most of the analytics are free; optimizing our website and moving it to a mobile platform, consolidating content
 - o Gerry: specifically the communications committee should be defined fairly narrowly; press releases and letters, etc
 - Tom: but should be able to track that with the data and analytics; website and pages are doing fairly well for a small org doing it ourselves
 - o Gerry: committees are not limited to board members
- Michael: we are working with a company, and Tom and Patrick have helped as well; would like to create a national speaker's bureau; identifying special days for our statements; presence in local media, radio shows, obtain lists of where these shows are; communications staffer could be building relationships with targeted media outlets; each campaign should develop talking points, in addition to various topics; enhancing youtube page with more content; public service announcements; television commercials

- Barry: another special day for a statement is August 27 for the Kellogg-Briand Pact; op-ed, letter to editor, public service announcements
- Michael: while writing grants and soliciting major donors, hiring a communications director is key
 - John: Akmed Salim a consideration for communications; Films For World Peace creator;
- Barry: Chris Smiley captured footage from the national convention in San Diego; need to talk to him to find out progress with using footage to create documentary or short films

Committee assignments

- Communications: Gerry chairs; Brian, Tom, Michael, Joey, Barry
- Nominations: Monique, Barry, Patrick McCann, Doug Zachary
- Awards: Joey, Barry, Patrick McCann
- Bylaws: Dan chairs; Gene Marx, Nate Goldschlag, Dave Wiley
- Resolutions: Bob K, John
- Convention: Dan, Barry, Michael, John, Jack Doxey, Gary Butterfield, Denny Riley, Paul Cox
- Development: Willie, Michael, Barry, Ken Barger, Matt Southworth, Ken Mayers, Doug Zachary
- Membership and Chapter Development: Tarak chairs; Brian, Monique, Joey, Kourtney, Mike Hearington, Nate Goldschlag, Jason Cardenas, Ellen Davidson, Doug Zachary
- Finance: Mark chairs; Barry, Michael
- Newsletter: Barry, Michael, Virginia Druhe, Doug Rawlings
- Personnel: Mark, Joey, Monique
- Programs & National Projects: Kourtney, Monique, Michael, Casey

Board travel reimbursement policy – Barry

- Michael updates the board on the policy as provided previous to the meeting

VFP Listservs and unofficial facebook group discussion – Gerry

- need to do a better job of monitoring the listservs and create a code of conduct, remind membership; executive committee decided to take responsibility for enforcing code of conduct
 - Willie: should have different board members on each listserv, and create a standard VFP code of conduct for all listservs
- Tom posted statement on the unofficial facebook group; excom recommends minor changes but otherwise agrees the statement is sufficient
 - Kourtney volunteers to assist with monitoring unofficial facebook group

Discussion on VFP policy on grants/loans – Mark

- Mark briefs board on potential policy for grants/loans to other organizations based upon report provided
- Gerry: don't want to tie our hands; we may never make another loan; suggests supporting first option for loan policy as listed in the proposal

- Mark and Barry to work on rewording the first option in the loan policy suggestion
- Board agrees to support the first option pending further edits

Staff & Board evaluation of Executive Director and work environment – Mark

- Michael breaks from the meeting to allow discussion on evaluations from staff and board
- Mark briefs on the staff responses on the evaluations as provided in writing to the board
- Mark summarizes that staff is happy with Michael but have serious concerns about the location of the office in St. Louis; Mark to discuss with Michael
- Discussion on further improvements of the location of the office; possible security systems
- Barry: could have staff evaluate their working relationship with the board; gain feedback from staff
- Mark briefs on the board responses to evaluation of ED
 - o Board agrees that less-than-perfect grades are more a reflection of the board's communication to Michael rather than Michael's performance
 - o Board must communicate with Michael our priorities and plan programming in congruence with Michael's consistently stated organizational goals, strategy, and org narrative for a more cohesive plan to present to potential donors and allies
 - o Ask Michael how much can we support him
 - o Board should ask the staff how responsive we have been to their needs

Barry adjourns the meeting at 12 PM EST

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors
Conference Call
Monday, March 21, 2016

National board members on the call:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary
Joey King
Nicole Waybright
Willie Hager
Brian Trautman
John Heuer
Monique Salhalb
Tarak Kauff
Dan Shea

Excused:

Gerry Condon
Tom Palumbo

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry convenes the call at 6:05 PM EDT

Agenda review

- Barry briefs the agenda as provided to the board
- Additions to agenda:
 - o Monique: Democracy Awakening event, April 17, D.C.
 - o Michael: Republican and Democratic conventions, what are we doing if anything; organizing safe spaces, VFP has been asked to participate

New Board member – Nicole Waybright

- Barry: congratulations to Nicole; Nicole thanks the board
- Barry asks Nicole for a brief background to the board
 - o Nicole: in the Navy in the 90s, officer, on board a destroyer and amphibious assault ship, five years; ROTC scholarship at Boston U; after fulfilling five year obligation, got out February 2001; decided to leave Navy behind, didn't associate with veterans issues until wars started; rhetoric and narrative going on about it, as if all vets supported that military intervention, started writing about my time in the Navy; looked for vets groups who were working against narrative; VFP

national website was exactly what I was expressing and working for, signed up on website, joined Boston chapter; has been at least two years; recently elected to serve on the chapter ExCom; first wave of women to serve aboard combatant ships in 90s; Nicole briefs on Navy cruelty scandal; looking forward to working with everybody

- Barry: thanks for standing up against cruelty; took a lot of courage
- Nicole: when started project eight years ago, everyone contacted wanted to speak and have history told; combined effort of people

Islamophobia campaign (VCI – Veterans Challenge Islamophobia)

- Michael: the latest action was in Phoenix at Trump rally; Nate Terani who lives in AZ participated and was lead person; another veteran who's not a member but got in touch with Casey, so some vets who are not members but have become interested; students participated as well; went really well, got a lot of coverage before the action, Michael did interview with Politico; and then Saturday and Sunday we had several articles including one in Washington Post; Nate got a lot of visibility, his veterans service organization non profit didn't know he was doing action, he didn't tell reporters, but his coworkers dug that up and made a story about it; they said they are pretty supportive but wanted him to be careful to protect their non profit status and donor relationships; other folks in his organization started talking about the issues with him, started a conversation in his org; as far as funding, we have been promised \$200k by Open Society Foundation, going through process of receiving those funds; Virginia has been communicated, Michael is set to speak with them; everything going fine with that; ten percent going into general funding to pay for staff work on the campaign; \$180k specifically for the campaign; Jim Driscoll will continue to look for more funding; he developed job descriptions for campaign; Nate Terani has been in touch, will contact Monique to figure out what cities to start with, find organizers; Michael rewriting budget to accommodate grant amount given; need national organizer in D.C.; Jim looking into who to hire there, will pick two or three more cities to start; after rewriting campaign document, will send to board; organizers will be doing:
 - Plugging into current organizers in each city; if there's none, they will bring people together and look for veterans to plug into networks;
 - Helping with any national events in each city; chapters and infrastructure and bring resources to those events
 - Most importantly, reach out to civic orgs, social orgs, go talk to them about Islamophobia and how that impacts U.S. foreign policy; confront people and make them talk before there is an attack and people get afraid, if something happens they will have already confronted their biases, makes it harder for them to do wrong thing; inoculate them, spread new ideas; before they become afraid
- Michael opens for questions
 - John: our chapter met two weeks ago and voted to become a candidate for a host city for the campaign; we already have a variety of campaigns here near Chapel Hill; asked associate member who directs Films For World Peace to take

frontline role and he's excited; we have an officer of a 1994 RV offered from Quaker House to our chapter; Salim is proposing to use it as peace mobile, traveling mobile studio to interview vets part of campaign; looking forward for opportunities to coordinate with national effort

- Willie: two weeks ago went up to Savannah for meeting with Imam at mosque, getting something together for the campaign; when we walked into meeting he rolled out a photo of when mosque was burned down a few years ago; when we talked about involving his mosque in the campaign, he said they were about anonymity and he couldn't see them speaking out in this community; they are going to do an open house event at the mosque in the future, and imam is willing to do a panel to speak to congregation
- Joey: we have a statewide org in Nashville and their ED spoke with us last month and we are going to speak at mosque, still trying to find out which mosque, but it will be third Thursday in April, will report back with more info
 - Barry: should Nashville become a host city for campaign
 - Joey: agree but long protracted fight with Murfreesboro about a thirty-year mosque who wanted building permit to expand and modernize mosque and an anti-Islam group in VA funded prop against them; meetings with city council and the state Lt. General called Islam a terrorist org and not a religion; so yes we believe it will be a good candidate to host campaign

VCI Survey update

- Brian: During one of meetings of VCI campaign coordinating committee, I agreed to draft survey to spread word about campaign and help determine which cities to make host cities; survey sent to VFP chapter contacts; survey is going well; so far we received twelve completed surveys and few others have contacted and said they plan to submit by deadline March 24; once deadline passes, will get a report of results to Jim Driscoll and to the board; with the letter that accompanied survey, I mentioned that VFP attained funding for media outreach and grassroots mobilization, hiring organizers in at least five cities; we intend to staff these positions with recent U.S. veterans; hoping to get a few more surveys back, following up with folks who did say they were going to work on it; from this info we'll be able to fill in a list of any cities we have remaining to focus on

Golden Rule update

- Barry: conference call with transition committee; the Golden Rule is under ownership of chapter/committee, and we're transferring ownership over to VFP national; working with them to make smooth transition; making good progress on that, everyone on accord, good working relationship so far, will get it done over next couple months; refining MOU, once approved by their committee, it will come to board for review and approval; still planning trip up to Northwest for summer months, many VFP chapters

there involved in planning; fundraisers, trip to Trident Submarine base; will still be on journey during Berkeley convention, so it won't be there for convention; funding is still a big thing, but it's holding it's own with local fundraising, but we need to step up a fundraising campaign; talking with Helen Jaccard about moving fundraising along much more quickly

Grant writing, general fundraising

- Mark: over a year ago, board decided we want to get more involved in grant writing; we hired a company to be our search engine for a five year program for around \$9000; Diane Weiman volunteered to help us with this; haven't had a lot of success with the search engine; it's very complex so takes time to understand how to use it better; our committee is made up of Jim, Diane, Helen, Ken Barger, Michael, Rhonda Ladendorf, Willie, Virginia Druhe; we meet phone conference every month, didn't meet this month because Michael and Ken were out of town; next monthly meeting first week of April; Jim Driscoll is the one who has the connections to raise the money for VCI campaign; he thinks there's real potential for VFP to also raise money for anything we might be involved with regarding climate change; we are looking into contacting Naomi Klein who wrote book on climate change, trying to get her to convention; she would likely charge quite a bit; Jim is pretty sure he can raise money to get Naomi to convention and set up a program to get out the information that we need to educate members on climate change and how threatening it is; if we get more involved Jim believes he can raise the money for us; the most difficult thing we are having trouble with raising money for is general funding; we are working on it; each monthly meeting the committee gets closer to understanding; finding grants to get general funding; Barry is excited about us becoming more involved with UN and could get general funding for that as well; this search engine will help us with all of this eventually; we have it for another four years, so we have time to work this out
- Mark opens for questions
 - o Michael: we are in really good financial position even without the \$200k for the VCI campaign; Michael briefs on specific financial standing of VFP national; we are down on donations; also fact that we had to pay \$12,000 for convention, this is a bit earlier than previous; we're still in the black so that's really good, would have expected us to be in the red; we got a craigslist grant again for third year in a row; also another foundation grant; we're doing very well with grants, but not exactly the grants we were going after, generally folks are seeing we're doing good work so we're getting grants; a foundation is now giving us much more money than previous years; we will have reached our goal for grants in the budget no later than next month, which is awesome; we need to continue to work on grants, we can do more and better; we really need to work on major donors and major donations; we don't really have anything in the pipeline, and our goal is \$40k; another thing to work on is getting bequests in the pipeline
 - Barry: clarification on increase in dues and donations from mailing

- Michael: every month folks renew, and we send reminders and Doug calls people to renew; that's why, but we're not up a whole lot, just \$2700; think it's from the work and people see us doing stuff; support appeal should arrive within the week; sent specific letters to associate members, veterans members; Michael describes three different approaches to appeal mailings to target specific member groups and supporters; last email will go out Monday after Creech events, will summarize that event, we'll take the same approach to specify associate members and emphasize actions to donors
- Mark: as the board treasurer, confirm what Michael is saying; we are in nice financial state, not great, but we're solid, feels good to start year this way; agree with emphasizing major donors, what's the plan to do so
- Michael: we haven't yet specified on paper, but there are plans and we'll finalize it for review
- Barry: development committee hasn't held the meetings like we should have; should have a meeting soon; what about having Jim come to that committee meetings; Ken Barger outline made a lot of sense, was ambitious but we should get on to it
- Michael: questions for the whole board; when Mark was talking about climate change; don't like chasing money; changing what we are doing just to get money, because then who is controlling the program, the funders are, instead of us determine the best way to achieve our mission and getting funders for that; question for the board is: is climate change something we should be leading, we should dialogue but should we lead on it; not to say we shouldn't have a program, we already have brochures and could implement into presentations; but if we go after major money for climate change work, when we haven't developed our plan of action, we're just chasing money instead of strategically looking at approach and asking best questions; example is VFP could not lead in Black Lives Matter, but we are associated and in solidarity; ask similar questions in any other field, is it the right thing to lead or solidarity and how to do it; board should look at this if we are to find money for it
 - Tarak: second Michael's concerns; very interested in climate change, direct connection with militarization; there's no way we lead on this, there are people who put their lives on the line for this cause; fighting this battle for decades; we can't lead but we can be part of and start doing stuff; I don't believe that we have paid honorarium other than travel or housing to the people who come to speak to us; think Klein is terrific, but talking about raising serious money, that's not our policy, we don't do that
 - Dan: what is Klein's fee

- Barry: don't know of a fee, don't know if she will ask; Paul Cox on Berkeley convention committee will contact her to see if she's available; let's find out first if she has interest
- Courtney: agree with Michael and Tarak about concerns on leading climate change and raising funds for it; keep our work focused; Michael has emphasized sticking with our mission statement, our goals and Case For Support, and using our voices as veterans to amplify campaigns where we can leverage more; appeal to the connections between war and climate change
- Barry: it interfaces with pollution, weapons testing, nuclear weapons, tremendous impact on environment; preventive measure to future war and conflict, not just about the wars; some of the wars were partly caused by climate change; potential for us to use our voice to stop future wars and there's an angle we can take advantage of; the Berkeley convention motto is looking at the angle of climate change and its impact on future wars; find a place for our message to get out
- Dan: we can focus the speakers to focus on military and climate change and how its changing the environment; we can specify Jeju/Okinawa delegation and mention how militarization is changing the environment in those countries

Creech anti-drone event

- Monique planning to attend the event
- Tarak: sent out application for young veterans to attend the event via travel fund and we got one response; veteran wants to attend and do live-streaming of the event and the conference; we funded him a bit more than what we normally would approve, but he's done this for us in Ferguson and has a radio show; we gave \$650 that will cover almost all of flight and hotel amount
- Barry: will be a great panel with Ann Wright and Marjorie Cohn and other whistleblowers on drone strikes

Delegation to Syria

- Barry: Gerry has been offered chance to attend the delegation; flight money is pretty decent on Syrian airlines, \$800; Syrian government is funding this; my concern is there an opportunity to hear other voices other than the ones Syrian government wants us to here; there is real value to being over there and seeing what the government has to say; delegation is at the end of April; before we spend the money we want the board to discuss since Gerry is an ExCom member; we'll get more info from Gerry on the delegation and get more info to you

United Nations orientation conference

- Barry: so many opportunities; orientation was live-streaming over two days; UN looking for newer members to consultation board; we are only vets org that is NGO recognized at UN, since 1991; we haven't taken advantage of real possibilities that are available to us; we could be working on disarmament and other issues; we have access to other nations from the Security Council countries; find other NGOs and explore common interests; would like to see us get some funding for this; we have four representative seat available, and two seats for youth up to age 32 to represent us in some ways also; many countries have sent young people to work for them at the UN over the years; attended September Culture of Peace conference with Tarak and Ellen Barfield and found out chances to do things that we didn't know before; question is finding someone who is able to commit; need folks from NYC, New England, New Jersey, etc.; Ellen has made trip up to NY for conferences; for the under 32 groups, could be students and interns at local colleges to attend meetings for us; if you want to do it, it will become a prime focus of your time on the board; those positions are renewed each year for the org reps; you would work with Department of Public Info at UN, at least until we move up to consultative status when we are ready; if anyone on board is interested, we can get you working with Ellen
- Barry opens for questions
 - o Dan: what about if we hold a board meeting in NY and we take some time to visit the UN; Barry agrees
 - o Barry: once you get a ground pass as a rep, access to most places in UN save for a few restricted areas; can also get a visitor's pass for particular events

2016 convention update

- Barry: had a brief meeting with Denny Riley, convention lead; will get another call first week of April; still working on speakers, Barry tried to contact Oliver Stone; he was interested last year, did follow up email; will contact his agent also; still working on major speakers; trying to get music and headline speakers and hope to raise money at specific events; Ann Jones confirmed as speaker; convention will start on Thursday evening instead of Wednesday; our board meeting will be that Thursday all day; convention will provide rooms available for the board; suggests board comes in Wednesday early, we are also going to have event at new veterans center in San Francisco that Wednesday

2017 convention update

- Barry: behind on securing location for 2017; 2018 is already covered; talked about Nashville for 2017 with Joey; Joey had some resistance from the chapter there; would be a great city with so much to do and easy transportation from around the country; is there a chance we can talk with them and Michael and Barry sit down with the chapter and try to convince them

- Joey: lost cause; we would be the smallest chapter to run a convention by far; we don't have enough people; didn't get enthusiasm from anyone; would be difficult to take it on; we don't have a good facility either
- Michael: that's not true as far as people; the Dallas convention started out with more people than who actually pulled it off; it ended up being two or three people who pulled off the convention; the issue is that they aren't excited about it; need to have people who are excited to do it; finding volunteers also
- Joey: don't have the enthusiasm, and no good place; don't have a hell yeah from anybody and that's what we really need
- Barry: when I first brought it up to San Diego, I didn't get a hell yeah either; but more we thought about it we found out we could do it; what we found out is that we have a big chapter but we have fifteen or twenty who are active; we would get ten or fifteen at meetings for the convention, but once convention got close, over thirty started coming to meetings; that number has stayed constant even after the convention; chapter took up more projects because of it; find inactive members and ask them to participate, even for just a couple days; gave them deals on convention prices and they got to attend and it built enthusiasm; you can generate enthusiasm by making the right pitch
- Joey: I just don't see it, this isn't the first time I've pitched it either; we got good participation in Asheville, but Nashville members don't want to tackle the work
- Monique: are there any chapters that are located near one another who could possibly host next year's convention; Monique talked to her chapter in Albuquerque; they didn't lack enthusiasm, but lacked available people; are there any other chapters who can share the work and co-sponsor
 - Barry: don't know the answer; when San Diego announced plans, we got chapters from Palm Springs, LA, Orange County to help out, joined committee; it was done in San Diego so I suspect it can be done in other regions as well
 - Dan: maybe it's time for Seattle to do it again
 - Barry: we should try to move back towards the east coast after having been on west coast for two years; Chicago is a good example, they have good chapter with young veterans and active campaigns
 - Joey: does it make more sense to encourage Minneapolis Chapter (027) to host the 2017 convention, instead of the 2018 convention
 - Barry: maybe it would be, but this chapter put their bid in a year ago, and they want to highlight the pact; there's a Kellogg memorial and their city celebrates it; a chance to get the treaty in greater visibility; wouldn't want to change it

Project Renew update

- Barry has no updates beyond what we talked about a month ago; Chuck Searcy's last email has us asking where to go next

- Mark: we're on hold with it; the Project Renew board in Vietnam is trying to decide whether or not to continue trying to get money from USAID; we're waiting to hear from them

Ralph Nader event in D.C. in May

- Michael: not many updates other than letter sent to board; we are going to be in D.C. the week of May 23rd anyway for VFP lobby days event; the weekend before, Sam Winstead's Ride For Peace is scheduled to come into D.C. that weekend before 23rd; Sam may not ride this year; they will participate in Lobby Days event; we first did it last year; nothing set in stone for date yet; Nader on the 23rd has rented Constitution Hall for the whole week; he has sixteen orgs highlighted on the 23rd; talk about effectiveness with small budget; he's hoping that people with money will be there and they will consider funding us; will follow up with Nader for more details; our task in meantime is to put together a twenty minute presentation about VFP to show attendees at the event; we have a skeleton beginning of presentation in two places: 1) Case For Support, which is almost done and 2) Slide presentation that Casey is working on; between those two we can put together a decent presentation; the following week is Vietnam Full Disclosure in D.C. and letters to the wall
- Barry: will send Nader a letter this week and ask him about the outline; will help us figure out some further planning once we get there; also another reception for advisory board members, this gives us opportunity to do that; board members will get to meet some of the advisory board; last year's advisory event went well
 - o Michael: do have some concerns about doing that again; there's so much happening with the Nader thing too; not saying not to do it, but concerned about capacity and cost
 - o Barry: we can discuss more once we get his outline and determine if we can put full focus on it

Legislative agenda update

- Michael: provided to the board as written by Virginia Druhe, staff member; if the board agrees that it reflects our plans, we can move forward; should also include Deported Veterans initiative
- Barry: that update will be focus or part of what we do for Lobby Days
 - o Michael: take our specific focus for that event from that update agenda document
 - o Barry: legislators will be home next week; with our agenda update this is a good time to get chapters to make contact with representatives and engage issues
- Dan: can talk with some of my congress people who have not responded to request to sign onto Agent Orange bill

Deported Veterans initiative as a national project or campaign

- Barry: Willie requested for effort to be included as a national campaign
- Willie: Deported Veterans Support House is the project, been working since 2009; initially got involved through VVAW Legacy Trust, we became financial sponsor for them to get running; two of our members in San Diego as part of our committee; ICE changed laws about who could be deported, so many veterans became deportable if they weren't citizens; sweeps processed them through detention centers and dropped them off at the border; that's how Support House began to be developed; we started a campaign for legislation and funding; supporting itself through small donor donations; talked with Michael and then did research and saw that in order to do what we needed to do, we'd need to turn it into a national project; Willie wrote a proposal and sent it to VFP ExCom
- Willie opens for questions
 - o Joey: thank you to Willie; clarify on the definition between project and campaign; where does it fit
 - o Willie: a campaign has a goal, develop a strategy; a project is a longer thing
 - o Barry: in the policy manual sets the guidelines on setting up a national project and how it is sustained
 - o Willie: in letter to ExCom, outlined how effort fits into guidelines for national project; can offer board more time to explore and then speak more about it during April meeting in St Louis
- Board agrees to take time to explore more and discuss at April board meeting in St. Louis

VFP music video idea with Pat Scanlon

- Barry: Pat Scanlon VFP member, Smedley Butler chapter member and singer-songwriter; spoke with Barry about his music, suggested putting together a VFP music video with his songs and take clips of VFP events and weave them into a video
- Barry opens for questions
 - o Tarak: very good idea; the person to do it is probably Regis Tremblay; he's made a number of really great videos; he has to be compensated; really worth putting funds into it; talk to Regis and ask him what he needs to put this together
 - o Barry: good suggestion; Regis was down with Pat this past weekend and filmed Midnight Voices event where Pat performed; Barry will talk to Regis to determine
 - **Dan motions for board to approve VFP working with Pat Scanlon and Regis Tremblay to produce VFP music videos; seconded**
 - **Barry confirms no objections; the motion passes**

Win Without War coalition steering committee

- Kourtney: briefs board on VFP membership in coalition; specifics of VFP running for the coalition steering committee and Kourtney as representative for VFP to attend monthly conference calls and quarterly in-person meetings in D.C.; total travel costs for

participation is around \$1000 per year; very strategic move to work with legislators, influential orgs, campaign advisors; flexibility on who can attend meetings to represent VFP; Barry and Michael can attend since they already have a travel budget; D.C. chapter members can attend also

- Tarak: agree we should approve whatever funds necessary for Kourtney to attend
- **Barry calls for opposition; proposes a cap at \$1500 for funding Kourtney's trips to meetings, beyond which the board will have to discuss and approve further funding; Tarak seconds the motion**
 - o **Barry confirms no opposition; the board approves Kourtney to represent VFP at Win Without War coalition meetings and to cap travel costs at \$1500 beyond which the board will have to discuss further funding**

Democracy Spring uprising participation

- Monique: April 17 event in D.C.; housemate and member Sally Alice Thompson proposed the event to Albuquerque chapter; they organized an event the same day and will be live-streaming; she also wants the board to endorse the event in D.C. on the national level
- Tarak: sent to the ExCom a while back with info; the march goes until the 11th from Philadelphia; sit-in scheduled April 11-18; it's an arrestable action; purpose is to get money out of campaigns and to overturn Citizens United; mass civil disobedience; two thousand signed up already; they have legal representation set-up; there are a number of respected organizations who endorsed; no idea how it will turn out; not pushing it one way or another; if we wanted to be involved, we should endorse and maybe push the issue a little bit
- Barry:
- John: would like to support board member Monique and member Sally Alice Thomson, one of our most esteemed members
- Barry: agreed; is there a motion
 - o **John motions to support; Dan seconds**
 - o **Barry calls for opposition; confirms no opposition; motion passes to endorse Democracy Spring event**
 - o Tarak and Monique will work together to obtain further information on responsibility of endorsement

Political conventions, possible actions

- Barry: discussion on how to engage with Democratic and Republican national conventions; what can we do, maybe involve local chapters
- Michael: don't want us to miss opportunity to do something; how to formally be involved; there will be a lot of protests; do we want to be a part of it in some way, bring in an anti-war and peace message and work in our anti-Islamophobia campaign; political considerations regarding participation of other groups with more radical bent
- Barry: emphasize Islamophobia campaign; an opportunity to have VFP out there within the confines of what we're already doing; have some good press involved

- John: agree with that perspective; Cleveland and Philadelphia organizations including Peace Action already planning events
- Michael: clarifies possible issues with other orgs participating in protests at conventions who could potentially cause chaos
- Tarak: requests to discuss more about it during St. Louis meeting; Barry agrees and confirms

Barry adjourns the meeting at 8:23 PM EDT



**Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors Meeting
April 15-17, 2016
St. Louis, MO USA**

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Friday, April 15, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary
Monique Salhalb
Brian Trautman
Nicole Waybright
Tarak Kauff
Willie Hager
John Heuer
Dan Shea

Board members excused from the meeting:

Tom Palumbo
Joey King

Members and guests present at the meeting:

Virginia Druhe, Staff, Office Manager
Doug Zachary, Staff, Membership/Development Coordinator
Casey Stinemetz, Staff, Membership & Outreach
Wells Todd, Veteran Member, Chapter 174, Jacksonville, FL

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry convenes the meeting at 10:05 AM CST

Barry introduces new board member Nicole Waybright and members and guests at the meeting

Kourtney reads aloud the VFP Statement of Purpose

Board member introductions

Barry leads the swearing in of Nicole and Dan

Agenda Review

- Barry briefs the meeting on the agenda as provided to the Board
- Additions to agenda
 - o None

Treasurer's Report – Mark

- Mark presents the written report as provided to the Board; doing fine financially; donations are good; staying ahead of what we have budgeted; expenses are currently under budget
 - o Dan: membership numbers? Michael will confirm in ED report
 - o Tarak: clarification on VCI deficit; Michael confirms approved grant is on the way to VFP
 - o Dan: do we post monthly reports on website? Michael confirms we post annual report
 - o Virginia: accountant is finishing up the annual report for 2015
 - o Tarak: clarification on Income-Operations deficit in expenses section; Mark confirms that it's Income minus Operations; confirms that it's a good number
 - o Gerry: Golden Rule deficit is actually less than last couple months; down from \$15k
 - Michael: actually first time in national office that GR is included as line item, so you're talking about a different number; now we are tracking income specific for GR; we have to work it out, because most of expense is in salary to Helen Jaccard; Virginia confirms expense is also in insurance;

Membership Committee Report – Tarak

- Loss quite a few members last couple of months, occasionally happens; Virginia confirms that membership is due at twelve months, lapsed at 15
 - o Doug: wouldn't be unusual to find non-renewing after Christmas holiday; tax day causes some to not renew; expecting rebound in April
 - o Tarak: does Doug need any help?
 - Doug: can explore; will be accelerating the schedule of renewal calls;
 - o Michael: exploring board member participation in contacting chapter leadership and project leaders and donors
 - o Barry: maybe the person to make the initial contact is the chapter leader; get the local people involved because they know the members
 - Tarak: we need a comprehensive list of non-renewals broken down by chapter
 - Michael: every month chapters get their rosters and info included about lapsed members; giving chapter contacts more stake in the national org, get them more involved in bringing back members; assigning each board member six or seven of the top active chapters for contacting and establishing relationships
 - Tarak: we have nine or ten on the membership committee; the committee could do that contact; Michael confirms that it's better for the board to do this
 - Michael: committee could help Doug with his calls; active leaders in the org should be called and thanked by the board

- Tarak: could use a separate meeting to get the details down; my approach to membership is in the work that we do, that's what will build and strengthen the org; various outreach projects, encourages younger veterans to join
- Michael: correct, younger veterans need to see how our work makes sense; demonstrate and explain strategy and not just busy; the peace movement tends to feel as if being busy is how you're active; if it doesn't fit into strategy; older members not sure what national does; more we're able to show how our work fits together, folks will be more excited about our org
- Nicole: member of Boston chapter a couple of years, active in last year; notice that there seems to be no center to the chapter; no philosophy laid out, having specific actions; developing a philosophy and engaging the actions with that; other local orgs do attract younger vets, but our chapter doesn't; IVAW has founding documents available, Nicole to visit Warrior Writers Train The Trainers event to use ideas to implement young vet recruitment in VFP; Nicole elaborates on Midnight Voices and Warrior Writers events; the setting is attractive to younger veterans
 - Dan: WW publishes the work and puts together combat papers as well
- Willie: Virginia sends out helpful quarterly membership status; use that info in the chapter meetings, leads to renewal of membership; a lot of work to call and track down lapsed membership; Gainesville chapter raises the money every year just to pay dues for members; everyone is working together to pay dues; attracting younger veterans is done by projects; JAX chapter donating permaculture garden for veterans
- Dan: we have a list of members who never come to meetings; chapter also pays dues for members; had some veterans active with chapter but didn't actually join; seeking advice on how to contact lapsed members
- Barry: we passed a policy a few years ago, post 911 vets get reduced dues rate and free registration at national convention, brought in a lot of vets; let younger vets know this is available; younger veterans talking about back-to-nature, farming therapy, sustainability; younger veterans appreciated being listened to instead of talked to
- Monique: expanding on sustainability factor; permaculture project in Albuquerque with at least five participants; key factor for younger veterans; fits in with VFP mission statement
- Gerry: agree that activities and approach attracts new members; we have to establish a recruitment program and advertising, let people know that we want them; possible to put out recruitment ads on social media, boosting posts; designing display ads for newspapers
- Barry: alternative media publishes VFP content; they are always looking for content; articles and ads

- Dan: having a hard time finding veterans; younger vets hang out with each other; younger veterans came to our chapter out of Occupy; reaching out to vets in the universities; could make a proposal for an organizer to travel around country to organize vets in colleges and set up chapters on campus
- Barry: younger vets recruit other young vets if they like VFP; we did something similar to college recruitment in San Diego with a chapter on the campus of City College; the problem is that when those students leave, the chapter disappears; good idea but hard to sustain; local members can attach the colleges to the chapter
- Dan: universities provide money and resources; the board can send speakers and events there
- Kourtney: campus groups have faculty/staff advisors who can do the work for us; funding and advertising with official orgs on campus; provide many resources such as spaces, honorariums, etc.
- Tarak: sustainability and positive approaches; we need to include that in a written form; include this info in a recruitment brochure, strategic; worked with Doug Rawlings on a letter to peace studies groups in the country; including a copy of Full Disclosure paper and PIOT in the letter package; working with Brian on the list of peace studies groups
- John: peace studies curriculum will be a national opening for us
- Dan: could we do an online educational outreach, like a conference; bring together peace studies groups and instructors into a forum or a class
- Michael: lots of good ideas, but we don't always have the time and resources; have been discussing with the board on prioritizing ideas; we may need to add or subtract ideas to our already established list; a little frustrating because if we don't build something more in depth and sustainable
 - Tarak: when someone comes up with an idea, that means that person will work on it; try not to bring up ideas that I'm not going to work on; how are you going to make that idea happen
 - Michael: has to be collective thinking and commitment to the collective decision making process; not closing the door on new ideas, but whatever we decide upon, we have to make it happen
 - Willie: IVAW emphasizes capacity to carry out ideas; the person bringing the idea has to take ownership; capacity being money, resources, personnel, connections; organizing schools for members; their programs are sustainable over the years and still continuing
- Barry: where does all of this fit into the structure of our organization; how to incorporate them
 - Kourtney: reiterating Michael's position on priorities, strategy, overall program; how to communicate ideas to members/donors/supporters; make the case for why we are pursuing a project

VFP Lobby Days Update – Michael

- Michael briefs the meeting on events regarding Lobby Days; ten days of events in May in D.C. for Lobby Days, Ralph Nader event, Full Disclosure, Sam Winstead's Ride For Peace
 - o Barry: Thursday all-day veterans event with Ralph Nader at Constitution Hall; will cost \$30 per person for the event; sixteen groups represented
 - o Tarak: would be good for the majority of the board to be in D.C. for at least most of the events; is it possible for funds to help board members to attend
 - Michael: board travel budget, but not sure if we allocated enough to add another travel date

Legislative Agenda Update – Virginia

- The legislative work has to be within the mission; following groups in D.C. who professionally follow legislation; we have legislative list serv to receive faster more often updates; People's Budget resolution coming up this week; framed based on what other orgs are seeing that needs a response or possible to push forward; this week there is a House and Senate bill that will make it impossible to get Gitmo detainees to the U.S.; needs quick response, well within our response; trying to push positive things through such as People's Budget, Iran Agreement, etc.; don't want to ask folks to do things that are not effective; have not prioritized Agent Orange bill because no one else is pushing it and it's not going anywhere; but that's not the only way to look at it, we can still say that we want to take the lead on it and ask other orgs to take it on with us; for Lobby Days, we should only be pushing two things; the standard action is that you push one item and ask the congress member to take it on; support the People's Budget which has very good defense limiting element, military spending, Pentagon auditing; can also talk about domestic needs and moving the money; we will begin prioritizing Agent Orange bill, currently has no senate sponsor; during last WWW coalition meeting, noted that Republicans are not giving up to destroy the Iran nuclear deal, so it's valuable to begin defending that bill; last budget that passed included a trillion dollars for defense; always stuff about VA to be addressed; as a last minute tack on, ask each congress member to make a commitment to oppose hate speech in their campaigns; militarization of police bill is still there; the People's Budget does not show VFP as an endorser, need to remedy; People's Budget is coming out of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, one of the major people is Ijalva, the caucus chair
- Michael: looking at our SOP as well as each of our areas of work; how legislation is impacting specific areas of work; our work can determine legislative priorities, use that as a filter; suggesting to the board that there should always be three legs for campaigns: 1) Legislation and policy; 2) education; 3) action/activism; trying to make sure for each of our work areas includes these three things
 - o Willie: during last convention, we went down to Mexico and formed a legislation committee; have a couple resolutions for congress to act upon; easing up the laws and allowing furloughs and make it meaningful for deported vets to foster their cases and gain reentry; can be done administratively; would like to be a part of the Lobby Days with deported veterans' issues; we have a proposal to

- present to congress, and will follow up with press conference at event where deported veterans turn themselves in
- Barry: have you talked to anyone in congress willing to carry bill
 - Willie: folks have done this independently and have made visits; but not as VFP; looking for member of congress to support and introduce a bill and get VFP voice behind it
- John: Peace Action has biweekly affiliate calls in which nuclear weapons issue is raised
 - Gerry: we need to focus on three things max for Lobby Day activities; agree that it makes more sense to put energy in areas that can be moved or are moving; some people will support legislation that won't necessarily win because they are building a campaign around it; there is going to be a surge of activity in the coming months with Obama going to Japan for G7 summit; he's probably going to go to Hiroshima
 - Virginia: People's Budget does address scaling back nuclear weapons
 - Gerry: PB is great, but is it an entire budget; do we lose focus on certain items needing to be highlighted; would help to know more about what these bills are and what they call for
 - Dan: member of the core group for agent orange; meetings in D.C. with Barbara Lee on the agent orange relief act; educational forum and way to get people involved; had a conference call this week, 22 sponsors on the bill; looking for more chapters and local people to ask their reps to sponsor the bill; will look at creating a companion senate bill; there is also talk of Obama going to Vietnam, trying to make sure he meets with agent orange victims; Susan Schall and Marjorie Cohn
 - Barry: Marjorie Cohn and Barry planning to meet with Susan Davis on this bill
 - Barry: we need to pick what the priorities are going to be; the nuclear issue has to be a major priority; spending a trillion to upgrade nuclear weapons; pending lawsuit with the Marshall Islands against U.S., should demand the U.S. negotiate to reduce nuclear weapons; will get a decision from the International Court of Justice
 - Virginia: the legislative vehicle for a possible SANE deal would be the federal budget that is funding the increase of nuclear weapons
 - Gerry: would put agent orange on the priorities because: Obama going to Vietnam, Full Disclosure activity going on that week, because it's veteran related, and because it's an opportunity for the national office to develop better relationship with agent orange committee; should also be a place for Willie and others to advocate on behalf of deported veterans
 - Barry: pick which reps you want to lobby for specific issues; not everyone would lobby for the same issue
 - Mark: any thing on Islamophobia? Michael confirms Virginia's idea to ask each rep to speak out against hate speech

- Michael: don't forget about defending the Iran nuclear deal; have to figure out the messaging, how to talk about these things in congress
- Willie: for capacity, Jan and George are coming for Lobby Days; will work with Virginia to provide language for proposed resolution; will have people on the ground there to carry it forward
- Casey: will provide online training for people who want to participate
- Virginia: will provide talking points for participants as well
- Michael: also encouraging members around the country to contact their local reps during our Lobby Days event; with it being before Memorial Day, makes it kind of tough
- Barry: once talking points are ready, get involvement from chapters; opportunity during the board calls to chapters to emphasize congressional office visits; so they see connection between board vision and their agenda; chapters can inform us on how to fit their agenda into it

Barry breaks the meeting for lunch

Grant Writing Committee Report – Mark

- Mark briefs the meeting on the report as provided to the Board; started committee over a year ago; what's the reality for us to be able to write foundation grant applications; monthly meetings; created a spreadsheet tracking foundations likely to give; Diane is using Foundation Search engine to find foundations; have not yet had any luck; getting closer to creating projects that will yield concrete results; not all working groups in VFP are functional; we need to have them and other projects create a detailed report of their work on the committee/project; hopeful that we are headed in the right direction; still have another four years of use of the search engine
 - Monique: Michael, Casey and Monique to meet to discuss working groups and national projects, which are active or inactive
 - Mark: Jim strongly suggest we develop personal relationships with the foundations; take the time to call and ideally meet with them, explain what we're doing
 - Barry: Jim emphasizing that we shouldn't make cold calls to foundations, don't write grants until we establish relationships
 - Michael: disagree with Jim; the committee needs to write grants because it will be the map for where the work area is actually going
 - Barry: talk to them and convince them to look at it; but can still write grants without relationship with foundation
 - Dan: have to research the foundations that will fit; follow their criteria; foundations may ask to call them and will instruct on how to apply for their grants
 - Barry: Foundation Search reviews grant proposals and will assist with writing grants

- Michael: not focused on the grant, but being clear on what we are doing with each project or campaign; becomes easier to write the grant; grant writer has to work with the project leaders, and the project leaders have to communicate what they are trying to achieve with the project
- Tarak: be very clear about to what projects we are applying grants; be clear that we don't want strings attached to receiving grants, so foundations cannot influence our work
- Brian: any indication on measuring the success of using the engine; Mark confirms not a lot of success so far
 - Mark: Diane using keywords to use the search engine
 - Michael: after finishing CFS figure out how to outline project goals and measurements of success; having that already figured out so we can write the grant
- Barry: FS able to show us the foundations who have previously funded us

Executive Director Report – Michael

- Michael briefs the meeting on his report as provided to the Board; have been able to renegotiate the number of rooms required to pay from 350 to 300; trying to fill up a big venue for Friday night of the convention, will have to charge a fee; Jim Driscoll to write a grant proposal for the convention
 - Gerry: convention has become a cornerstone annual event for the peace movement; maybe reach out to wider outreach organizations; encourage other orgs to have substantial participation
 - John: will not have the same conflict with similar conventions this year as we did last year between ours in SD and another in Santa Fe
- Michael: lowest number of members in two years; maybe something going on that we have to figure out; may increase as time passes; will talk with Virginia to determine how lapsed members are categorized; received Craigslist grant, slightly solicited through Paul Cox; discussion on how to recognize Craig for generosity; possibly invite him to the convention and give award
 - Barry: maybe invite him to serve on advisory board, can speak to Paul; also received two other unsolicited grants from foundations; can request another grant from Magic Pebbles
 - Dan: unsolicited means our name is getting out there and people are looking up our work and want to give; mission statement is a great statement
- Michael: continues with report; sending out targeted appeals to each member category; proposing creation of two gift opportunities and need to tweak the names
 - Barry: national conference calls with membership; segmented by region or coast; answer member questions, get board involved
 - Nicole: PETA a good example of how to run national conference calls using good tech for their calls
- Michael: update to website is not an overhaul, just making it mobile-friendly and other smaller level changes

- Willie: submitted a workshop proposal on website but no confirmation that submission was successful; Michael confirms will look into it

VFP Participation in U.S. Peace Delegation to Syria – Gerry

- Gerry tentatively agreed to attend delegation in mid-April, organizing committee has had complications and delays; recent conference call explained situation; objective to have a diverse broad delegation, represent entire peace movement in U.S.; fact-finding delegation, many contacts and meetings with a broad subsection of people in Syria; confirmed attendees include UFPJ, UNAC, NJPA, VFP, Glen Ford of Black Agenda Report; currently don't have a date; one week commitment for delegation; asking current attendees to help recruit others; will make collective decision for start date, anticipating July; an objective fact-finding experience with credibility would be to have Arabic speaking delegation members so they don't have to rely on Syrian government translators; Monique has ties in Lebanon and is first generation American, Arabic speaker, came in handy when deployed to Iraq; Gerry proposing VFP support both him and Monique to attend; total cost could be about \$1500 per person; expenses in country mostly covered; previous board discussion was in support, but need more thorough discussion on details and potential impact for VFP; Gerry recommends the delegation, trusts the organizers; delegation is projecting to come back and be in a position to push the U.S. government to engage the peace process in Syria, negotiate a political settlement; speaking in public, pressing political leaders
 - Tarak: feel very positively about the trip, quite important for VFP to be represented; recommending an electronic translation device as well as providing a professional interpreter to attend if possible; also can use the set aside funds for outreach/travel for young veterans but not exclusively for younger veterans
 - Dan: would we make a motion for this? Barry confirms after discussion
 - Mark: need a clearer picture of what will happen; Gerry confirms meeting with civil society, peace groups, unarmed opposition groups possibly, government officials, journalists
 - Gerry: whoever we can meet with, don't yet know which contacts; still a work in progress
 - Barry: confirm dates of GR voyage; Gerry confirms late May through mid-October
 - Gerry: will be very involved with GR voyage, don't want a conflict with the Syria trip; could probably get a week away from the GR in July
 - Monique: would delegation trust Monique to represent VFP should Gerry be unable to attend; Gerry confirms, Monique can attend biweekly delegation meetings
 - Willie: next most important issue is what you will not do while there; upfront with nonviolence; issues with meeting with certain groups in Syria; should not endanger our brand by meeting with unsavory groups
 - Gerry: we will be committed to nonviolence, want to see an end to hostilities and start the peace process; no matter how broad based or

how much access we get, we will be attacked when we return from trip, accused of being pro-Assad; won't be easy to overcome ridicule; better for delegation to be more broad and more diverse to overcome accusations

- Tarak: we're peacemakers, our credibility is based upon our integrity, enough to stand up to any accusation; sometimes we need to hear the voices of those who use violence, doesn't mean we endorse the violence; important that at least two VFP members attend
 - Gerry: and don't know what the dynamic with the delegation will be
- John: Pat McCann will submit workshop proposal on Syria; has been in contact with people on all spectrum of Syria discussion; certainly can expect criticism from even our close allies
- Barry: should decide as soon as we can if Gerry should attend or if we need another member
 - Gerry: visa issues as well when trying to find others; Gerry feeling fairly confident can attend
 - Barry: makes sense to have a backup person who participates in meetings and organizing with the delegation
 - John: North Carolina chapter associate member is fluent in Arabic
 - Barry: should be a veteran who attends; don't necessarily need a board member though
 - Monique: important that he has experience with the region and area, big plus
 - Michael: look at the entirety of the delegation; he can still attend but shouldn't be the person we want to specifically send
 - Nicole: can put the word out in the e-blast or newsletter to garner interest to find a third person
 - Willie: when we have board conference call, Gerry can report back with possible persons

Discussion of VFP Support for Palestinian BDS Movement – Tarak

- Big pushback from pro-Israel lobby, getting into legal actions against supporters; 22 states pending legislation against supporters; France and England also passing repression legislation; good sign, it means BDS is working; VFP can't take lead, but we can support; can develop the t-shirt logo to start our efforts to support
 - Michael: the politics of the issue is crazy in the U.S.; we should do what we can with BDS; freedom of speech and level of intimidation is in some ways a separate issue but connected; we also need to deal with this belief that you can stifle people's freedom of speech; figure out how to do that, can help uplift the BDS campaign; step out in a strategic way on this issue; can reach out to people who may not care that much or know about the campaign, but may want to get involved in the issue of freedom of speech; there's people who may be on the other side of the campaign, but will stand up for the freedom of speech

- Tarak: will design a banner for this, and can make it available through the office for the chapters and members
- Monique: thinking about the membership who may have an issue with our speaking up about BDS; how to possibly deal with opposition in our membership; Albuquerque chapter has two opposition members, one who grew up as a Zionist and struggles with our chapter actions; it's a reality
 - Dan: agreed; local peace group individual is with us on other issues but is hardcore supporter of Zionism; has lived in Israel and lived his whole life with that position
- Gerry: good consideration; inform membership that BDS is a nonviolent method of pursuing justice for Palestinians; will be members who are uncomfortable; 2005 resolution we passed supporting BDS; those members who were most concerned and organized the working group on the subject never actually offered up any leadership or initiatives on the issues; VFP is a member of the End The Occupation movement; actualize the BDS issue and roll it out in VFP properly; one way is to reconfirm our commitment to it and use Michael's idea of freedom of speech approach; make members aware of the campaign and link them to the website for more info; possibly consider BDS targets and make it real; has been on the books every year; the majority of the convention participants have no problem voting criticism of Israel and support of Palestine
- Courtney: my take on the temp of the membership is that they will support; Ali Abunimah keynote at Asheville convention followed by chants of "Free Palestine;" explore concrete roll out, maybe a committee, could start with tees
- Tarak to consider taking on the roll out of the campaign in VFP
- Michael: discuss how we can roll out the issue in VFP more closely; maybe a petition around freedom of speech, or a press conference; get a number of prominent people, Jewish specifically, to speak out on freedom of speech issue; do things that no other vets org will do; on the Dem debate last night, Sanders talked about Israel/Palestine when he was asked about disproportional response; the news was saying that Clinton was talking about Israel and Sanders talking about Palestine; never see any politician speak out for Palestine in the way he did so during debate; a national prominent candidate and lots of positive response; lots of opportunities for VFP
- Tarak: will work on the roll out of the campaign with Dan and Michael, Tarak to take care of the tees
- Dan: surprised that there was discussion on folks being worried about BDS; Portland chapter very active in BDS
 - Barry: 95% of membership is on board; can definitely talk about the freedom of speech issue

VFP Listserv Guidelines Proposal – Gerry

- Gerry briefs the meeting on the draft of the guidelines as provided to the Board
 - Tarak: who will be able to monitor; Gerry confirms the ExCom will process complaints and act to remove violators

- **Dan motions to accept guidelines as written and presented by Gerry; seconded by Brian**
 - **Barry calls for vote; unanimous acceptance**

Deported Veterans Support House Proposal for VFP National Project – Willie

- Willie briefs according to proposal in writing submitted to the Board; has been substantial progress on the front for deported veterans; has become a nationally identified group; VFP has now become their main support group and infrastructure, for credibility purposes; support house grew so fast that fundraising outran us, needed to find some way to use the money; Willie briefs on issues of processing money and checks in Mexico; aiming to be self-sustaining, need to raise money and move forward; Willie talked with Michael in JAX and came up with national project idea; Board would determine the coordinator of the project, Willie can do so; does not cost VFP anything, already made an agreement to pay 8.5% of donations
 - Gerry requests confirmation of percentage payment for national projects; Barry confirms according to VFP policy manual
 - Willie and Barry confirms almost \$20k raised by fundraisers for the project; Michael confirms money has arrived at VFP
 - Barry opens for questions
 - Mark: what are the major expenses
 - Willie: \$1250 per month overhead; goes to rent on the building, technology, upkeep of building, housing fourteen people at a time
 - Gerry: applaud Willie, excellent inspiring work; has a good team; breaking new ground, dealing with a tricky situation
 - **Tarak makes the motion, Dan seconds**
 - **Barry calls for vote; unanimous support to make the Deported Veterans Support House a VFP national project**

Discussion on Possible VFP Statement on President Obama Trip to Japan – Gerry

- Gerry: folks believe Obama will visit Hiroshima; Peace Action sent out strong letter pressing Obama to make the trip to Hiroshima; John Kerry went to Hiroshima and notably did not apologize; pressing Obama to take concrete steps on new initiatives towards disarmament; New York Times editorial says the same; opportunity for VFP to make the same message; we decided earlier to make nuclear disarmament a focus of lobby days efforts; Peace Action sign-on is good, we can possibly support their message; or collaborate with PA; or make our own statement and refer people to the PA sign-on
 - Barry: no one who has released a message on this has talked about Marshall Islands lawsuit against U.S.; can call upon U.S. to negotiate according to the NPT for disarmament; Barry agreed to help write such a statement
 - Gerry: also discussed contacting Paul Chappell, VFP member and advisory board member to help; could write an article and get it published with big distribution; Oliver Stone also involved in issue, visited Hiroshima last year, could be published even broader

Miko Peled Consideration for Nomination to VFP Advisory Board – Tarak

- Tarak: veteran of IDF special forces; his father is one of most famous Israeli generals; father became Arab linguist and scholar, proponent of peace process after 1967 war, taught Arab literature in Palestine; Miko is prominent and persuasive voice for Palestinian peace and self-determination
 - o Barry: he puts the narrative in perspective, leaves you with no doubt about what's going on; wrote a book called "The General's Son" new edition rollout in NY coming up
- Tarak: we came up with idea of him being on advisory board; he would fill this niche on the advisory board
 - o Kourtney: are there any advisory board members who disagree with Palestinian solidarity or BDS? Michael and Tarak confirm no
 - o John: his father encouraged stopping U.S. military aid to Israel
- **Tarak motions to approve Miko; Willie seconded**
 - o **Barry calls for vote; unanimous support to approve Miko Peled for the VFP Advisory Board**

Wells Todd Report on Trip to Cuba

- Wells presents photo slideshow of trip to the meeting
- Wells: three weeks ago, family went to Havana, Cuba; twelve people on the tour; son of Andy Rooney attended; Jim Reyerson organized the tour; Cuba has rich history of fighting for independence, before 1800s; has rich tradition of African Spaniards; Cuba among sites that were set up as production centers to build up the Northern Hemisphere; before 1950s revolution, a quarter of adults were illiterate, thousands of teachers were unemployed, most of the rural population had no schools; turned former military garrisons into schools; needed volunteers to teach peasants and farmers on countryside; U.S. was continuing to try to overthrow the revolution; installed anti-revolutionaries to bomb hotels and planes; Cubans closed the schools and sent literate teachers/students into countryside to teach; anti-revs began murdering teachers and students to stifle the literacy campaign; now, healthcare and education takes up a greater portion of the Cuban GDP; before the rev, organized crime controlled the economy in Havana, and U.S. corporations ran the countryside – sugar, tobacco, land; Platt Amendment threatened U.S. troops to Cuba if they ever attempted rev; permaculture was a tool of survival in the countryside of Cuba because of mass starvation; were not getting soil and fertilizer from Russia any longer; utilize connection to organize permaculture farming in Jacksonville, FL; free market economy taking over in Cuba; farms controlled by the people and the government
 - o Wells: nowadays, rise in tourism, rise in panhandling and rise in prostitution; women in Cuba have certain rights, such as a right to abortion access; don't see a lot of children running around like in other South American countries; Cuba's aging population and decrease in children is a concern; women in Cuba trying to figure out what to do about prostitution; CDR – Committee for the Defense of the Revolution

Barry adjourns the meeting at 5:33 PM CST

Saturday, April 16, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary
Monique Salhalb
Brian Trautman
Nicole Waybright
Tarak Kauff
Willie Hager
John Heuer
Dan Shea
Joey King

Board members excused from the meeting:

Tom Palumbo

Members and guests at the meeting:

Wells Todd, Chapter 175, Jacksonville, FL

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry convenes the meeting at 9:22 AM CST

Barry briefs the meeting on Friday's business

Agenda Review

- Barry briefs the meeting on the agenda as provided to the Board
 - o Additions to agenda: none

Project RENEW Fiscal Sponsorship Update – Mark

- Mark briefs the meeting on updates to VFP fiscal sponsorship of Project RENEW grant from USAID as provided in writing to the Board
 - o Barry: briefs the meeting on previous Board discussions and decisions on fiscal sponsorship for the USAID grant; the answer is yes, we can cancel the MOU at any time if we so choose; we don't necessarily have to do anything regarding the membership and the grant; the question is now do we want to do or say anything to message to the membership on the status of fiscal sponsorship, considering the debate within VFP; we will be putting energy into other efforts

- that can help the Vietnamese people, with agent orange legislation and other efforts
- Dan: if they do get the grant, Chuck Searcy will step back in the efforts; didn't think USAID would approve the grant because we were talking about agent orange and they don't want to confess to the issue; the language in the grant is to help agent orange victims, not just persons with disabilities; don't think we have to do anything, just give it some time; USAID owe a responsibility to the people to make that payment
 - Barry: Chuck says that he doesn't understand why RENEW insists on VFP involvement; we would have more legitimacy if we weren't the fiscal sponsorship because we wouldn't be getting any cut of the grant
 - Joey: we have to say something to the membership soon, we owe it to them
 - Willie: what's the question? We don't have to do anything, so why would we do anything; we've voted positively to move this forward, but there's no need for us to do anything; Searcy burning out on the issue, but Chuck Palazzo is also in Vietnam and he is perfectly capable of doing Searcy's work; Leahy bill precludes CIA intervention
 - John: important to understand what RENEW means; keep in mind the context that we are still engaged in catastrophic environmental destruction around the world
 - Mark: during recent ExCom meeting, was of the feeling that if Searcy drops out we would have to as well, but Willie is right about Palazzo's ability to carry it on, do the paperwork, submit the quarterly reports; boils down to we don't have to do anything other than be patient; I think they are getting closer to getting this money that will change the lives of the Vietnamese people; they are going to allocate more, they don't know, but they hope so; there's a lot of veterans who are not getting their benefits because they have lost their patience
 - Willie: they made concessions; they included the province after failing to do so in the first time
 - Gerry: don't want to see this continue to be an open sore; don't want to see us act in a way that would negatively stir the pot; we have little more to do right now than to inform the members of the status of the grant; if we can agree how to state that; status is that it's not happening, but maybe it will happen in the future, though I doubt it; willing to be patient and let the whole thing play out; not optimistic; if they do get the money, it's probably going to rekindle the debate within VFP
 - Monique: coming from neutral position; number one thing for me is thinking of our membership; recognize the passion involved in sense of reparations; at convention last year, witnessed a lot of acrimony; caused a lot of pain to our membership, and it still continues; chapter meeting in Albuquerque, was asked about RENEW; two of our chapter members immediately got into an argument; still a sore topic on the surface for our membership; how much as a board are we willing to risk making our membership suffer; in a way, for us to issue a

statement in this way, is equal to silence; how will the membership interpret this; they trust us to follow our passion and hearts, but also come from a mindful approach regarding membership; long term effects, extreme wound, members leaving

- Tarak: struggled with this decision for months, but it made me stronger; when we were in London, UK chapter opposed going forward with USAID; when I spoke I said I respect their decision and would like them to stick with it based on principle; my position was different also based on principle; overriding things in common, staying inside the tent of VFP; a few people have left, but VFP has done great this past year; in favor at this point of just letting it go forward; would like to see USAID and the whole system radically changed; in favor of anything that does that; USAID knows that they will not get anything out of VFP, and they know we wouldn't sign if we did; don't think we have to do anything right now, just send out the update to the membership; don't see right now that there's a mandate on us to make a decision; we've already made a number of decisions
- Barry: membership reporting that seeing members at the convention talk about the issue in person gave a different perspective than the email exchanges
- Michael: agree that we don't have to make a decision now to do anything different; we do need to start looking at what point we begin to exit the possibility of taking money from USAID; I think we should as a board to think about that; agree that it has made us weaker, though we may have overcome that; spent a lot of time in argument that we didn't have to spend; that time was not used to address other issues happening right now; there were people in Vietnam on the other side of the issue as well; what is this really about, the issue isn't RENEW because we're all for RENEW; the issue is what point does our members' feelings matter; watched us struggle over something that we could have figured out as a board to navigate through it and still got what everyone really wants and the money didn't have to come through VFP; not necessarily true that other sponsors would charge higher fee, and we didn't help find other orgs to do it anyway; the advocacy could have been done differently; we would have had all of our opponents join with us and we wouldn't have had this fight; that's how you have to think about stuff as a board; I still don't hear this thinking in our discussion, that takes into consideration everyone's perspective; as ED I have no choice but to do that, so it's very troubling; where is this going and what is the horizon, and what do our other members feel; we could have not had this happen; perspectives on what USAID is doing or thinking is just conjecture, we don't really know; Vietnam is in struggle with China right now, how do we know relationship with USAID is not nefarious and Vietnam is in on it?; just wait three months, there will be other fights; we should find ways to navigate around these fights
- Tarak: very leery of avoiding conflict; in favor of conflict resolution; an issue was dumped on our lap that we could not avoid; sometimes we have no alternative and we had to take a position; we tried to not make it black and white, we thought deeply about the issue; think we are better for dealing with conflict;

- didn't appreciate personal attacks on both sides, folks claiming others didn't have integrity
- Dan: this is not the first time we've had conflict, we've had other debates; agree with Monique that members did develop deep wounds over this; Brian Wilson did leave VFP chapter over this issue
 - Kourtney: who wants to volunteer to craft a message to the membership?
 - Barry: need to inform the membership of the status and leave it at that; folks on the implementation committee to draft a message and input from the Board; within the next week or two; Barry to assist with that effort
 - **Willie: we should have a vote to approve crafting a message; Willie makes the motion; seconded**
 - **Barry calls for vote to approve crafting a message to the membership updating the status of the grant; unanimous support**
 - Michael: there are different ways of doing things; know for a fact that it didn't have to be like this; money didn't have to come through VFP, we could be in the same position but a different org could have been fiscal sponsor; in the future, there could be conflict and we have to look at all possible different roads and take out our personal feelings
 - Tarak: agree with Michael's principle; I examined that alternative
 - Monique: this discussion is a perfect example of the long-term effects of this issue amongst the membership; still feel like this should be brought to the next level and thinking about how to heal this wound
 - Dan: there's no reason why we can't start looking for ways of alternative to getting funds to RENEW; Dan and Tarak to look into doing this, possibly finding other fiscal sponsorship

Veterans Challenge Islamophobia Campaign Update – Michael

- In many ways we are in same position as before; haven't received the grant money yet; president of Open Society Foundation has signed in approval to send the funds; \$200k to be received within the next week; there are no other admin issues with the foundation; ten percent of that will be general funding, the rest goes to the campaign; identified cities to put organizers on the ground, will call another committee meeting to determine steps forward; Jim Driscoll will look for money, but has been holding back until we secure the OSF funds; may have Muslim couple volunteers in D.C.; campaign is going as well as it can go with us not having funds for it; we will put organizers on the ground in 3-5 cities, D.C. will be national organizing center; in cities with capacity as well as need; need identified by high activity of anti-Muslim activity and hate crimes; organizers will be connecting with existing coalitions to bring more veterans voices into that coalition; if no coalition exist, then organizers will help bring coalition together and look for veterans; event where we can bring in a known person to draw a crowd
 - Barry: will be using funds to help pay Fenton Communications
 - Michael: they will help us advertise and put us in connection with media contacts; talked to Jim about looking at low periods of activity do we really need to pay Fenton for that month of low activity

- Barry: also could just pay Fenton for the work they've done or hours they have put in; Gerry suggests also paying them for other projects if VCI activity is low
- Tarak: measurements of effectiveness of Fenton work
- Nicole: experience with consultations and large budgets; had to pay them per hour per contractual; have to hold them accountable otherwise they will work on other projects and then charge you full cost
 - Michael: in some ways it is hard
 - Willie: agree with Nicole in that there is a measure for it; the hourly rate was beyond what I have experienced; a little concerned about the cost of their work, but supportive of the campaign; hiring personnel but claiming there is no way to measure their work doesn't make sense to me
- John presents a new edition of the Quran for Board to view; forward written by Mark Siljander
- Gerry: wondering if Fenton has helped us secure the grant; the money is coming in with the understanding that Fenton is involved; agree that we should make them as accountable as possible; in general would like to hear more about the vision, what cities we are organizing in; what kind of events, maybe such as Nashville and Boston events; are we going to be following the campaign; the money does coincide with the campaign, not totally accidental; how to shape and arc this campaign with a veterans focus and a strong community component and really make it ours and make us a stronger org after the six months have passed and we move on
 - Tarak: agree with Gerry; also would like to think about how broad and inclusive we are going to be; the anti-Muslim issue touches on many other issues, such as deportations, racism, wars, connection with Israel who are anti-Arab; my opinion is that when we make it broad and see the connections, it strengthens us
- Nicole: was on the organizing committee for the event in Boston; opposed to the wars; campaign should be really centered on that; want everyone to be sensitive to the women's issues in this campaign; was difficult for me to participate in the campaign; don't want to be perceived as supporting everything that comes with that; issues with both churches and mosques because of women's treatment in the spaces; make it so that the veterans issue here is being against the wars, that's the focus
 - Mark: this is a quandary, feeling the same thing; we are putting this campaign into the idea of vets challenging Islamophobia; watched documentary on a woman who wanted to become a mosque officer and was not allowed to do so, was never allowed to have the position of authority, and not any mosque in the country has a female authority position
 - Tarak: appreciate Nicole's critiques of the mosques and Catholicism; oppose the racism and bigotry dumped on all Muslims; male speaker on the intersectionality of Islamophobia and promotion of empire; Tarak sent video of the speaker to the Board

- Gerry: vets are uniquely positioned to make that connection between U.S. Islamophobia and racism and hate speech and how it's used to garner support for endless war abroad; goes along with our theme of PAHPA; we don't want to support the sexism and misogyny in Islam, but we also don't want to tangle it with necessarily; be careful about racists who use feminism to support attacks against Muslims; explore together how we respond to women's issues in Islam
- Monique: Nicole absolutely right; don't see in the future women being allowed to hold leadership in mosques; event in Albuquerque called Women Speak and six Muslim women spoke about the difficulty of navigating their faith and women's issues; I do see the intersectionality of it, huge importance related to race and gender; the U.S. has a large percentage of the black Muslims; constant navigating with personal background and last names; as veterans we can talk about the impact on Muslims since 9/11; we relate Islam with the visual of a hijab or burka or when they identify themselves; had discussion with Nate Terani, Muslim veteran, didn't tell his employer that he practices Islam; there are so many connections to the campaign itself and how we approach it
- Barry briefs the board on contract with Fenton, clause on charges billed based upon completion of worked hours; if ten hours per month is not achieved then they charge us on reduced hourly rate; Michael confirms that Fenton sends the invoice to the office
 - Dan: important to bring the war issue into this; they use racism as an excuse to go to war; they use laws to limit people's choices; not based on whether we agree with their choices or not, but their rights
 - Barry: hate speech justifies going to war with them overseas and the cycle of hate at home; campaign says that we cannot do that anymore; fighting against the government, the campaign opponents, trying to break the cycle of hate speech
 - Michael: a lot of these points are already part of the campaign; keep the front face of the campaign narrow, but VFP's expression is broader; we want broad outreach, but not all participants have to agree with VFP; our expression would be different than if we had more conservative groups in the campaign; campaign events have been making the connections; the committee will make the decisions about the cities more than this Board will; IAWA is part of the campaign, their expression is called Vets Vs Hate; we are using their hashtag; Bureau of American Islamic Relations is a white supremacist group who spun the name of CAIR; Michael briefs on recent anti-Muslim events in Texas and resistance; area in Texas is a good place to put organizers on the ground for the campaign
 - Joey: have taught ASL and ESL; a third of my Muslim female students do not cover, and the children even less so; many Muslim women do not view it as oppressive, western perspective on Middle Eastern religion;

- one never knows when the reformation will occur; Islam is only religion that has not undergone a reformation
- Joey reports on the Nashville chapter mosque event
 - o Joey: Nashville area very anti-Muslim event; citizens opposed creation of mosque in area; governor called Islam a terrorist religion; Nashville is largest Kurdish community in U.S.; worked with Muslim organizer who founded American Muslim Advisory Council; oldest mosque in Nashville held event, included eight VFP members, 20 Muslim individuals; sharing event, discussion; Kurdish participants talked about being victims of Saddam's chemical attacks; event video posted on chapter Facebook page; the way to pull it off well is shoe leather and Facebook; invited the press and none of them showed; highly recommend organizing similar events; we need VCI national to do its thing, but also chapters need to do it as well; a lot of people stated they don't know any Muslims and that's why they attended; part of it is the push of the empire that's the cause of a lot of today's problems
 - Willie: in JAX the model you're describing evolved out of the contact; worked with an Imam in Atlanta; Imam stated that the truth is that his people really want to remain anonymous, their families become endangered and they are not going to rally; he is open to setting up a fellowship meeting in the mosque and inviting us to be on a panel with their congregation, and how to go forward with such a campaign; cannot impose things on them; anti-Islam billboard in Florida spreading hate; local groups have reached out to JAX VFP chapter to mount a campaign; we need to be at the forefront to speak on that
 - Barry: SD chapter found out that the mosques are much more receptive when they come to us

Development Committee Update – Michael and Doug

- Michael: how the board can be more involved in development; make the org stronger by building stronger relationships
- Doug: attended ExCom meeting and made suggestions; several ways Board members can be involved; asked to make thank you calls to top donors; have face-to-face meetings if possible with chapter leaders, ask them what they need from national, get info about chapters; Boston and Gainesville are good examples; deeply impressed with VFP membership and leadership; can learn from anyone doing chapter development activity; will provide lots of info about membership to Board; also contacting project leaders, who have put in a lot of time and energy and heart into the projects for which we are known; contacting recurring donors, still discussing how to categorize them; chapters in VFP come and go, give some attention as to why and do something about it; when we talk to chapter leaders, inquire about how they are doing and what is working and what is not working; be creative, encourage new ideas and diverse methods; bring whatever you learn from the outreach back to national; will provide the Board with some forms to help gather information; inquired with ExCom if each Board member

could find one lifetime member each year; hoping to ask each Board member to carry donor and lifetime member forms while attending the convention, and take some time to do outreach and ask attendees to become donors or lifetime members; sustainers are the people who provide the base for an organization; the trick is to put 2-3 second statement together to encourage members; once a member signs up for recurring donations, they usually stick with it, unless they can no longer afford it; as a 501c3 board member, you are fiscally responsible for the organization

- Joey: from experience, give us each one number to call per month, not more than one; each of us can make one phone call
- Barry: previous Board efforts to contact top donors to thank them
- Doug: whichever number we come up with, will be more than one; not talking about calls, we're talking about contact; can contact in two ways
- Gerry: excited about the chapter contacts; it's a great thing for each board member to have regular contact with chapters; on the topic of securing lifetime memberships, people who are already members will be likely to upgrade, but what's the track record of getting brand new members to commit to lifetime membership
 - Doug: we've never tried, but it's a chore to get members to upgrade from a low level of donations; on the topic of the convention banquet, I'm usually left alone; making the pitch for donors and lifetime memberships; asking the board to help amplify my efforts at the banquet; in the last several years we had lifetime members who took out multiple commitments; feedback from low income members said that piece of it made them feel like less when high donors are rewarded and honored at the banquet; suggestion to ask people to sponsor others for lifetime members; asking Board to be strategically placed at the banquet and distribute the forms to members and ask them to participate; make it obvious and vocal that we are going to do that; expecting to double what we bring in from the banquet, and double the energy
 - Mark: are we going to have a list of names whom can potentially targeted for lifetime membership
 - Doug: for the Board to discuss, but a good idea
 - Kourtney: not every Board member is or will be good at speaking and contacting members and asking for money
 - Willie: attended conference with ICARE social justice group; not necessarily training us, but pressure us; it was like a sales seminar; high pressure is uncomfortable for many folks, some don't want to hustle people
 - Barry: one place to start with lifetime membership is right here on the Board, working with those of us who can't afford or who can; those of us who can sponsor another Board member can do so; Barry willing to sponsor a Board member for lifetime member

Barry breaks the meeting for lunch

Development update continues – Michael

- Michael presents the report as provided in writing to the Board; Howard Zinn Society for Peace and Justice – Michael to check with Ken Barger on if he notified Zinn family of these plans
 - o Joey: concerned that Zinn Society will be confused with Zinn Fund
 - o Michael: possibility of it becoming confusing, but not necessarily; we can make sure donors understand where the money is going; folks who apply for the Zinn Fund know what they are applying for
 - o Dan: can't be neutral on a moving train, maybe we can create the Conductor's Circle
- Further discussion on levels of gifts/donations, stratifying recognition to donors; naming the funds and legacy
- Michael: not all of our campaigns say VFP in the name, but our literature we send out will identify us clearly; not sure what kind of filter to put on it; the idea of Peace is Possible is something we are really trying to push; Veterans For Peace Legacy Gift is a good name also
- Willie: clarifying that the gifts and funds are not raised for specific projects or initiatives, but rather for VFP general operating and can decide how to distribute based on the category of the legacy or fund
- Michael briefs on national staff needs; need to hire additional St. Louis-based staff including Program Coordinator (Casey acting as such presently), Associate Director (to be based in D.C.), Development Coordinator, Grants/Major Donors Associate Director (looking to Jim Driscoll as a possible candidate); External Comm Coordinator
 - o Barry: SD chapter member in contact with over thirty media contacts and results in good coverage of our chapter events
 - o Gerry: External Comm Coordinator could be a person who is good with messaging with the media and not necessarily good with social media
 - o Michael: since times have changed, that person could be good with both
 - o Gerry: recent communications committee meeting went well; will meet more regularly; would like to see the comm staff position hired soon
 - o Willie: how do we find these persons to fill the positions; do we have an application process, or will it be a selection; Barry and Michael confirm that as a private association we are not required to post jobs positions, we can select and hire if we want
 - Michael: these positions would be a more considered search; AD would likely include the Board for help with the search and consideration; Michael makes the final decision
- Michael: would like to increase the income from the org store within next three years
- Dan: potential for a major event with major donors and possibly celebrities
 - o Michael: haven't done yet, it's a lot of work; Jim Driscoll proposed the idea also; one thing is to find local volunteers to do the work and split the income with the chapter
 - o Joey: did that once soon after Zinn died when Dennis was the ED; Zinn was close friends with Matt Damon; didn't raise a lot to justify the event, held in California

- Kourtney: consider the idea of salons, small intimate events for purposes of fundraising without the specific “ask,” but tacit understanding to do so; invite wealthy supporters and past donors who may be interested in a presentation and mingling for VFP

Communications Plan – Michael

- Michael presents the report as provided in writing to the Board; we have to focus in on what we have decided is our main body of work; Michael presents calendar of VFP actions/events
 - Brian: World Beyond War has a very comprehensive peace calendar we could adapt in some way
 - Michael: we have to consider that there’s only so many days and events for which we can organize actions; purpose of a short list is just the days that VFP is really putting effort into these specific days
 - Tarak: maybe we should consider putting Maine Peace Walk on the short list; powerful manifestation, could see many vets out on the streets walking
 - Michael: would have to ask what we should actually do for it; could potentially send them people such a videographer so that we could get a return on video content
 - Dan: another idea is a printed peace calendar including photos of events and we can use it for tabling and it would help the chapters with their outreach
 - Michael: have problems getting good quality photos
 - Brian: can contact Regis Tremblay for some still photos
 - Michael: we can find multiple photographers in different regions
 - Willie: I’ve found that using photos that have an appeal are the ones of chapter actions; members acting and holding flags are inspirational
- Michael on campaigns and projects connection to Case For Support; connecting projects with our categorized mission statement; hoping over time we can develop a peace curriculum and include the idea of peace studies program collaboration and we can provide content to teachers and educational leaders
 - Dan: working with people locally in Portland with the Rethinking Schools program; high school teacher working on these issues; they already have some kind of curriculum; but if we can get a curriculum from a veteran’s perspective
 - Michael: number of retired school teachers in VFP who we can call and may be excited about developing something for schools; we need to bring new people into initiatives
 - Willie: we tried to set up an online training for veterans’ claims advocates; had a specialist who could help develop the curriculum; the follow up is that you need lesson plans and is labor intensive
- Michael: speaking with Monique about how there is a number of actions towards sustainability, farming, permaculture; bring these efforts into a coherent message and program and maybe we can organize grants and funding for those efforts

- Gerry: consider a bigger campaign on V Day Victory over Violence Against Women; could be very powerful
 - o Michael: may need to explore efforts regarding Military Sexual Trauma
 - o Willie: could be a collection point using the Facebook page where many female members discuss women's issues within VFP and the larger military

Golden Rule National Project Report – Gerry

- Gerry presents video and PowerPoint of Golden Rule peace boat campaign; Gerry presents recorded song about the GR; presents brief history of the boat; in 1958 attempted to sail into Marshall Islands to protest nuclear testing, was stopped in Honolulu; was the inspiration for the first Greenpeace boat; spurred an international movement which partially helped to influence the first nuclear test ban treaty; testing was stopped by Eisenhower in 1968; then the boat changed hands several times and ended up sunk in Humboldt Bay and was recovered six years ago; VFP and friends found out about it and began restoration; put the boat back into the water last June and sailed down the coast into San Diego for the VFP convention; stopped in ten cities back up coast for events; organized on very short notice, was uncertain about making the trip to SD; will be leaving Humboldt Bay on May 28, going up Oregon coast into the Columbia River; then down the river into Portland, will be the first stop on June 7 in time for Fleet Week parade of ships; other activists also involved in the organizing; night of June 8 event in First Presbyterian Church featuring David Rovicks musical activists; variety of speakers including Don't Shoot Portland activists; then go up the Hood River afterwards; thirty different port cities, including four wooden boat shows in Seattle, Vancouver, Victoria, Port Townsend; will be organizing with kayaktivists; helping with organizing against the militarization of Washington State; Fleet Week August 3rd in Seattle; Hiroshima Day August 6th; August 9th action outside the Banger Trident Submarine Base, right before the VFP national convention, so GR will miss the convention; a lot of work, but people get it and are excited and it's not hard to sell the mission of GR; will be returning to Humboldt Bay near October 12 or so; calendar likely to be posted on the VFP website
 - o Barry: some talk earlier with someone coming aboard to do radiation testing and using the ship for paid expenses
 - Gerry: we're still talking to that person; not going to be practical to be launching to and from the boat; he may still come with us but he'll be reaching those beaches for Fukushima testing by land and not by sea
 - o Barry: do we know who the crew will be and the captain? Those waters have high tide changes and need experienced skipper
 - Gerry: serious stuff for sure; lots of discussion during our meetings; we have a crew selection committee, crew applications, thirty three people have applied and that number is growing by the day; seven or eight qualified captains who have approached us, including one who is the son of the former owner of the boat and used to sail on the boat and knows the waters very well; captains have to be very very qualified but not

necessarily licensed; not everyone on the crew has to have a lot of experience; Helen had never sailed before joining the crew; do have spots for newcomers; will be rotating crew; but even experienced captains don't know this particular boat, so we will rotate captains and have at least two on board

- Joey: possibility of sailing the Mississippi River?
 - Gerry: Freddy Champagne first put out the idea; putting out a ten-year mission to sail the U.S. and internationally; the general plan now is to next go to the Gulf and sail the GR next year down to San Diego, take her out of the water, take off the masts, put her on a truck and ship her to Texas and Gulf of Mexico; we know someone who recently did that with a similar boat; they paid only \$2500 to do that, could cost more; doable and cheaper and easier than sailing the Panama Canal; would then sail through Texas and make stops along Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, and maybe even Cuba; inter-coastal waterway once headed back North; in Portland, met Marshall Islands community members with Dan and Helen; they are building the first Marshalese outrigger canoe to sail with GR
- Gerry: would like to hire someone who is very good at ensuring that we have the best possible media at every stop of the journey; national and international media involvement as well; maybe Fenton can also help us with that
 - Barry asks about possible videography of the boat and journey and supporters
 - Willie: JAX chapter has good videographers and created a documentary; sure we could get them to work with us without worrying about overhead; provide them with stipends and they are very professional
- Gerry presents GR budget to the meeting; includes half-time staff salary for Helen Jaccard; we have a plan to make this sustainable; don't have any major donors or grants; have to make the trip pay for itself; the voyage will cost about \$30k; the intention to raise \$10k using a Gofundme campaign; \$10k of that from organizational sponsorships; Skip Oliver donated \$4000; we have a transition committee to put together the MOU to transfer the boat to ownership of VFP; would not be equal sharing since VFP would be ultimately responsible for the boat; need to step up efforts to transfer ownership soon, before the boat begins sailing for upcoming journey

Ralph Nader Event in D.C. at Constitution Hall May 23-26

- Barry presents Ralph Nader's letter to the meeting as provided to the Board; VFP to feature at the event for twenty minutes; will have tabling staffed and provide printed materials to attendees; Nader wants us to bring a couple hundred attendees; need to start thinking about creating videos to present at the event and securing our own speakers; still awaiting the schedule and program so we can decide how to publicize and how to hone our participation; will be billed as a major event; we only have six weeks to put this together; want someone who was involved with Winter Soldier event

- Monique: what he proposed as the attendance cost, what is it for? Barry confirms it's for purposes of fundraising for the participating organizations
 - Barry: but without the chance to get a lot of publicity, it may be iffy
 - Monique: clarifying his expectations for us and what he wants us to do; meeting agrees that we are concerned with this
 - Michael: in the email his folks sent with the bios of other org speakers, he mentioned that he would also be sending the schedule soon; in terms of getting ready, making sure that Chris Smiley video is up to speed so we can use it at the event; pulling out pages of the Case For Support to make into a short brochure; anything we feel like we need to have to present VFP in the best light at the event, we should do that until we get more info from Ralph; once we do get info, it will be an add-on to our current efforts; the thing concerning me the most is the day he wants us to take over and what that's supposed to look like
 - Further discussion on the specific days Nader wants us to participate and how much time and content we have to commit to; possibly May 25th as a veteran's day of participation and we may be asked to fill in a lot of time at the event; Michael and Barry to contact Nader to clarify expectations of the event

2016 VFP National Convention Planning Update – Barry

- Barry: nothing new to report concerning Oliver Stone attending the convention; we should go ahead and plan the Berkeley theater event at the convention with the other participants; we have another convention call next Sunday; Barry and Dan confirms deadline extension for workshop proposals to May 1st; opening plenary on Friday, workshops afterward; workshops could broaden out the information presented in the plenary, but not every workshop needs to do so; Ann Jones keynote banquet on Friday night; Paul Cox suggestion for musical and poetry acts to begin each plenary session; Sunday night event at musical acoustics center; Wednesday night event in San Francisco at the new veterans center, efforts to honor Lawrence Ferlinghetti;
 - Board meeting to be held on Thursday, business meeting on Saturday
 - Barry: possibility of providing written Treasurer's and Membership report to the membership at the business meeting in order to shorten the meeting
 - Michael: business meeting is why we have a convention; cautious of limiting the business meeting; should run the meeting in an efficient and entertaining manner
 - Further discussion on how the board can interact with the membership during the business meeting; Willie encourages more interaction with the membership; Tarak recommends very short intros from each board member at the business meeting
- Michael: sending out mailing postcard with the dates of the convention to convey the change in dates from previous years; starts on Thursday, goes until Monday; really playing up the convention

- Monique: Charles Powell, Albuquerque chapter president pointed out last year that the older veterans may have trouble participating in the banquet based on how it's set up, problems hearing and seeing
 - o Barry: have to explore assistance for those who need help participating; possibly wait until the meal is served and over before starting the banquet program; have to limit additions to the program so it doesn't go long; maybe put the keynote address earlier in the program
- Gerry: regarding the public event at the convention, modest expectations of attendance; local area in Berkeley is huge progressive community
- Dan: WWII vets attended last year, they should have been introduced to each other; maybe have a little place to keep them together and meet each other
- Tarak: last couple of years we allocated five grand seed money to help post cold war vets attend the convention; **motion to allocate \$5000 this year for the purpose of helping post cold war veterans attend the convention; seconded by Dan**
 - o **Barry calls for discussion**
 - **Unanimous support**

Discussion on 2017 Board Nominations Process

- Michael: need to figure out who the people are we will ask to run for election to the Board
 - o Up for re-election: Willie, Gerry, Barry, Tom
 - o Gerry: thinking about it; almost six years for me; reelection would be nine years serving my term
 - o Willie confirms intention to run for reelection
 - o Michael: so then as it stands we need to find six candidates
- Willie: would like to see a nominating committee actually work to set up a criteria and process for identifying candidates and then clearly state that to the membership so they know when we are recruiting people; ensure that they get recognized and considered
 - o Barry: clarifies the current members of the nominating committee
- Further discussion on criteria and skillsets of potential board candidates; could possibly use the current questionnaire as a set of criteria; Michael reminds that the criteria is technically just to be a veteran and a member of VFP; Joey recommends we always use that questionnaire
- Michael: the search committee put together a slate for open seats requiring running; Michael clarifies how a veteran member can get ten signatures to petition to be included on the slate, or be nominated by the board to be included on the slate

Barry briefs the meeting on Board calls to top donors

Barry adjourns the meeting at 5:20 PM CST

Sunday, April 17, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary
Monique Salhalb
Brian Trautman
Tarak Kauff
Willie Hager
John Heuer
Dan Shea
Joey King

Board members excused from the meeting:

Tom Palumbo
Nicole Waybright

Members and guests at the meeting:

Wells Todd, Chapter 175, Jacksonville, FL
Douglas Parker, Lifetime Member, Chapter 61 St. Louis, MO

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry convenes the meeting at 9:10 PM CST

Brief reports on Board member calls to top donors

Member/guest introduction: Douglas Parker

VVAW Legacy Trust Annual Meeting May 4 at Kent State University – Willie

- Willie: rally every year there with the task force; extending invitation, would be appropriate for VFP to send a representative to the board meeting on the 5th; staying at a Microtel, six miles from the campus; participating in the panels, parades, candle light vigil; gathering for fundraising for the task force; likely the only peace memorial going on in America regarding Kent State

Holocaust Survivor and Honorary Member Heddy Epstein

- Tarak: local member, terminal cancer; Michael planning to visit

Barry briefs on Saturday's business

Additions to agenda

- Jeju government lawsuits against protestors
- G.I. Coffee House in Germany financial assistance
- Discussion on VFP use of term “America” instead of U.S.
- VFP possible actions during Democratic and Republican National Conventions

Possible Sites for 2017 VFP National Convention

- Barry: spoke to Army Stieber from Chicago chapter; he’s concerned that they don’t have enough people to do the work; Chicago chapter has gotten a lot of attention with their billboard campaign challenging militarism of schools; long-term hope is challenging militarism in school systems, pushing for peace studies curriculum in schools; make next year’s convention a circle around that theme, begin to raise awareness of what’s going on in the schools
 - o Tarak: great idea; should have a fall back position in case they don’t want to do it; should talk to others in the chapter, such as Rory Fanning
 - o Mark: Milwaukee and Madison only two hours away; if Chicago doesn’t have enough people, we might be able to help
 - o Joey: could organize around the increase in gun violence in Chicago as well
 - o Douglas: when Saigon fell, service members returned and became police officers; many officers trained by Blackwater

Shut Down Creech Anti-Drone Event Report

- Tarak: eight arrested, seven VFP members; meant something that a board member and president was arrested; event was pretty good; the criticism is that there wasn’t many VFP members who attended, maybe 13, down from around 50 last year; need to get more participation next year; facilitate participation in some way
- Monique: very few post-cold war members attended; the Shut Down Creech event could have much more impact; we have other drone bases in the U.S.; felt that the main purpose of folks there was to simply get arrested; the symposium was fantastic; the set-up of Camp Justice is not realistic for many people, many cannot forego hotels for camping; Sean Westmoreland on the panel talked about appreciated the support but mentioned the impact of seeing signs such as “baby killers” and how negative impact that has; small group planned to do protest with coffins and fake babies looking burned and bloody, and they went ahead and did that; need to work on messaging; if we want to reach out to the men and women who are drone operators, them seeing those signs and props, how are we reaching them? What is the message we are putting out? Next year, how can we make this event much more impactful, reorganized so it has positive impact; Casey did the legal observer training and was the point person for arrestees and arranging transportation for them; should have been one designated legal observer; no internet hotspot access
 - o Barry: disappointed in the low number of people attending compared to last year; didn’t have the same media coverage as last year; symposium was a high point, packed the classroom at UNLV; many people at the jail wondered what

- Creech base was, hadn't heard of it; maybe there should be another component to it, maybe more public teach-ins and get public attention to it; Amy Goodman mentioned the arrestees on Democracy Now! Program
- Gerry: main paper in Las Vegas published an article as well
 - Barry: the authorities know when the demo will be going on; the drone pilots are either arriving really early or leaving late after the demo
 - Gerry: was there last year, was pretty good overall; included on the organizing list serv for the event; would be really good for us to share the feedback with the organizers of the event; a very Code Pink dominated thing, can expect some of these dynamics to continue; our kind of changes would be because we take responsibility for our portion of the event and just make things happen; former drone operators who participated were uncomfortable with the Code Pink aspect, so VFP was made part of the organizing; national speaking tour with former drone operators
 - Barry: coordinating events on the same days around the country at other bases; how is this fitting into what we are doing
 - Willie: we did a drone protest at the pilot training school in JAX; would be happy to fall into a supporting action with Creech; if we want an impact as VFP, we can have our chapters participating
 - Gerry: doesn't have to be at the same time, can be rolling dates for the activities
 - Monique: spoke with Casey, talking about the inactive drone working group in VFP; extremely important in bringing awareness of the pilots and how they are affected and the manufacturers; more work can be done, bring it to the next level
 - Michael: only three post-cold war veterans present; IVAW pulled out of the event; the former pilots didn't want to be associated with Code Pink and not the events at the base at all; these are the people who are fighting the wars right now, we need those vets; it means that there's something wrong with the organizing; in the office we have been discussing how much time we should put into this; reiterating goals and objectives, not real clear with the drone campaign; hope between now and the next event in 2017 we figure out what VFP is trying to do; need to listen to the younger vets because they can relate to their peers; being arrested is good, but if the public doesn't understand what it's about, either they won't pay attention, or it's just a bunch of loonies; just because it's in the paper doesn't mean we are getting our message across; important to consider that we get positive feedback from our supporters, the reality is that most other people have no idea what's going on; need a more comprehensive approach
 - Douglas: connections with other bombings and wars around the world; lying to the public about the effectiveness of drones and bombings; we need that coverage and that press
 - Tarak: if we don't address the issues Michael is talking about, I can't see us getting good participation there next year; if they can't be resolved, then I'm not

- going to put energy into it; important to consider the value of sustained protest, not just one day
- Dan: Portland Oregon chapter sent people last year; members had to return and testify in court before being dismissed; people weren't prepared to camp out in the cold nights, bringing plenty of water, out in the middle of the desert; the argument of using graphic images; the media doesn't show what the drones do to people, forbid us to see the coffins returning; images have major affect on people, can turn tide of thinking; how to do it without alienating the soldiers and operators
- Willie: in JAX we found that the best messaging is connecting with militarization of the police; de-weaponizing the drones because there are a lot of good uses of drones; when we go back to the gates at the training center, that will be our theme; won't be talking about the drone pilots
- Joey: equally powerful messaging was the young man placing a flower into the rifle of a police officer during Kent State incident
- Michael: what we are trying to do is different than other peace orgs; they aren't trying to organize vets and active duty personnel; those images don't work for what we are trying to achieve; we need to figure out how to have a relationship with folks who are doing things differently, but we can't do that; unless we're lumped in with other peace folks; we organized as VFP for a reason, need to remember that
- Tarak: the other thing no one knows about, after we were arrested, we were taken back to a pen without handcuffs, kept and eventually an intelligence officer came to talk to us; got a lot of info from him; wound up giving him the letter and he was eager to get it; that was valuable
- Further discussion on Code Pink issues of organizing event
- Monique: the other issue is one of color; only four people of color attended, including myself; offensive comment from a Code Pink attendee; as a young veteran, wondering why I attended; isolation is an issue; on being arrested, I cannot choose that as a person of color; no problem participating in drone events we put together, but won't be involved with Code Pink organizing next year

Possible Organizing for Democratic/Republican National Conventions

- Michael: likely IVAW and our own members will be involved in the convention protests and demos; creative ways to make IVAW/VFP issues visible; brainstorm over the list serv to figure out what we want to do; Ryan Holleran is organizing something, will touch bases with him to figure it out; Dem convention in Philly; Republican convention in Cleveland
 - Joey: can get hairy in Cleveland this year; 25k signatures for open carry at the Republican convention; lots of guns floating around in the parking lot there; need to have a contingency plan if we are going to participate in actions there
 - Willie: John Penley calling on people to rally at his organizing at the convention; stated in one of his postings that VFP is going to set up a safe zone; we don't

- want to make people think that we are doing something that we are not; personally I'm not sure that we need to be there
- Tarak: John Penley is a loose cannon; our message there could get really muddled; possibly just drop a banner and not have people on the ground
 - Gerry: going to be big mass mobilizations at each convention; may have Klan and NRA in Cleveland; not sure how we can avoid being there; not sure how much energy we can input from the national level; discuss how to frame it so we have a conscientious stance; tens of thousands of people in the street, we gotta be there
 - Dan: not a bad idea to have a safe zone represented by VFP; should probably talk about if we can set it up
 - Kourtney: consideration that party national conventions have included black bloc anarchists who vandalize shops and fight the cops in the streets; sometimes they wait until after the mass demos end before starting
 - Willie: a safe zone is a different issue; capacity is important, we better do it right; the issue is John stating out front that we are going to do it, it's a misrepresentation of us
 - Barry: our responsibility is with our other national projects; peaceful manner and not get involved in street fighting and guns; don't need to get overrun by others when folks see our VFP flags and getting involved with police and the image of VFP being involved; other organizing we can do for our messaging about issues important to us, engaging the candidates
 - Mark: we don't have the capacity to do all of this; if we are going to ready for the VFP convention then we need to get focused
 - Gerry: local chapters can take care of this aspect
 - John: the Cleveland convention is July 18-21, Dems July 25-28 in Philly; could talk to the chapters and see what they can do

VFP Draft Policy on Grants and Loans

- Barry: Mark and I were going to re-draft the position on grants/loans; the only ones I'm aware of is the \$50k grant to IVAW; Barry presents the IRS guidelines on nonprofits grants and loans requirements; issue is whether we should or should not give loans and grants and follow the guidelines
- Mark: my issue was that we were giving loans and grants without any kind of policy
- Barry: make sure that we are not confusing grants and loans
- Gerry: going to be pretty rare, may never happen again; and it would be an org like IVAW who is very close to us; Mark and Barry working on the draft
- Barry calls for the feeling of the board on the issue; proposing a policy for orgs like IVAW/MFSO to consider loans but not grants
- Joey: so hard to see in the future; may be a time we want to make a grant
- **Barry calls for motion; Dan motions to allow Barry and Mark to create a policy for considering loans to orgs that are closely aligned with VFP; seconded motion**
 - **Barry calls for vote; unanimous support**

Pat Scanlon Music Video Project Funding Proposal

- Barry: asking the board for a thousand dollars to help fund
- Kourtney: briefs meeting on recent Smedley Chapter 9 approval of \$1000 to Pat for the music video; was some concern about the name of the song "Extremist"
- Gerry: came up twice in our ExCom meeting; the ExCom recommended in respect of Pat's great work and the chapter's work, to donate \$500 to the project; that was a compromise after long discussion with the ExCom; suggest we move in that direction quickly
- Willie: remember board discussion on not being in the business of promoting and producing music and films
 - o Michael: this situation is a little bit different, it's a project promoting VFP from one of our members and our chapters
- **Dan: motions to grant \$500 to Pat for the project; seconded**
 - o **Barry calls for vote; unanimous support of the motion**

David Swanson Peace Day/War Is A Lie Tour

- Willie confirms that JAX chapter and others are giving him travel stipends and lodging
- Barry: he's asking for endorsement or participation; will be bringing speakers for a big event; Peace Day event is in D.C., can help us expand on our statement and activities in D.C.; September 23-25 at American University; significant event with very well known speakers
- Kourtney and Brian agree to help explore possible VFP participation in Peace Day event

South Korean Navy Lawsuits Against Gangjeong Village

- Dan briefs on the lawsuits; Samsung says they lost a lot of money so they sued the South Korean Navy; so now their navy is suing the village; will effectively wipe out that village along with navy base environmental destruction in area; Tarak drafted a letter to the South Korean President, proposing endorsement and signatures of VFP Board; possibility of their suing VFP members who protested in Jeju Island
- Gerry: backhanded repressive acknowledgement for the effectiveness of the resistance; opportunity to gain more support for their resistance
- **Barry motions to accept the concept of drafting a letter to the South Korean president in support of the anti-base resistance on Jeju Island; Joey seconds the motion**
 - o **Barry calls for vote: unanimous support of the motion**
 - o Tarak reads aloud the letter as drafted and provided in writing to the Board; needs to be put on letterhead

The Clearing Barrel G.I. Coffee House in Germany Financial Assistance Request

- Willie: the monetary amount is a high point to get the coffee house moving forward well; looking for general support
- Gerry: attended the grand opening of The Clearing Barrel coffee house and bar; attended the tour for support; three remaining dedicated GI coffee houses are Coffee Strong, Under The Hood, and Clearing Barrel; since that tour, Coffee Strong has closed though they maintain a low level existence in Olympia; Under The Hood has also closed;

after many years of struggling, they've had to admit that it's not a sustainable model for this era; do not recommend giving significant funds to the model, but can give something for moral support; but possibly mentioning that we have serious concerns about the sustainability of the model

- Dan: she's saying there is increase of supporters at the coffee house; she was concerned that fascist Nazis were giving her trouble consistently
- Willie: I think they are sustainable if they have the right GI programs going; GI hotline is an example; want to work with her to set up claims advocacy base to interact with GIs; would make a motion for \$1000
- Tarak: for someone doing that work for so long, and dealing with phenomena of Nazi rise; would like to support the project, but want to give something substantial; would like to raise the amount to \$2000
- Michael: not real excited about giving money to things in general, especially if it's not our project, and none of our members are there; it's generally speculative, not firsthand; the issue with coffee houses today is that the troops have all kinds of ways to entertain themselves; they have reasons not to frequent coffee houses; not for giving money to a model that's not going to succeed; won't be fulfilling what it intends because there isn't that need
- Mark: agree with Michael, we're in a different continent; oversight would be very difficult; some mismanagement going on if they need as much as \$34k; Gerry mentioned why don't we ask the UK chapter what they think and maybe they can help
- Barry: I'm opposed to giving them any funds; in comparison, the Tijuana project is a VFP national project; we raise money for it, support it, can oversee it; \$2000 would be gone in a week, it won't make a difference; the coffee house movement had its place; we have to make sure we are not losing money for our other projects such as our national convention
- John: does anyone know of any prospect of forming Germany chapter? Barry confirms conversations with other veterans in that area but it hasn't gone anywhere; the language barrier is a problem; getting documents and having to translate and then they don't give feedback when we provide information; hasn't worked out, but we wish it would
- Mark: there are limits to what we can do; if it weren't for the Craigslist donation, we'd already be in the whole; if membership continues to slide, and we don't get any more grants, at the end of the year we will be below what we should be at; we should slow down
- Dan: we're working with international chapters now, possible to go have a tour or event in Germany; suggested to Ben in UK that they do an event at the coffee house and bring people there; one way to give money is to support our chapters there to bring people to the coffee house; and we have U.S. bases in Germany, possible to reach out to our soldiers there
- Tarak: at the very least, we should draft a letter of support to them
- **Willie motions to give \$2000 to the coffee house in Germany with a letter stating our support but reservations about the sustainability of the model**
 - o **Dan seconds the motions**

- **Gerry: amendment to change the amount to \$500; Willie accepts the amendment**
- **Barry calls for vote on sending \$500**
 - **Vote shows motion fails, six opposed, five in favor**
 - **Gerry to draft letter and encourages Board members to make a personal donation**

Possible VFP Participation at NATO Summit Protest July 8-9 Warsaw, Poland - Gerry

- Gerry: peace movement in Poland organizing counter-protest and conference in Warsaw at that time; Ben Griffin in UK and Ed Horgan in Ireland to attend the protest conference in July; we should encourage them to do so; Peace Council also asking us to participate, they are concerned that no one in the U.S. is paying attention to NATO; suggesting that VFP release a statement or press release and provide info to our chapters to inform them of what's going on with NATO and possibly join in long distance support of the conference and protest; put it on our calendar and strong educational component for chapters
 - Willie: all good, right thing to do; other chapters over there can take the capacity off of our shoulders
 - Michael: should we try to have some kind of symposium or conference about NATO; has come up in presidential campaigns quite a bit
 - Barry: could be a discussion for David Swanson event and talk to Bacevich and others
 - Michael: talking to Gerry or Barry to write something and using Trump as a hook
 - Joey: could be with the conventions in Cleveland and Philly an aspect that we can provide in a rented space that is away from the fervor of the streets; that may be our hook into the political conventions
 - John: could be a part of the presentations at Nader's event at Constitution Hall
 - Willie: we have a lot of talent in this field, such as Bruce Gagnon who are hands on the NATO issue and are well spoken about it
 - Gerry: could form a 2-3 person committee to organize this
 - Tarak: could do a special edition on NATO and publish, similar to Full Disclosure publication special edition
 - John, Gerry, and Joey to explore organizing VFP participation in NATO protest

Use of Term "Americans" in Veterans Challenge Islamophobia Statement – Gerry

- Gerry: reads aloud VFP member Ellen Barfield letter to the VFP board asking to cease using the term "Americans" to refer to the U.S.
- Brian: cannot change the statement as it's already gone out, approved, circulated in the public; can change it in the future however
- Tarak: changing the language is not hard for the online statement; Brian disagrees we should do so
- Michael: it doesn't change the meaning in term of what it says to people; trying to meet people where they are who think that way

- Willie: don't like preaching to the choir, reach people where they are; people perceive America as an entity, refers to U.S., that's what we are in struggle for; Quakers have issue with wordsmithing; we are giving it our best representation of everyone's feelings on the thing; we gave it our best shot; we can respond in hindsight and say that in future reference she's right and we should pay attention to this
- Gerry: surprised that we didn't catch it the first time, normally we wouldn't use it like this
- Michael: it's because the committee did bring this up and we realized who exactly we were trying to reach with the VCI campaign
- Gerry: the downside of the two-track approach of what VFP is and what VCI is and how to reach out to veterans; **motion to change the terms in the statement as posted on the VFP website, and work with Jim Driscoll on how to approach future use of the term**
- Barry: does it change the focus of our message in some way? Addressed to Brian
 - o Brian: not necessarily, Willie's point resonated with me as far as what we've already done and approved; and now to go back because one member has expressed an issue with it defeats our previous decision and discussion to move forward with the campaign; but for future reference we absolutely should and I support changing the terms
 - o Dan: we are Americans just like all North, South and Central Americans; no problem calling myself an American but understand the point
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - o **Motion carries seven in support, four opposed; motion passes**

Tarak to step down as Membership Committee Chair; Kourtney to take over duties of committee chair

Dan to step down from Bylaws Committee

Meeting Assessment - Barry

- Barry: did we accomplish the items we wanted; were you listened to and respected, equal participation
 - o Dan: highly productive meeting, accomplished the goals, active listening; everyone was taken seriously, we moved forward efficiently
 - o Joey: agreed; there have been severe personality clashes on Board in the past so it's refreshing not to see it here
 - o Dan: agreed; think that what makes this work is the Chair; to keep everyone going smoothly; motions are clear and everyone is listened to
 - o Kourtney: agree that meetings went well, appreciated how much everyone listened; nice to have a board in which we can all be friends and still make decisions; we care about org and members
 - o Willie: went swimmingly actually; in terms of progress it has become much more respectful, and we are aware of where we are all coming from; starting to leave our baggage behind; going to trust that what I'm feeling is respect and love; we

- are unique and strong individuals or we wouldn't be here; there is an equal exchange; has seen a lot of maturity developed on this board, attributed to Michael's leadership; voted for Barry twice for prez
- Monique: I think it went very well; everyone has been fantastic in making me feel welcome to the Board; feels like Sundays get rushed through, but that may just be me; wouldn't mind going extra time on Saturday so we don't have to rush Sunday; would have loved to be able to see the staff a little bit more but understand time constraints
 - Gerry: hope we keep coming back to St. Louis at least once per year to meet with staff; male dominated board so it's good to have women leaders on staff participate in meetings; board is functioning well and has been for a while, but it's getting better, especially with new Board members; the younger we get the more mature we get; a diverse Board feels great and we need to keep moving in that direction
 - Tarak: great meeting, Barry did a tremendous job, and Michael and everyone here; appreciate that we have two women on the Board, influences me to behave a little better; great indication of how effective the meeting is that we laughed a lot and we are leaving here smiling
 - Mark: in the beginning there was a lot of fighting and we have come a long way; all about respect and we have matured in that way; as far as our maturation in prioritizing what we are doing, and figuring out how to put the structure together so we can have a stronger voice, I feel excited that we are moving in that direction; change is really good and we are showing positive change
 - John: appreciate the opportunity of the fresh perspective of our new board members, added a tremendous amount; appreciate the fellowship
 - Michael agrees with the general sentiment
 - Barry: new board members are really going to elevate us even further; thanking everyone for the work you do

Barry adjourns the meeting at 12:11 PM CST

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors
Conference Call
May 17, 2016

Board members present on the call:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary
Nicole Waybright
Monique Salhalb
Joey King
Tarak Kauff
Brian Trautman
Tom Palumbo
John Heuer

Board members absent from the call:

Willie Hager
Dan Shea

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry chairs the meeting.
Barry convenes the meeting at 6:10 PM EST

Agenda Review

- Barry briefs the meeting on the agenda as provided to the Board
- Additions to agenda: none

Proposed Sign-on to PETA Bill on Military Trauma Training

- Barry: PETA sent email to Barry expressing hope that since this is a military issue they would like VFP support to phase out mistreatment of animals during military trauma training; if no objection, would like to take the sample letter, redraft it, put on VFP stationary and send to House/Senators; open for discussion
 - o Gerry briefs on experiences of animal cruelty in military trauma training
- **No opposition, unanimous support**

2017 National Convention Update

- Barry: Chicago chapter votes to host convention, already looking for venue; Barry and Michael attended chapter meeting; looking into University of Illinois-Chicago campus;

focus on militarization of Chicago schools; good opportunity for VFP to talk about this during convention; haven't picked exact dates yet but Chicago host is done deal; Minneapolis in 2018

Nader Event – Breaking Through Power

- Barry: asked VFP to MC the event on the 25th; Barry and Michael will speak for ten minutes each at the event; need to make a big push to get this out there, please use connections through email and social media to get folks to attend and promote; asked VFP to bring in as many members and supporters in Maryland/DC/Virginia area; we bought 50 tix, and scholarships are available for those who aren't able to afford attendance
- Michael: in terms of promotion, has been on website since April 22; made a slider as suggested by Tarak, put on website; will send e-blast out about it tomorrow or Thursday; trying to write a short piece about why people should go with a link to the event website; may do some phone-banking for this event if we can find volunteers
- Barry: briefs meeting on other special guests participating on Thursday event, themed Breaking Through Power: War; we want to promote VFP there, so we want a booth or tabling at the event
 - o Tarak: bringing down 2000 copies of Full Disclosure special edition and 800 copies of Peace In Our Times papers; probably coming down Tuesday night, want to know the plan for bringing the papers in, lots of bundles to carry in; arriving by car, how to set up logistically; would you like me to bring down a number of banners related to war and militarism, would the venue be appropriate to bring banners and put them up somehow; Michael confirms to bring the banners, and Michael will ask Nader's people about hanging them; Michael will know more about tabling and bringing papers by Monday afternoon, the first day of event
 - o Tarak: want to put one copy of Full Disclosure on seats at the venue, folded in half; confirm are still doing that; Michael confirms yes, Tarak needs assistance with task
 - o Gerry: agrees with bringing banners and displaying around the halls of venue
 - o Barry: not sure what our access to venue after venue ends for day, if we could put them up then instead of when speakers are presenting during the day
 - o John: wonder what outreach to other veteran organizations for Wednesday event; Michael confirms that he has had no interaction so far
 - Barry: makes sense to do that; Nader also inquired about contact with other vets orgs in DC area, doesn't know if we do; not just a leftist event, others on right also don't want endless wars and may be interested
 - o Kourtney: info on how members can find out about scholarship for Nader event
 - Barry: Nader's people said can apply on their event website, but they can also contact us
 - Michael: buying 50 tix, e-blast will let people know; if we run out of tix, then there's scholarship available to attend
 - Kourtney: VFP provides travel assistance for people of color?

- Michael: don't have a POC fund for regular member travel to DC events; that was for the convention

2016 National Convention update

- Michael: registration on the website is live; during STL board meeting, we discussed issue of dispute of number of rooms on campus, that has been worked out to a much more reasonable number of responsible rooms, we still have to fill them but we're happy; almost finished with determining workshops; opening plenary set, post 911 plenary is likely about Islamophobia; mini-plenaries include a drone whistleblower, militarization of police/Black Lives Matter/Palestinian struggle solidarity with Ferguson movement, and the Asia Pivot; convention will start on Thursday instead of Wednesday; Friday night off-site public event with Oliver Stone, Helen Caldicott, Andrew Bacevich, and Rory Scranton; want tix to off-site event at \$30, included with convention attendance; Ann Jones is the speaker at the banquet; haven't totally figured out the Monday program, likely will be about/for children
- Barry: we were able to move the banquet to inside the venue; outside could have potentially been cold weather; trying to put an event on Wednesday at the new veteran's center in San Francisco; wouldn't be arranging transport for that; Nicole will do book reading, Ben Griffin will be on panel, will try to honor Lawrence Ferlinghetti poet, and have some music; looking for the public in Bay Area to get engaged, no charge to attend
 - John: Asia Pivot mini-plenary will be good opportunity to feature nuclear issues
 - Michael: confirms plans in work; looking for someone from Okinawa chapter, and someone who went on Jeju/Okinawa delegation trip; need someone to frame out the foreign policy issues around the Asia Pivot; want a max of four people with Q&A; trying to have the Korea Peace Campaign part of it as well, but with it being a campaign and a workshop then it could take up more space than allowable on a panel, so that could be its own workshop without the panel
 - Gerry: saw an email from Greater Seattle VFP to its membership encouraging people to come to the convention, making them aware that a number of vets will be riding the same train to event; email encouraged people to forget about Monday events; haven't had chance to respond to them directly; if that's going around among others then it needs to be addressed if we want people to take Monday event seriously
 - Barry: agreed; Kids For Peace group has chapter there; theme of convention being building sustainable world for children; KFP has chapters in Palestine and travels to Pakistan and has good ideas about approaching peace; may be nice to hear what kids have to say and how they see their role as peacemakers; that's the idea for Monday event
 - Tarak: noticed on the Friday event we have two women speaking; other than that, it's all white people speaking at that event; Michael corrects that it is only one woman speaking at that event

- Michael: brought it up to the group, we thought an MC could be a woman or at least a person of color
- Tarak: know a man named Aaron, speaks about drones, Islamophobia, empire, making solid connections; beyond what many of us have perceived or derived, brilliant analysis, great speaker, and a person of color
- Michael: we were thinking about finding a local person to draw in locals, hoping for a woman; Islamophobia plenary could include Aaron and a couple of locals, and a couple of vets
- Barry: briefs on ideas on organizing post 911 plenary; Friday event is mostly locked down; rather than having moderator, Ray Scranton suggests that after presentations, they question each other; interesting idea, seems to work out well; then you don't need a moderator; after that, maybe a break and then questions from audience, and there we would need someone to facilitate questions; Denny suggested writing down questions to present to presenters
- Gerry: sounds like four really outstanding speakers we're lucky to have; four white presenters in Bay Area event will be quite glaring
- Michael: told the organizers that
- Barry: tried to get a more diverse group, no response from Van Jones; Naomi Klein turned us down; there was issue on rooms and we would go into the hole filling rooms, but we negotiated down to make it manageable; needed to attract names to get people out here; didn't know about Oliver Stone at the time; knew Bacevich would respond quickly; Caldicott responded quickly; same day as Bacevich, Stone agreed and then day later Scranton changed mind and agreed to do it; my idea was to put Scranton on a plenary and look for Van Jones but Jones said no so Scranton was added
- Tarak: is this absolutely set in stone, and why would it be totally set in stone two and a half months out; are we under contract so we can't change? Would be good to add a Black Lives Matter activist
- Barry: people made commitments with expectation to participate; don't have answer for this, would have to bring in convention committee to discuss it
- Michael: there's no reason why we can't have a person of color on the stage other than we choose to do it or not do it
- Nicole: hear what Tarak is saying about ways to make it dynamic with diversity; but things happen based on the way the org is and the way it's represented; if we bring in these people then it is not representing the org; we are largely white and male; will continue to be that way until we reach out to more diverse movements and orgs
- Gerry: at least communicate to convention committee about these concerns; Barry confirms

VCI campaign update

- Barry: received Open Society Foundation funds for event
- Michael: moved forward with hiring organizers, particularly in Dallas/Irving Texas area, Raleigh/Durham North Carolina area, talking with Ken Barger in Indianapolis to see if they want an organizer; five cities total; need to send the Board a write up for Fenton on what the work will be; Ira of Fenton will take organizers to each represented to meet main media contacts there; making sure the media contacts know the organizers so they will pay attention to our press releases and events, raise visibility of campaign and for VFP; Jim organizing a call to look at other cities, such as Chicago, chapter there is interested; two members interested in being the organizers in Chicago, just need to make sure chapter is supporting; but we are asking them to do a lot for the 2017 convention and the VCI campaign; purpose of the campaign isn't to shadow Trump, but instead to get some visibility in the media; organizers in the ground, solidarity with Muslim communities, organizing vets, talking to people who wouldn't otherwise talk about these issues; before something happens that would create anti-Muslim sentiments; use visibility the same way we usually use it; shouldn't think we are being used by anybody; we decided to do this our way before we asked for money; if they don't like it, they should take their money back

Golden Rule update

- Barry: ambitious calendar coming up at end of May going into October
- Gerry: currently in Port Townsend, Oregon meeting with folks there for planning with the Golden Rule; briefs on further meetings and planning with anti-militarization of Washington State; first leg of voyage is Portland, Oregon on June 8th-12th; lots of places around Puget Sound; will participate in four wooden boat festivals; organizing going on in twenty plus locations; struggling a little bit on the transition committee, how transferring ownership to VFP will work out
 - o Tarak: recruit me to be on the crew
 - Gerry: all board members invited to come out; want to send out letter to Advisory Board to join us whenever they can, as crew or as speakers at our events; will send out entire schedule that is currently tentative to the entire Board; GR will not be at the convention due to activities in Seattle during that week
 - Tarak: how is GR doing financially
 - Gerry: head barely above water; Helen and Gerry to talk to Michael about it; line-item in VFP budget for GR, but we still have to raise the money; hoping this effort will be sustainable, get sponsorships from other orgs; if we get dangerously short of funds, we will let everyone know, but right now we have a good path ahead
 - o Barry: talked to former colleague who will introduce me to person who runs a foundation that gives to orgs dealing with nuclear weapons

Veterans Writers Tour

- Tarak: last I remember was we had spoke about someone contacting Greg; Brian will follow up with Greg; he is fairly easy to work with, we helped him get to DC for Occupy event; I think the writers tour is good, but should not be limited to writers; have great writers, but also other vets who are good writers who don't yet have a book out

Grant Writing Update

- Mark: in process of writing general funds grant to Arca Foundation; they normally donate \$20k; a little bit more work before sending to Michael, then will send to Rhonda who will send to Arca on their website; they don't accept applications for another two and a half months; once we send it in, they will come back with decision sometime in December; Helen Jaccard will continue writing grants for GR, have received a few from what she's written; this current grant I'm writing, I look at it as being a boiler plate, once we get this application in, then it will be a lot easier to write applications for a number of other foundations; important to go through this process now
 - o Barry: has anyone talked to reps at Arca one-on-one to introduce VFP
 - Mark: confirms they have not done so; Jim Driscoll is encouraging us to do that, and not too late for us to do so; have time tomorrow to try and call them to get that discussion going; Barry confirms he will also call them
 - Barry: Helen got back to us with helpful info on writing grants; Puget Sound Foundation generally tries to fund local folks, but we can make strong case that could fulfill their requirements; when is Magic Pebbles Foundation period open again? They made it clear to us that it would be easy to apply again, should keep eyes open; Barry talked to them a couple of times and they are interested especially in GR; max they give is \$20k, we received \$10k; who is doing research on these other foundations? We have all kinds of projects for funding; is Diane working on trying to identify foundations? Any feedback from her?
 - Mark: we do have quite a number of possibilities; the trick is to develop a really good case to be able to prove in a concrete way what we have accomplished and why we need funding to accomplish it more; will take some time between Michael and I to go over Arca's questions and how to frame our answers; this whole process takes time
 - Barry: as you get applications done, send them to Rhonda, she has a good handle on these things
 - Mark: Rhonda doesn't have the perspective on how we need to frame our language and where we need the money the most

Membership Committee

- Kourtney briefs the meeting on committee attempts to hold a Skype call; unable to hold the call, will use the VFP conference line instead of Skype; Tarak offered good feedback on the proposed agenda; Nate Goldshlag can work out Skype issues if necessary; Kourtney won't be able to organize call until June 7 or later; committee is discussing

which actions and delegations will attract more veterans for membership; not much to report until we hold a call

Project RENEW update

- Mark: Gerry and I emailed and agreed that Gerry would write the first draft to update the membership and email it to me
 - o Gerry: correct, have not done that, apologies, will get it done; important for membership to be updated on where we stand with fiscal sponsorship; many of us felt we needed closure on this rather than keeping the door open with controversy still going even without an actual grant coming; premature to say we are closing the door completely; will get a letter drafted and send it to Mark tomorrow; fairly simple, though how do we say we want closure but don't want to close the door; let members know that no grant has been offered to Project RENEW and Chuck Searcy doesn't believe it will happen
 - o Mark: but Palazzo doesn't want to give it up; he was one of the main characters of this; if we were going to be fiduciary, Palazzo would give us quarterly accounting of activities with the grant funds; if he is willing to do this, then it is still breathing
 - o Gerry: among other issues, since I am busy with other things, may leave this to Mark and the others, role may be seen as questionable
 - o Michael: no one will know that Gerry wrote the update to the membership
 - o Gerry: essentially don't have time since dealing with Golden Rule among other tasks; other people can write this as well as I could
 - o Barry: why don't Mark draft something up, Tarak can review the draft; Palazzo is interested in staying in and would be a bookkeeper; but the real manager is Searcy, he's the international advisor to the committee; really revolves around Searcy; if Searcy pulls out, then I don't see how this could go forward, but don't have to bring that to the attention of the membership; we gave up on pursuing this because there's no money coming to RENEW; we're still in limbo, don't need to say much more than that

Sam's Ride For Peace update

- John: had a great launch from NC State bell tower in Raleigh; Sam's wife, two kids and four students rode with other supporters; briefing on three day rides; two vehicle malfunctions and a rider was bit by a dog; this morning we had a big rain and converged on Richmond NC; dramatic location at Virginia Commonwealth University, had big event there; have a program tomorrow at 11am, will continue on through several cities to DC on Saturday May 21st

Lobby Days event update

- Michael: Monday and Tuesday next week; Tuesday morning will be a training in the morning at FCNL; that afternoon we will lobby; will also lobby on Wednesday; have about twenty people coming to DC, a number of them are with Deported Veterans campaign; we will be targeting and lobbying about Agent Orange bill in the House; we

will be trying to talk to Senators since they need a companion bill in the Senate; talk to Senators John McCain, Claire McCaskill, and Patrick Leahy; also talking about nuclear weapons and using the progressive caucus people's budget as a template; also allows us to talk about NDAA to some extent; being debated in the House this week, and in the Senate next week; a number of chapters around the country will visit local congressional offices; we will put out press release about our participating in Nader event, Lobby Days, and Memorial Day Full Disclosure; also reached out to chapters to find out what they are doing for Lobby Days; have developed some leave behinds; also have some rooms that Barbara Lee got for us on Capital Hill; after FCNL, we will have people gather in that room for debriefing; the next day is the same thing, meet at that room in the morning and then debrief; Barry and Michael can't lobby because of MC-ing for Nader event; on the first day we will decide who will lead the delegation; people may decide they don't need to lobby second day and instead attend Nader event

- Gerry: glad to see there's a way for people who can't make it to DC to participate in Lobby Days locally; is there another level with individual members contacting reps and providing info about those bills we are supporting
- Michael: we will send out e-blast to members and supporters to ask them to contact reps; vets call and talk about issues, supporters call and support VFP
- Barry: Marjorie Cohn will meet with congress person regarding Agent Orange on Saturday

BDS Support Update

- Tarak: don't think we can lead on this issue, but we can support Jewish Voice For Peace, CODEPINK, BDS Movement; can update board on their activities and the Board can support; don't need to create our own campaign; may create a VFP support banner at their events, a statement that gives more of an impression; would be available through the office; also please make sure to wear the shirts at the convention
 - Gerry: good to have an occasional regular BDS update on the website and weekly e-blast so people can see what kind of campaigns are out there that they can plug into; Tarak to provide info to Shelly

U.S. Peace Delegation to Syria

- Gerry: approved by Syrian Embassy; ten member delegation from various peace orgs in the U.S.; going to have conference call this coming Sunday to discuss timing and itinerary; thinking about the last two weeks of June; will be a five day visit to Syria; primarily to Damascus area; seven days with travel; happens to be a fairly good time for me as far as taking time off from GR, coinciding with their long voyage from Columbia River up the Washington Coast; cost may end up being closer to \$2000 each for Gerry and Monique to attend; Michael suggested we do special outreach to major donors to fund that trip so we don't drain our travel outreach fund
- Monique: looking forward to conference call Saturday; working on passport and visa issues; Albuquerque chapter is aware of trip, have solicited chapter monetary support, feel positive they will contribute

Office Staff update

- Michael: Virginia will be leaving the staff at the end of June, will be retiring; staff will meet tomorrow on how to reorganize the office; towards beginning of June we will put job announcement out to fill her position; trying to move things around, do some things different, will update Board
- Mark: as a Board we should think about giving her a gift after her 8 years of service to VFP; would be more personal for each of us to consider sending her a card; need to let her know we appreciate her

Awards

- Joey: have received 8 nominations for awards; there are three awards – Lifetime Achievement, Stewardship For Peace, and Leadership For Peace; have received noms for all of those in last few days; committee is Joey, Barry and Patrick McCann
 - o Gerry: self-nominating? Joey confirms no self-nominating for awards
 - o Barry: any tradition or custom to entertain noms for Board members? Or only for members? Joey confirms that a Board member has been nominated
 - o Michael: don't remember last time a sitting Board members was given an award; Joey confirms he also does not know when that last happened
 - o Joey: don't think there's anything against it; I'm not against it, no prohibition against it, the committee will chat about it
 - o Barry: something Board members may want to consider; the danger is that it looks so insular; the membership may feel like they are on the outside; doesn't sit well with me as far as policy; not a very good idea, sets a bad tone; others may be well-deserving, should look outside of ourselves
 - o Gerry: feel the same way about it
 - o Board agrees in general to avoid nominating sitting Board members for VFP awards at the convention

Bylaws/Resolutions update

- Joey: Michael put in bylaws change last year to vote online; pretty good time to do it this year, so we can get it over to Bylaws/Resolutions committee; Michael will talk with Joey about proposing the resolution

Additional Discussions

Tarak: Ann Wright when in Germany made contact with a group there of veterans and active duty who are on board with VFP issues, especially concerning Ramstein Air Base which is core of U.S. drone operations; have been communicating with Captain Florian King, they invited us to come to their meeting on November 11-13; exact same dates as event in London; possibility of allying and creating solidarity with German vets and active duty, could be powerful especially with our drone campaign; interested in helping us organize something; main purpose would be to establish working solidarity with them; Tarak and Ellen are thinking about going, will be in Germany at that time any way for other event; have sent info to Board before; it's about organizing combined protest at Ramstein; possible VFP Germany org can be established, similar

to UK chapter; will send out info to Board again and looking for ideas on proceeding and building this effort, need Board enthusiasm

- Barry: met German captain at Manning event in Germany; language barrier is a challenge; briefs on several contacts, possibility of establishing German chapter
- Tarak: will send info to Board again; establish solidarity and contacts, more powerful anti-war movement; Ellen speaks German and has radical friends in Germany
- Barry: will send Tarak the contact info for two German vets, can put them in touch with each other and establish contact
- John: German constitution has right to conscientious objection; some German youth has signed up as CO; should be celebrated and publicized; John to send info to Tarak for Peace In Our Times inclusion
- Barry: Peace Abbey provided CO sign-up book; could be a project of VFP for chapters

Barry adjourns the meeting at 8:13 PM EST

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, June 28, 2016

Present on the call:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Mitchell, Secretary
Willie Hager
Monique Salhalb
Brian Trautman
Tarak Kauff
John Heuer
Dan Shea
Tom Palumbo
Nicole Waybright

Excused from the call:

Joey King

Important information underlined.

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry Ladendorf chairs the meeting.
Barry convenes the meeting at 6:13 PM EDT

Agenda Review

- Barry briefs the meeting on the agenda
- Additions to agenda:
 - o Tom: Bylaws Committee report

Tom: suggests the meeting enters Executive Session; Barry agrees. Board agrees.

The meeting enters closed Executive Session.

The meeting exits Executive Session.

Project RENEW/USAID Update

- Barry briefs the meeting on past board decisions to become fiscal sponsor of Project RENEW grant from USAID; in the last year and a half there has been no movement to get the money funded; all but a few million dollars of the fund has already been disbursed to other projects, and the province where Project RENEW works – Quan Tri – has not been added to the list of recipients; Chuck Searcy stated that they were so

frustrated with process that they did not submit a concept paper and Chuck is of opinion that no money would be coming to RENEW; would have to find another fiscal sponsor; VFP Excom discussed this and it is our opinion that we should not agree to be fiscal sponsor for any reason for Project RENEW

- Barry opens for discussion
 - o Tarak: totally understand us pulling out of any willingness to be fiscal sponsor with USAID as the grantor; but don't understand why we would now go back on our 12-0 vote to be a general fiscal sponsor; there may be some other reason to be fiscal sponsor; in favor of backing out of the USAID fiscal sponsorship, but what's the rationale for the backing out of the original vote
 - Barry: their situation in Vietnam 160 as conduit for most of the activity that goes on, Chuck Searcy as their international representative for Project RENEW; they don't think they have the capacity to handle any kind of monies at this time; they need to handle this issue, get themselves organized and deal with the tours in Vietnam; they are not prepared to take on additional financial burdens; if Searcy is saying they need another fiscal sponsor to handle their work, so if he's not going to have anything to do with it, then it doesn't make sense that we should be involved any further; adding more fiscal responsibility to them after this disaster doesn't make sense
 - Tarak: under the impression that it would be VFP National in the U.S. that would be the fiscal sponsor; if that's not the case, then I understand
 - Barry: I think that's right, we would be the fiscal sponsor; but we are not going to go over there and oversee projects and divvy out money; Searcy would handle that
 - Michael: do we have to oversee money that is donated to RENEW, or can we trust them to handle it
 - Barry: wouldn't give them donations unless we have people there to make sure the work is done right
 - Dan: people can make donations directly to RENEW which they already have ways to do that; relieve us of responsibility
 - Gerry: it sounds like on the face of it that RENEW is being punished somewhat indirectly because of member's actions; uncomfortable with this; USAID was a sticky issue in VFP, and to have these two decisions pulled in together is a little obscuring in a way; agreed with Excom recommendations but now questioning one of them; the decision not to be a fiscal sponsor for USAID grant is a separate issue than this stolen money; before it was revealed that money was stolen, Searcy had already stated that he was no longer confident that any money would be received in his lifetime; removing ourselves from being fiscal sponsor of RENEW, maybe we should look at it again and clarify it; not convinced that the stolen money should result in removing ourselves as fiscal sponsor of RENEW; by implication, it holds them accountable for something they had nothing to do with

- Tarak: sympathetic to what Gerry is bringing up; two separate issues; it's clear why we are backing out of our decision to be fiscal sponsor for USAID; the other vote is for general fiscal sponsorship; be willing to be very clear why we are going back on that unanimous vote; that should take a little bit more time; not sure that is wise to do at the same time as the other issues; have to convey this to the membership at large; need clear and accurate reasons; don't want to tie it in right now to what happened with member
 - Barry: don't see it as a punishment to RENEW; they have all kinds of fiscal sponsors on other projects; we were interested in USAID but first we have to agree to be a fiscal sponsor so we agreed; the process involved getting a presentation in 2015, then deciding to be fiscal sponsor, then deciding on USAID
 - Michael: if Searcy is feeling that if money is sent and the people there feel responsible and worried about our oversight, unless we are willing to put something in place for accountability, then it's probably best we don't do that; but support RENEW as best we can without being fiscal sponsor
 - Tarak: who is going to present this information to the membership and when will it be done; is there a committee; will the board take a vote on the Excom decision
 - Barry: would like to take a vote; and the Implementation Committee with Gerry can draft a letter and get comments from the Board and then send out
 - Michael: don't see how we can separate the stolen money from this; the reason why this is happening is because of the stolen money; not really making the decision separately; we have to tell the whole story; that is the Board's responsibility, I think the Excom has to put together the whole story
 - Tarak: we are not being asked to do anything with fiscal sponsorship right now; we can do what people want right now, and we can communicate that concerning Project RENEW
 - Michael; nothing has changed about status of RENEW getting money from USAID other than member stealing money
 - Mark: VFP has lost its capacity to monitor what is going on in Vietnam; our original unanimous vote for fiscal sponsorship of RENEW was based on knowing that Chapter 160 was keeping close eye on money; now we don't have that, the chapter is torn apart for a while, that capacity is lost; very important that we follow Searcy's statement that we should get out of it
- Barry: we could have a clear vote on being fiscal sponsor
 - Gerry: would prefer to have two votes; USAID issue has its own dynamics and needs its own explanation, don't fold it in; agree we should vote, but separate them

- Barry: if we say we are not going to be fiscal sponsor of RENEW, that says it all; we can explain about USAID in the statement on the decision
- Tarak: we need a rationale, and it's that because we don't have the capacity because of stolen money; would like to see this cleared up; confuses the issue when we lump them together, and if we do, we have to mention member
- Further discussion on how to clarify the message to the membership
- **Mark: motion to not be fiscal sponsor for Project RENEW beginning henceforth**
 - Barry clarifies that if we vote to not have fiscal sponsorship, then we cannot be fiscal sponsor for any of their activities
 - Gerry: go in reverse order; vote on fiscal sponsorship for USAID first, and then vote on RENEW fiscal sponsorship; they were separate issues when we dealt with them, and we can do this separately also
 - **Mark agrees to withdraw his motion**
 - **Gerry motions that VFP will no longer be willing to serve as fiscal sponsor for funds from USAID to Project RENEW**
 - **Barry calls for roll call:**
 - **Barry: yes**
 - **Gerry: yes**
 - **Mark: yes**
 - **Kourtney: yes**
 - **Monique: yes**
 - **Willie: yes**
 - **Tom: yes**
 - **Brian: yes**
 - **John: yes**
 - **Dan: yes**
 - **Nicole: abstain**
 - **Tarak: yes**
 - **motion carries 11 in support; one abstain**
- **Mark: motion that VFP does not be fiscal sponsor for Project RENEW; Gerry seconds the motion**
 - **Barry calls for roll call vote:**
 - **Barry: yes**
 - **Gerry: yes**
 - **Mark: yes**
 - **Kourtney: yes**
 - **Monique: yes**
 - **Willie: abstain**
 - **Tom: yes**
 - **Brian: yes**
 - **John: yes**
 - **Dan: no**
 - **Nicole: abstain**
 - **Tarak: no**

- **Motion carries with 8 in support; two in disapproval; two abstaining**

Barry offers to forego rest of agenda and suggests holding a second board call later this week or next week

- Board discussion on scheduling the next call
- Barry agrees to continue current call with agenda

Michael office and financial updates

- Shelly will be taking Virginia's place as Office Manager; the Board has to vote that Virginia is leaving and Shelly is taking her place and Shelly is authorized access for VFP's bank accounts; Michael needs copy of that vote in the minutes and an officer of the Board has to sign it and Michael can take it to the bank
 - **Willie: motion to approve Shelly Rockett, VFP staff member, to have access to VFP banking accounts as the new Office Manager upon retirement of Virginia Druhe; motion seconded**
 - **Barry calls for vote: unanimous approval of motion**
 - Barry inquires to Michael about access to accounts
 - Michael: we are set up so that a person could not embezzle funds over time; Michael checks transactions and Virginia looks at what Michael authorizes, and Mark as the Treasurer also checks accounts; so we have four different eyes on the accounts; only way money could be stolen is if staff are planning it, but we still have accountant and Treasurer checking accounts; and we have a yearly review of the accounts
 - Barry: Kourtney could sign the minutes and forward to Michael; Michael confirms this is true
- Michael: we received from information on our stock investments; stocks are with Edward Jones, and those stocks are currently going down; but our advisor says that we should sell some stocks because they are losing value; we should develop some policy on when ED should make these decisions and who to notify for approval
 - Barry: has the trend line been going down for some time, or is it related to Britain exit from EU
 - Michael: we recently received this, our advisor told us that it's only \$1500 but we don't want to lose any more of it; it was a donation so it would go into our general fund account
 - Gerry: would not want to leave Michael/ED making these decisions by himself; so maybe bring it to Excom for additional input
 - **Barry: call for opposition to Michael's proposal to sell the relevant stock before losing more money on the stock; Barry agrees Michael can make the decision on good consultation with advisor; for later purposes, at minimum the Treasurer and maybe the Excom should be informed**
 - **No opposition, the Board authorizes Michael as the Executive Director to sell the relevant stock to avoid financial loss**

U.S. Peace Delegation to Syria

- Gerry: the trip to Syria is happening last week of July; National VFP has purchased the flight ticket for Gerry; going to be a good delegation; will have meetings with Syrian Embassy, access to many orgs and even various opposition forces in Syria; having a good process going with regular meetings with the entire delegation and preparing for an effective delegation;
- Monique: unfortunately, will not be joining Gerry; missed documentation deadline for the trip, as well as personal issues; Gerry will represent VFP well
- Barry clarifies that funds for Gerry's participation in the delegation was authorized at previous VFP Board meeting
- Gerry: flight ticket was around \$800; hoping additional costs are minimum
- Tarak: reminds that Gerry is eligible for the Outreach fund for this travel
- Gerry will come back to the Board if additional guidance is necessary; clarify that there is a committee to handle request from the Outreach Fund

Convention Committee update

- Barry: Sunday night event will be a musical event; working on Monday closing plenaries; the U.S. Peace Memorial Foundation is awarding the 2016 Peace Prize to VFP; they want to make a presentation at the convention; they have requested to keep this confidential to the membership because there were other orgs considered and they don't want the winner to be leaked before the convention; they have asked for around four minutes to make presentation at banquet; Michael and Barry will submit written statement for inclusion on their website
- Gerry: update on Friday night event and issues of inclusion and panel being all white?
 - o Barry: committee decided that the panel will stay as is; black activist female from Bay area will moderate the panel; Michael will do the introductions
 - Michael: also trying to get a spoken word performer for opening entertainment
 - Barry: Michael, Paul Cox and Barry wrote statement outlining the event and will go out to panelists
 - o Monique: as a queer person, will there be any acknowledgement of Orlando events, community sentiments, responding to violence; the convention is in Berkeley which is one of the most diverse places in the nation
 - Michael: sent out to the board ideas that we need to include LGBTQ concerns in the convention; not sure if there is a workshop or caucus for folks to meet there; will keep sending it out but so far no one has come forth to help plan it; want to have a Muslim person and a LGBTQ member address issues of diversity; there is a local chapter member who is a gay male veteran Hispanic member who could help address diversity; looking into having LGBTQ plenary participant; one of the issues will be militarization of the police and a speaker will be the mother of a transgender woman who was killed by police; also looking for LGBTQ speaker at the banquet
 - o Dan: there is a woman in Berkeley area who is a Japanese refugee and is doing her Ph.D. in ethnic issues and is part of the queer community; possible for inclusion at the convention

- Michael: may need some help at the Sunday night concert; want three or four organizations, preferably LGBTQ, Muslim, Black Lives, and anti-violence against women; want to find an org to cosponsor and help us promote the concert; trying to find an act to represent the community with each org; and the intersections with war; Dan to speak with Michael
- Tarak: will put something in PIOT three weeks before convention from Denny, a short write-up of the convention; he mentions six speakers in his write-up, and they are all white; Michael to give Tarak names of other speakers for inclusion in PIOT; has anyone reached out to co-founders of Oakland BLM for inclusion at convention
 - Michael: did reach out to BLM and got a response but they said they would get back to me; haven't really gotten much more response; should have looked for a second or third person because they are busy

Travel assistance to convention for Post 911 Veterans

- Tarak: the fund started with \$5000; last year we raised over ten grand that went to over 60 young veterans to help them attend; in the last few days, Tarak put out appeal for funds and we received \$2000 more with more coming in; estimating that we will need a total of around \$10,750; Doug Zachary has promised \$1500 donation of his own money; there is also a \$5000 fund for female and POC veterans; right now we have sixteen young veterans who have requested assistance; the letter was only sent out a few days ago; right now we have a total of \$8500; we may have to come to the Board to make up the additional need; when these folks come to the convention, it makes them want to stay; Tarak will personally thank each donor with phone calls
 - Barry: clarity on POC/women's veterans fund
 - Tarak: message from Doug Zachary stating that he has brought in a \$5000 donation for POC and female members to attend convention
 - Michael clarifies recent update to Board regarding Doug raising the money for that fund, the monies are with National
 - Mark: clarity on how funds are distributed to members requesting
 - Tarak: brief on how deciding the costs of the flights and considering housing; generally providing 70-90% of their travel costs; National sends the check
 - Mark: what keeps the recipient from deciding they don't want to go and keeping the check
 - Tarak: we advise them to please remit the funds if they do not attend after receiving the funds; we have gotten the money back from everyone who previously said they cannot attend
 - Mark: how do we follow through with who attended
 - Tarak: we keep a list and cross-check it with registration at the convention

Barry briefs on Wednesday evening event in San Francisco week of convention

- Michael to check on housing and meeting info for Board members Tuesday and Wednesday night, board meeting Thursday night
- Barry to check on transportation from Berkeley campus to SF Veterans Center

Gerry gives generally positive remarks on Golden Rule activities and will give further updates at next scheduled Board meeting call, Wednesday, July 6

Veterans Challenge Islamophobia update

- Michael: we hired staff in D.C., NY/NJ, Phoenix, Dallas, Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill, and looking to hire staff in Atlanta and Nashville area; have done a number of actions around the country; organizing a press conference in Cleveland ahead of RNC convention with allies of the Muslim community; hoping that LGBTQ community will also be a part of that; also doing that with a church organization; initiated coordination with IVAW and Beyond The Choir; Brian Trautman to act as convener of the coordinating committee; intensifying coordination as election cycle heats up, trainings with Common Justice; working to organize public speaking with campaign staff and VFP members; Nate Taurani going to Vietnam Veterans of America convention; tomorrow will be on call with major funder with department which handles Islamophobia; the organizations they fund will be on that call as long as another veterans initiatives; talk about our work and how to plug in with each other; at some point will move Jim Driscoll out of being coordinator and Michael will move into that role, and Jim will do more direct fundraising; \$5000 grant from Proteus fund; we need to explain during business meeting and during the plenary on why we are doing this campaign and the importance of it; connections to racism
 - o Tarak: will Jim fundraise for VCI or just for VFP in general; Michel confirms Jim will raise funds for VFP in general
 - o Gerry: is Trump still a primary target or are there other foci
 - Michael: Beyond The Choir and IVAW are focused on Trump, and a lot of young veterans want to do that; the VCI campaign gets conflated and people see the Trump stuff in the news; but the news reports on Trump actions, not on our other actions; we have to do a better job of informing everyone of all the different things we are doing; get organizers more focused on meeting with other specific orgs, so advocate for that with the new coordinating committee; our staff member in NY/NJ is working with chapter 21 and with a group of Muslims who want to open a mosque and who are getting pushback from community members; not in the news, but it's work being done

Nader Breaking Through Power conference

- Barry: great experience, very worthwhile; got new members from event, and handed out lots of literature; will likely be repeated sometime in the fall

Barry adjourns the call at 8:57 PM EDT

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, July 27, 2016

Present on the call:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Kourtney Andar, Secretary
Brian Trautman
Joey King
Tarak Kauff
Monique Salhab
John Heuer
Dan Shea

Excused from the call:

Gerry Condon, Vice President
Willie Hager
Tom Palumbo

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry Ladendorf chairs the meeting.
Barry convenes the meeting at 6:04 PM EDT

Agenda Review

- Barry briefs the meeting on the agenda
- No additions to agenda at this time

Nomination to fill vacant Board position

- Barry: have 8 candidates to run for Board during election cycle; Nicole Waybright resigned from Board; if we don't appoint anyone, we could go as long as eight months with a vacant slot; Jason Cardenas has been on the Board and was a hard worker and served on Membership and Development committees; experience as grant writer; Hispanic male, Army post 9-11 veteran; had to leave his initial position to take care of PTSD issues at residential VA program; member of San Diego chapter; **Barry puts the name of Jason Cardenas forward as an appointment on the Board to fill the remaining year and a half of Nicole's term**
 - o Barry opens for discussion
 - o Dan: I strongly support having Jason on the Board; he has already been vetted, he's an excellent choice
 - o **Barry asks for opposition to his appointment**

- **Board votes 9-0-0 to approve Barry's appointment of Jason Cardenas to fill vacant Board slot left by resignation of Nicole Waybright**
- Michael: we should announce that Nicole is no longer on the Board and thank her for service, and announce Jason's appointment to Board
- Barry: we should include both announcements at the same time

2016 VFP Convention update

- Barry: still trying to nail down Monday night event; have a Board meeting on Thursday, and Board members should come in on Wednesday and attend the event at the Vets Center in SF
 - Tarak: not wild about Pat Scanlon's singing and his songs; would request we don't have him add a few songs to fill time at the Wednesday night event
 - Barry: members have expressed enthusiastic support for his songs and music, were in favor of his video project
 - John: will Pat's video "Extremist For Peace" be ready for display at the event?
 - Barry: he's hoping it will be, that's the plan; maybe he will be able to play it at the banquet program
 - John: clarify on availability of housing for Board members on Tuesday
 - Barry: dorms available Wednesday, not Tuesday; do know of alternative housing that was for Ben Griffin and his guests, it's now open and may be available; check with Denny Riley; another couple a few blocks from campus have offered rooms as well
 - Joey: clarify on procedure for arriving and securing rooms
 - Michael: we ask Board members to pay what they can; talk to Shelly about the dorm room availability and let us know; everyone needs to register for the convention and for rooms; we have dorms on the 10th and then we will have to move after that, to the suites on the 11th; no dorms available after the convention; will send out notifications again to Board via email

BOARD DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS FOR 2016

Resolution 2016-01: Use of Phrase "Military Service"

- Barry: reads resolution aloud and explains rationale for Excom decision not to support this resolution
 - Barry opens for discussion
 - Joey: agree with Excom analysis; sounds like thought police; anti-1st amendment; can't tell people what to think or what to say
 - **Barry calls for disagreement to Excom decision**
 - **No opposition; Board votes 9-0-0 to not support Resolution 2016-01**

Resolution 2016-02: Normalization of United States-Iran Relations

- Barry: briefs the Board on resolution, reads "Resolved" sections; reminds Board that author presented climbing expedition plans at a past Board meeting; explains rationale

for Board not agreeing with certain language, Michael contacted author and he agreed to update the language

- **Barry opens for discussion; no discussion**
- **Barry calls for opposition; no opposition; Board votes 9-0-0 to support resolution 2016-02 with the amended changes**

Resolution 2016-03: For A Just Resolution of the War in Syria

- Barry: briefs the Board on resolution, reads aloud “Resolved” sections
 - Michael: Gerry was concerned with where Andy Berman, the author, was coming from since he has been banned on VFP list serves because of his posts on Syria war; Gerry agreed to draft alternative resolution and present to Berman; a lot of this we liked, except for use of “simplistic slogans” and lack of call for U.S. withdrawal
 - Tarak: disagrees with language concerning Assad and Russia and “well-documented war crimes” portion; needs to be more general without naming names; many sides to this; this will turn quite a few people off; also agree with Excom regarding the “simplistic slogans” statement
 - John: problem with Andy Berman trying to paint Assad as a well-documented war criminal; unproven assertions and allegations and then claiming them as facts; paints resolution in a negative way and should be rejected
 - Joey: it’s a U.N. allegation, not a U.S. allegation
 - Michael: don’t think we need to debate this resolution; Excom already doesn’t like parts and need revisions; pretty sure Andy Berman will not approve changes; do we want this to be the only resolution on Syria put forward at business meeting; it could pass at convention since it’s the only Syria resolution; we need to come up with a resolution that makes sense for VFP to pass and we can promote afterward
 - Barry: can we as the Board draft a resolution after deadline and present to convention
 - John: two factors we should consider in drafting a resolution; one is based on Gerry’s findings during his visit to Syria on U.S fomenting refugee crisis
 - Barry: I can contact Gerry and see if he can start thinking about substitute resolution based on his info gathered on trip to Syria
 - Michael: #15 on resolutions protocols, allows Board to draft resolution
 - **Board votes 9-0-0 to not support Resolution 2016-03 with the intent to draft alternative resolution**

Resolution 2016-04: Petition for a United Nations Peace Conversion Conference

- Michael: reads aloud “Resolved” portion of resolution; informs Board that Excom supports resolution
 - Tarak: don’t see anything in the form of a petition; does this mean petition will be created, and who will create it, and who will deliver to UN and other nations; you have to have something in order to sign
 - Michael: clarifies that the petition is the short paragraph in the resolution

- Tarak: has to be put in a petition form and put out by someone; don't see it doing much
- Michael: we would have to get in touch with author; decide whether or not Board wants to support such a petition and resolution
- Dan: likes the statement, but need to know who is doing it
- Joey: the problem is that it should not be a resolution; should just be a petition
- Michael: understood, but it's what we have before us; we can't stop it from going before the body; not sure if we want to vote this down; need to deal with this person about those issues; the question right now is do we agree or not
- Barry: my guess is that if we ask author what he wants, then he would say he wants VFP to do this
- Monique: he's putting forth that VFP would undertake this; if there are questions about this, I am happy to contact him and get clarification
- Joey: we had a policy maybe two years ago that we will not a resolution that mandates we do something
 - Michael: it does not do that; we told people to use terms such as "encourages" and "asks" and that's okay; the only thing we can say about that is that it asks us to endorse; this has been deemed as okay
- Brian: quick Google search, the petition is up on Roots Action without the VFP "Therefore" language; but is present and has been created by author and has almost two hundred signatures; not sure if this makes any difference
- Monique to contact author for clarification on who will deliver petition to UN and other nations
- Dan: he could withdraw the petition and offer a petition instead; Monique will include this question
- Michael: if his answers don't satisfy us, then we wouldn't endorse this?
- John: this a no-brainer for VFP, it's what we were looking for over 31 years
- Barry: my vote would be that in the way it is drafted I would endorse it
- Michael: if we are not going to endorse it, we need good reasons; the average member will read this and then vote for it; makes our no-vote look bad; it can't be because we think it should be done another way; just be real thoughtful; it looks like a half-assed veto; I'm hearing kind of flaky reasons right now not to endorse
- Barry: if we don't endorse it, we have to write the rationale for not endorsing
- Dan: disagree with Michael; on resolutions committee, we talked bout how resolutions are crafted; not clear what he wants us to do; we would write back to them and ask them to clarify; reasonable to reject resolution if it's not written clearly enough
- Tarak: didn't know this is an actually existing petition; if language is changed to reflect that VFP endorses petition by Roots Action; don't need the parts on circulation and deliver to UN and other nations, that's for the author to do; can be resolved by stating that VFP endorses the existing petition
 - **Barry calls for opposition to Tarak's approach; no opposition**

- Barry suggests for Monique to offer changed language when speaking to author
- Monique: agrees; put it out there to him and leave it open that he be not made to feel that we are completely rejecting his resolution

Resolution 2016-05: Climbers for Peace In Iran

- Barry: reads “Resolved” portion aloud; not asking us to provide financial support, just sponsor; effort to show solidarity between US and Iran and show both flags at the summit of the mountain; Excom voted to support
 - Barry opens for discussion
 - **John: propose immediate vote; Barry seconds**
 - **Barry calls for opposition; none heard**
 - **Board votes 9-0-0 to support Resolution 2016-05**
 - Michael: author reported receiving invitation for Iranian climb and he wants to update resolution to reflect that change
 - **Board agrees with resolution including changes**

Resolution 2016-06: Oppose US Policy of Using Antipersonnel Landmines in Korea

- Barry: reads resolution aloud; Excom supports
 - Barry opens for discussion; no discussion
 - **Barry calls for opposition; no opposition**
 - **Board votes 9-0-0 to support Resolution 2016-06**

Resolution 2016-07: Support Haitian People’s Demand for Free & Fair Elections

- Barry: a number of factual info that we didn’t know is correct; need to speak to author to verify facts
- Tarak: needs to be tightened up quite a bit; don’t need this short history with very strong opinion; it’s debatable
- Kourtney clarifies that Gerry agreed to contact the author; Monique agrees to contact the author if Gerry cannot due to his trip to Syria
- Barry clarifies whether or not Board will not support as currently written; we can vote no and inform author that we don’t have enough verification of facts and needs to be more direct and succinct
- **Barry proposes that we reject the resolution and advise the author of the reasoning**
- Dan: Haitian people have suffered so much; resolution should state that US should draw out of regime change efforts in Haiti; like the idea of the title, but would like to see it re-written and then re-introduced, not to just make it go away
- Monique: agree with Dan; if we are open to looking at resolution #4 for rewording, then not sure why not for this resolution
- Dan agrees to suggest changes to author and will send to Monique for review
- Tarak: what it needs is a good job of editing

Resolution 2016-08: Defend the Public Post Office

- Barry reads “Resolved” portion allowed; Excom did not support because we couldn’t determine a tie-in to VFP mission
 - Barry opens for discussion
 - Dan: postal workers do hire veterans as a priority; that is a connection, that our returning vets are able to find reasonable living wage; austerity is another tie-in; if he puts returning vets into resolution, that could work
 - Michael: made the same points; this resolution wasn’t really written in a way that brings up those issues
 - John: opportunity for friendly amendment to include vets hired by post office?
 - Mark: all government jobs offer advantage for veterans, not just the post office
 - Dan: with austerity looking at us in the face, they are eliminating jobs and putting more into poverty; in lieu of money going towards armament; we are trying to attract labor to take on our issues, it’s a great opportunity to let labor know that we support workers, many of them are vets and we want vets to maintain those jobs; important time to take a position on this
 - Kourtney: originally agreed with Excom decision not to support due to issues with tie-in to VFP mission; but convinced by arguments here concerning connection to military veterans and how it looks to oppose such a resolution in front of the membership; as long as strong tie-in to veterans can be made, then will support
 - Brian: was initially opposed, but after these concerns expressed, could support with revised language; long-term relationship between the post office and the veterans
 - Barry: agreed; initially opposed, but would vote in favor after hearing these arguments; but I think we could support it without changing the language, I now think it is good enough; language already mentions veteran postal workers
 - Joey: much to do about nothing; constitutional amendment, nothing we can do about it anyway
 - Barry: they can continue to do what they have done, and that is to continue to be funded; canceled services are picked up by private providers; post office 15% of their deliveries are what the other private companies cannot deliver because they don’t have offices there; don’t think we need the amendment, we’re not looking for a way to reject it
 - **Barry proposes to vote and support as written; Tarak seconds**
 - **Barry calls for opposition: Joey opposes**
 - Joey: doesn’t follow the mission statement; that original concern is valid
 - Barry: I’m persuaded by what Dan has said concerning seeking justice for veterans by providing employment and his other arguments, including union support and unions being natural allies
 - **Barry affirms; Board votes 8-1-0 to support Resolution 2016-08**

Resolution 2016-09: Asia-Pacific Pivot For Peace And Sustainable Democracy

- Barry: Excom voted unanimous to support; Barry reads aloud “Resolved” portion

- Barry opens for discussion; none
- **Barry calls for opposition; none**
- **Board votes 9-0-0 to support Resolution 2016-09**

Resolution 2016-10: Post 9/11 Veterans

- Barry: reads aloud “Resolved” portion
- Michael: we agreed to get clarification with the author since two “Whereas” statements seem to conflict; “this demographic” is ambiguous, not clear; the resolution names post 911 vets, but he mentions post-cold war vets generation; Michael spoke with author and offered suggested language change and the author agreed; at the Board meeting, we will be able to decide real quickly
- **Barry proposes to table pending discussion at Board meeting after completion of language changes; Board agrees**

Resolution 2016-11: Political Affiliations of Veterans For Peace

- Barry: reads aloud “Resolved” portion; Excom disagrees with resolution
- Several comments on disapproving of resolution from the Board
- Tarak agrees to write rationale for disapproving of resolution
- **Board votes 9-0-0 to not support Resolution 2016-10**

Resolution 2016-12: Resolution to Clarify VFP Mission and Priorities

- Barry reads aloud “Resolved” portion; Excom voted not to recommend
 - o Barry opens for discussion
 - o Michael: the absurdity of this is mind-boggling and the arrogance; how are you going to say fighting racism is not a worthy cause but then quote Dr. King; disconnect is totally incredible
 - o Dan: “peace at home” but forgot to mention peace abroad; doesn’t deal with the substance of what we are trying to do
 - o John: Michael’s comments would make a real succinct rationale for our rejection of this resolution; John agrees to write rationale for rejection
 - o **Board votes 9-0-0 to not recommend the Resolution 2016-12**

Resolution 2016-13: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Hezbollah

- Michael: the Excom felt that there were too many topics in one resolution; Michael contacted author and informed him he needs to separate the topics into several resolutions; the author agreed to submit by August 1st

Resolution: Support For An Independence Referendum In Northern Ireland and an All-Ireland Re-Unification Referendum

- Michael: reads aloud “Resolved” portion; Excom voted not to recommend; none of our business as US national VFP to call for these things when we already have chapters in the UK and Ireland and if it were something they were calling for, we could support, but we need more consultation

- Barry: our mission statement is to call on US government not to interfere and this calls for us to make recommendations in Ireland and England that has no bearing on our efforts here
- **Barry calls for vote**
- **Board votes 9-0-0 to not support Resolution 2016-15**

Resolution 2016-16: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Syria

- Barry reads resolution aloud
- **Barry calls for opposition; none heard**
- **Board votes 9-0-0 to support Resolution 2016-16**

DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS FOR 2016

2016 BL-1: Article II. Statement of Purpose

- Tarak: the change is simple from the original; Tarak briefs on changes; the rationale should be more inclusive of veterans who are not considered as having “served dutifully;” inclusive of international chapters and members
- Barry: Excom supported
- **Barry calls for opposition; no opposition heard**
- **Board votes 9-0-0 to support 2016 BL-1**

2016 BL-2: Article II. Statement of Purpose

- Joey: briefs on proposed change
- Barry: Excom did not support this change; oppressed people could find themselves with no choice but to protect themselves; we would not want to be in a position to be forced to say we cannot support their position
- Michael: UN recognizes self-defense which includes violent means; if UN is saying that they have right to self-defense, then I don't think we should condemn people who are defending against US invasion; we can call on them to use nonviolent means, but we cannot be forced to condemn them
- Barry: some peace makers over time have supported self-defense; did not want us to be boxed in on issues that can be fluid; we would not completely disavow our support of oppressed people
- Monique: supports this bylaw change; raises the bar with the org and chapters to step up to the challenge on how to approach situations and each other; even when we have our annual conventions, it's difficult for members to not become verbally insulting, and even on chat boards; having this language in there, it puts a subliminal shift in the psyche of our membership in how we approach things
- Mark: have a whole lot of trouble with this; it sounds like we are supporting Hamas to me; sounds like we are saying that we know Israel is a murderous bully, but it sounds like we are saying that self-defense might include violence; don't support violence in any fashion; does more harm and feeds into the violent machine; there are a lot of

Palestinians who are against Hamas and that Hamas creates more problems; support Joey's amendment

- Barry: Hamas is just a handy example; as an org, what we should do
- Kourtney: do not support this proposal for reasons of not wanting to completely disassociate with oppressed groups who have no choice but violent resistance; don't think a U.S. organization can rightfully make such a claim; understand that we cannot outright support violence, but every situation is different; would not want us to lose credibility and standing as a sophisticated political organization
- Dan: believe in self-defense, don't consider it violence; violence is aggressive, self-defense is not aggressive; we supported the years in Central America during revolution; the guerillas would definitely be considered violent, and they were an army; agree that I do not think it necessary for this change
- Michael: don't think it calls upon us to support people's choices to use violence; hindsight on violent acts such as slave rebellions would we say they should not have rebelled? Trail of Tears, some Natives had to stop fighting and go on the trail; there was no nonviolent resistance that was going to change white minds about Natives; the people of Haiti should not have thrown off Napoleon's army?; truly understand, and I don't call for violence; but we cannot put ourselves in a box; most of us have not really faced such oppression on that scale; we should think about what we are really saying
- John: go back to Blaise Fountaine as a priest who became a guerilla sympathizer and wrote a book about it; could be a good guide for us
- Barry: we can still offer nonviolent ways to solve problems; we just don't want to say that we don't want to be involved in resolving conflicts just because violence is chosen as self-defense; we will not join in the violence, but we will try to help find alternatives
- Tarak: we have every right to affirm how we are going to behave and address phenomena; we don't do that universally the same way; I may have to use a certain level of self-defense to protect a loved one; people have a deep understanding of things and there are no absolutes; also support Joey's and anyone's right to not use violence and to oppose violence; but I do not want to tell oppressed people that they cannot do what it takes to get the boot off their necks; 99% Palestinians are way above us with terms of nonviolence; this bylaw change smacks of religious intolerance and absolutism
- Barry clarifies the bylaw change and language
- **Barry calls for roll call vote:**
 - **Barry – no**
 - **Mark – yes**
 - **Kourtney – no**
 - **Brian – no**
 - **Joey – yes**
 - **Tarak – no**
 - **Monique – abstain**
 - **John – yes**
 - **Dan – no**
 - **Board votes 5-3-1 to not support 2016 BL-2**

2016 BL-3: Article III, Section 5. Restrict or expel from membership

- Barry briefs on bylaw change, reads aloud; informs Board that Excom supports
 - o **Barry calls for opposition; no opposition heard**
 - o **Board votes 9-0-0 to support 2016 BL-3**

2016 BL-4: Article X, Section 4(d). Resolutions

- Barry briefs on the proposed change
- Tarak: the grammar is incorrect on the new section 4d; Barry agrees
- Dan: did associate members already have the right to vote on resolutions
 - o Barry clarifies the language
- Barry: agrees with Tarak's proposed change to add clarifying language to 4d
- **Barry calls for opposition; no opposition heard**
- **Board votes 9-0-0 to support 2016 BL-4 with Tarak's proposed language clarification; Michael to check with resolution committee for changes**

2016 BL-5: Article XII, Section 4. Chapter dues

- Barry and Kourtney briefs on the proposed bylaw change
- Dan: clarification make it much clearer; no issue with this proposed change
- Tarak: agreed; full membership is not dependent on paying chapter dues
- Barry: Excom supported this
- **Barry calls for opposition; none heard**
- **Board votes 9-0-0 to support 2016 BL-5**

2016 BL-6 Addition: Article XV. Funding

- Barry reads aloud bylaw change
- John: we've already accepted funds from Soros foundation; this bylaw change should be moot
 - o Barry: they are talking about the future; just an example of an org that would be arguable
 - o Joey: sometimes hard to determine who is and who is not an acceptable org to accept funds from; disagreement on this
 - o Monique: we recognize where this is coming from on two levels; from USAID and also on Soros foundation for VCI; by accepting this bylaw change, it then leads to questioning if there will be a separate governing body who determines where to accept money for the org; vague language here; obviously the idea is to get money from reputable orgs; but it's nebulous in interpretation and if we need a separate governing body to determine
 - o Brian: agree with Monique; some orgs are obvious not to accept money from, but there is some ambiguity here; we've done terrific work with VCI; we would be cutting our noses off if we make a complete and total rejection on possible monies in the future from what perceived as vague set of criteria
 - o Dan: agree with Monique and Brian; it's a little vague; if we are rejecting, we can say we agree with the intent, we just need greater clarity

- Tarak: they will say that they have been very clear; they are putting us into a tight little box; can agree with the intention; think it was a right decision to apply for funds from USAID for Vietnam; so many sources could one way or another put into that little box; the key thing is that we should never have strings attached to money we take; we should never become dependent on money we take; certain principles to outline; if we take any money from any org, we have to be very clear that it is not quid pro quo; how did the Excom vote?
- Kourtney: Excom voted to support
- Barry: on its face, it's hard to disagree with; the problem is in interpreting what is "inconsistent" or "incompatible;" it gets down to judgment on the Board
- Tarak: in that case, according to this bylaw, there is no way we can take money from USAID or any US government org or the Soros Foundation, because their principles and motivations are opposed to our mission; the way this reads, it would shut out funding from US government entities, who are indeed criminal, and the Soros Foundation, which there was no strings attached to it, and we aren't planning on taking money from them again; I think this is a mistake
- Barry: Soros was funding anti-Islamophobia causes before us and that's what made us attractive to them because we are veterans; Open Society website states support for causes we would support; there are some things we may disagree with, but there's a lot we would agree with; I think the bylaw change is too constraining; takes away flexibility
- Dan: this also restricts us from demanding reparations; does this bylaw change mean we couldn't take that money?; we wouldn't be able to take any money from any capitalist organization that exists; puts us in a box; how to discuss this with the membership?
- Further discussion on current and future relationships with possible funders
- Mark: we should not allow ourselves to be boxed in; don't know why this would need to be a bylaw; seems we need a statement to guide future Board members to use discretion and be cautious when someone is offering us a chunk of money; they could possibly be trying to make us dependent on them; when we are writing grants we want to make sure the foundations are not able to manipulate us in some way; maybe it needs to be a bylaw, but maybe it's a policy of the Board for discretion
- Barry: we could support it, but in the rationale state that it still allows the Board to exercise its discretion; question on ambiguity
- **Kourtney: motion to vote on supporting proposed bylaw amendment**
- **Tarak seconds the motion**
- **Barry calls for roll call vote:**
 - **Barry: abstain**
 - **Mark: no**
 - **Kourtney: no**
 - **Brian: no**
 - **Joey: no**
 - **Monique: no**

- **Dan: no**
- **Tarak: no**
- **Board votes 7-0-1 to not support 2016 BL-6** (John Heuer exited call before vote)

Bylaw Addition: Article XII, Section 10: Chapter Annual Examination of Finances (later withdrawn by author)

- Barry reads bylaw change aloud
- Kourtney: Excom tabled this bylaw change
- Michael: we should have a more considered discussion on how to approach this; one person put this forth, not sure if it's appropriate for us
- Barry: no guidance in the bylaws as to when a certain auditing and reporting method is appropriate and when it is not; there is no threshold clarified to determine; "licensed accountant" is also ambiguous; reputable bookkeeper is a layman's term; sit down with finance chair and some folks from the Board to determine parameters
- Mark: one things we are trying to do is make it more difficult for money to be stolen; require any chapter with \$20k or more to have two signers to take money out of the account; would alleviate a lot of problems
- Joey: no penalty here if the chapter does not comply; agree with the sentiment, just not with how it is written
- Michael: this is what I mean about how there needs to be more considered discussion to address these issues; you can't stop people from stealing completely; but there can be a window to catch them; it does say something about additional policies and rules as we set them; our rationale for not supporting is that it needs more consideration so it fits our organization and our policies
- Mark: we need to put a deadline on when we are going to make this new proposal; to the membership, to our chapters, they need to know what rules should be followed to make it safer so we don't have any more thefts; afraid with everything that comes up every day that this will be lost in the swirl; suggesting a deadline
- Barry: such as the end of this year; can put Mark in charge of this as the finance committee chair
- Joey agrees to serve on the committee with Mark, Michael, Mark, and Barry will ask Garry Butterfield to join
- Joey suggest we include Paul Cox as well
- Barry asks for clarification to reject the proposed bylaw change
 - Dan suggests tabling instead
 - Barry: only if we take it up later; we either have to support it or not support it; the only way to justify support is that we say we are prepared to write a set of rules for Policy Manual to clarify
 - Michael: but it has specific things, calls on chapters to do one of a list of actions; don't know if every chapter even needs to do that if they don't have a lot of funds; do we write a clarification that says that chapters don't have to follow the bylaw? I will ask Paul to withdraw

- Barry: yes we should ask Paul to withdraw and we will instead put him on a committee to draft a better way to handle this
- **Board votes 9-0-0 to not support Bylaw Addition; recommends asking author to withdraw and join committee to draft guidelines and determine deadline**

Proposed statement updating membership on USAID/RENEW situation

- Barry: in conversation with Chuck Searcy; made some changes to the statement after that conversation; Barry reads aloud the proposed statement
- Tarak clarifies the two different votes; Kourtney confirms according to the official minutes
- Barry clarifies that we can look at this again in the future but as of right now the Board has agreed to not be a fiscal sponsor for RENEW
- Dan: RENEW didn't mishandle funds
 - Barry: it's based on our lack of confidence on the ground in Vietnam that they cannot handle funds at this moment

Barry adjourns the call at 9:38 PM EDT

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
31st Annual National Convention
Business Meeting
Clark Kerr Campus of University of California – Berkeley
Berkeley, California, USA
Saturday, August 13, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Andar, Secretary
Tom Palumbo
Monique Salhab
Brian Trautman
Joey King
Tarak Kauff
Dan Shea
Willie Hager
John Heuer

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry chairs the meeting
Barry convenes the meeting at 9:07 AM PDT

Agenda Review

Barry opening remarks

- Three pronged approach: membership, funding; our job as veterans is to wake up the public on what is happening to the country and the world; how to go about that, what's the message; we have to talk about the constitution being in shambles because of abuse of war powers; administrations and presidents continue to engage in endless wars without accountability; war powers clause hasn't been used since 1941 until now; AUMF is of no consequence, it's ignored; UN charter, Kellogg Briand Treaty, all ignored; hold reps accountable; have to bring the American people into the discussion
- The Golden Rule: there is no more tangible symbol against nuclear weapons than GR; thirty ports of call until November; demos against Trident nuclear submarine among other activities; integral part of VFP message; has interested people across the globe; San Diego chapter pledged \$100 per month to help support GR; make a commitment as a chapter; investment into us and our organization; keep the pressure on to eliminate nuclear weapons

- Peter, member, Chapter 56: representing the board and membership in a matching fund campaign; one campaign is for our parent organization, to recognize the incredible and inspiring work VFP does; we have proposed \$5000 matching fund, dollar for dollar; also have a second matching fund campaign and that's for the GR, \$4000; chapter was pleased to purchase a life raft that is now safely aboard the boat with the crew; any contributions to national and/or the GR, will be matched up to respective amount
- Barry introduces GR crew members and committee members
- Barry: draw attention to what we are doing by actions; campaign in Okinawa to shut down US bases; 12-member delegation last year that got lots of publicity; standing in front of base gates, blocking traffic, preventing construction of air base there; those people have been occupied since the end of WWII; we support pulling back the empire there; construction and exercise noise, sexual assaults, and more on the bases
- Another event that got our name out was Breaking Through Power conference with Ralph Nader in May 2016; Michael McPhearson and Barry presented at the conference; didn't get the kind of press coverage expected, but was streamed online through Democracy Now; third day in which we made our presentations, the screening numbers went up over the other days; many people who attended had never heard of VFP
- VCI – Veterans Challenge Islamophobia campaign is another way to get our name out; Michael saw the need for this before others did; this is what fuels the wars, creating enemies overseas and endless wars in Muslim nations; they are the perceived enemy of the US; easy to translate that into the Muslim Americans living in this country; we say no to this; if chapters are interested of getting involved in campaign, the staff is here to talk to them about it
- Barry: Peace In Our Times publication, best activist newspaper in the country
- Barry: newsletter being run by Doug Rawlings; a great source of information; lists chapter activities; drives us on the board to continue the struggle
- Barry: Traverse City chapter opposing Blue Angels air show; San Diego chapter began campaign to shut down air show at Miramar Air Base over a five-year campaign;
- Vietnam Full Disclosure: have to continue to speak up to challenge the narrative of the government
- Zinn Fund helps chapters if they have an innovative idea; provides funding to help with projects; Long Beach chapter received 2014 Zinn Fund grant to work with youth, created six peace groups throughout the community; young people built memorial dedicated to youth victims of war; they attend peace camps and talk to other kids about it
- Barry: we are picking up new members, especially younger veterans; represent VFP, wear your VFP gear, talk to people when they see your gear
- Barry: VFP is the only vets organization in the world that is an NGO and a seat at the UN; Ellen Barfield is our representative there; Barry sat through two-day forum on UN NGOs; we have four seats available; we can lobby the mission sites of all of these countries; we can have members go into those countries and ask them to support our goals

Vietnam Chapter 160 and Chuck Palazzo situation

- Barry briefs the meeting on the issues surrounding Chuck Palazzo's theft of funds from the chapter; asset search and litigation underway for this; Chuck responded by claiming to pay the money back by next year, not likely; this stolen money was donated to help the victims of Agent Orange and the Vietnam War, it was the work of the chapter

Board elections and nominations

- Four vacancies this year; have nine members running for the four open seats

Treasurer's Report – Mark Foreman (complete report available on VFP website)

- Mark briefs the meeting on the financial status of VFP; oversight of treasury is quite secure, watched over by four people – Michael, Mark, Shelly, and Angela Hudson of Davis & Associates; hired a CPA, Jeffery Randle, of Randle & Associates to do the end of year financial statement due before the end of the first quarter every year;
- Assets are currently more than ever; but not a whole lot more; Mark presents the specific numbers, displayed on screen during the meeting; Craigslist donating \$50k every year for the last four years; total revenue is increased \$50,716.31 over last year; expenses are decreased \$23,800.23 over last year; Michael's budget and approved by Board was conservative but it keeps the treasury safe; we are ahead of the game; we all hope this convention will make money and not lose money
 - o Michael and Mark briefs on recent grants for VCI campaign reflected in donation numbers
 - o Michael: what you should do is write into the grant what it takes to do work in the national office; there is the time of the staff and webmaster and others; we took 10% from VCI grant for that, as opposed to a grant coming through for a fiscal sponsor, which is different set of rules and is 8.5%; donations means from members, supporters, all donations
 - o Michael on Craigslist grants: thank Paul Cox for his relationship with Craig Newmark; Barry has talked with him several times, sent him the Our Work document; we don't know each year if we will get it; we did invite him to the convention
 - o Michael: anything donated to a project that goes through the national office, the office takes a fee for the work of the office for that project; we aren't trying to take money from the work
- Budget: member dues are \$13,810.80 less than budgeted; donations are \$66,206.26 more than budgeted; revenues are \$98,865.23 more than budgeted; expenses are \$42,687.75 less than budgeted
- Mark presents the list of special projects and donor designated funds
 - o Michael: list of projects for which VFP has attracted funds
 - o Michael answers member questions regarding source of VCI campaign grant award – Open Source Foundation, the foundation of George Soros

- Michael briefs on the creation and ideas behind the VCI campaign; we are not dependent on the money, we don't take money with strings attached; they didn't come to us; we were already going to do this campaign, and already had partial funding; initially received \$10,000 from Jane Fonda, and another \$10,000 from another source
- Member: why does Jeju delegation have zero balance, did they pay their own way?; clarification on VFP chapter 160 zero balance
 - Michael: \$201,000 of the Vietnam funds went through Chapter 69, not through the national office; the reason you see a zero there is because when money comes through to us, we just move it on out because we don't have to hold onto it if a chapter already has their own bank account; grantors may want to send funds through national office, and then we send to chapter; Chapter 69 and Chapter 160 went through their accounting process and found that all tours monies were accounted for; the big donations was for that; they were holding that money to see if there was a project worthy of these funds; they didn't want to spend it without being thoughtful about how to spend it; unfortunately a member who was responsible for overseeing the funds, actually stole the funds
 - Nadya Williams, Vietnam tours coordinator: briefs the meeting on stolen funds; national was aware, but ultimately Chapter 69 and Chapter 160 were responsible for those funds; didn't appear on national's books because the funds were donated for 160 and we were the conduit for all the funds for the tours; the money was stolen from the Vietnamese victims
 - Barry briefs on the committee formed to draft protocols and policies applicable to national and chapters to prevent any further theft of funds; not every template will work for each chapter; don't want an unbearable burden of reporting for chapters with fewer funds
- Michael answers member question regarding how funds are solicited for individual projects
 - Michael: we go through a process of what things as a national org we want to promote; the national office has to have a certain level of funding or else we won't exist; fundraising to the whole organization
 - Tarak: on Jeju delegation: for the most part, everyone paid their own way; we did create a fund for extra expenses, and we used all of that fund; chapters also contributed; we are doing the Jeju delegation
- Michael answers member questions regarding why projects with zero balance are included on projects list
 - Michael: zero balance means money was spent; this is not the budget, it's just a balance sheet
- Michael answers member question regarding negative balance for GR
 - Michael: that negative balance represents money for Helen Jaccard hire as staff for GR; the organizing committee has an account of their own, and they raise money for it, which we never see; that's been paying for

most of their operations; part of our responsibility to ensure it is operating, we need someone to look at it every day, so we provided national funds for that for Helen's pay; we need to do some fundraising for GR; that's really coming out of the national budget operations; we should probably should just have it as a line item in the national budget; we haven't yet figured it out

Membership Committee report – Kourtney Andar

- Kourtney briefs the convention on August membership numbers; recent committee meetings; plans to begin recruitment campaign; how to retain members and make VFP an organization that diverse members want to stay in; how to assist chapters with recruitment and provide materials; recent successful delegations to domestic and international activist events in solidarity; successful efforts to bring young veterans to convention for last three years; recently established several new chapters both in the States and international
- Member suggestions to track members by age range and at-large vs. chapters; trends based on age groupings

Executive Director report – Michael McPhearson

- Michael reads report and displays on-screen at the meeting; we have gained 19 associate members and lost one veteran member compared to August 2015
- Michael: communicating program goals, thanking associate members with a mailed letter
- Biggest concern is how the convention will play out financially; most years we are able to cover everything for the convention with fundraising; especially with the advertisement book, which is at \$13,000 and is very good; shout out to Becky Leunig who does the layout for the ad book
- Appeal letter will be sent out later this month; members tend to give more through mail than through online donations; possibly reflects the age of our membership; bridging the difference between how older and younger veterans do business and use the web; we have to continue to do the paper appeals; Chapter 56 matching donation program will be a part of the upcoming appeal
- Exploring idea of donor societies, legacy gifts, bequests; possible names include "Howard Zinn Community," "Peace Is Possible," etc
- Asking the board to make phone calls to thank top donors; using internet based software to track donors; engage members in national conference calls to gather info and give them info on VFP priorities of work
- End of year priorities include updating website; we aren't doing a major overhaul, but just making it responsive on different size screens and making it mobile friendly; hiring an administrative assistant; VCI campaign; continuing strategic planning, development and fundraising; the Our Work Case for Support document; staff reviews; programming budget; major donors; grant writing; and hiring interns in the national office

- Member requests a report on the attendance of this convention; Michael agrees
- Michael presents PowerPoint slideshow presentation given at Nader event Breaking Through Power, introducing VFP statement of purpose, and informational about org; talking about what we can do to build an international organization of veterans
- Peace Is Possible: we can't achieve peace unless we believe it's possible; have come a long way from slavery; if that history can happen, then we can do it too; it took everybody to do it, a struggle; the whole world is looking at this idea of human rights, freedom and dignity
- PAHPA: attendees at Breaking Through Power event understood PAHPA and believed it made sense; very encouraging
- Deported Veterans: no other vets organization is talking about deported veterans; we gave John McCain some information about it; he recognized previously received info from us and talked at the Lobby Days event with us
- Peace Stock: member briefs on event; reaching out to the community, educational event in Minnesota
- Michael presents Upcoming Events calendar as part of PowerPoint presentation
- Tarak briefs on RNC/DNC protest participation; banners received coverage on Democracy Now; Black Lives Matter protestors asked and wanted the VFP banner at the front of the march
- Michael: legislative priorities include relief for agent orange victims, supporting SANE Act, stop deporting veterans, stop VA privatization, reduce Pentagon budget
- Spokane Chapter Member briefs on groups Concerned Veterans of America; right-wing conservative group who aims to privatize the VA; dismantle VA and sell it to insurance; it's funded by the Koch brothers; staffed by former veterans; the group came to Spokane and held a meeting, and Spokane Chapter members disrupted the meeting
 - o Monique: they are active group; have billboards seemingly advertising better care for veterans; they are active on Facebook and Twitter
 - o Doug Rawlings, Member: Ann Jones will be addressing this issue as an investigative reporter
- Michael: comments on current tide of discontent as materialized by both Senator Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump in another way; we are framing the narrative, providing it to the public; education about the full costs of war and militarism; actions help us grow; in order for people to find out about those actions, it will take alternative media or other kinds of media; some people we are trying to reach don't watch alternative media, and mainstream media doesn't cover our actions; we have to go around it, and one way to do that is to go out and talk to people
- Three focus areas:
 - o education about full costs of war and militarism
 - Military Veterans' Voices For Peace
 - The Golden Rule
 - Before You Join
 - Vietnam Full Disclosure
 - o Resistance to U.S. Militarism
 - End current and prevent threatened wars

- Korea Peace Campaign, Okinawa chapter, Delegations to Okinawa and Jeju
 - Weaponized drones campaign
 - support war resisters and whistleblowers
- Healing and Peace Building
 - UN
 - Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility
- Michael: If there are areas of work that members believe is missing from this document, contact Michael; look at the document and study it, so we can become more focused; will help us with our fundraising; slideshow will be available on the website
- Tarak: the Peace In Our Times paper covers every issue we are concerned with; the writing is great, covers the issues well; study shows young people are still reading newspapers; it's a tool, every issue is covered; the Full Disclosure issue is good, can't read through it without crying; utilize this tool
- Michael addresses member question concerning possibility of working with Native American groups
 - Gerry: Golden Rule spent last week as an escort support boat for the indigenous canoe journey in the Salish Sea throughout the Northwest
- Michael presents war and discretionary spending chart as presented at Breaking Through Power conference; What We Are Up Against – Pentagon Budget vs VFP Budget
- Michael presents the Case For Support document; displays on-screen at the meeting
- Joe, Chapter 122 member: commend chapter 125 in Atlanta for putting in advertisement calling for help for Leonard Peltier; believe that this speaks directly to our second point of statement of purpose; would like to see more participation from VFP national in supporting the cause of Peltier; commend the chapter for also putting in ad for Chelsea Manning
- Jim Ryerson, LA chapter: lead four Cuban tours with VFP members; solidarity with Cuban veterans; meeting with Cubans who were in the revolutionary war in Cuba; will take a trip every month next year to Cuba; have been asked to form Havana, Cuba chapter for VFP
- Member: in London, VFP was asked to attend Remembrance Day commemoration and it was incredible; VFP UK chapter does it every year in Trafalgar Square, gets lots of coverage
- Doug Rawlings: Letters to the Wall, Vietnam Veterans Memorial; we just published 150 of the letters in a book, can get the book on the Full Disclosure website; very powerful read; would be excellent tool
- Fred Ptucha, Chapter 71, Santa Rosa: leading VFP peace climb in Iran in September of next year; Climbers For Peace; chapter has co-sponsored ten expeditions over last eight years; have climbed in Greece, Russia, Alaska, Denali; have a website for viewing; we have two people signed up who have joint Iranian-U.S. citizenship; invited by an official entity of the Iranian people; VFP is the lead sponsoring entity for the U.S.-Iranian peace climb

- Member, Chapter 27, Twin Cities, MN: hosting convention in 2018; we will address Native issues at the convention; we will be doing a tabling at a tribal pow-wow in the area; good outreach; will include info about Leonard Peltier at our table
- Ann Wright, Hawaii Chapter 113: we had three VFP members and several associate members and other Bay Area folks went to Russia in June, including several days in Crimea; met with WWII veterans and Afghanistan veterans; Ray McGovern was invited to speak at the commemoration of WWII in Crimea, speaks fluent Russian; we represented well; also had a Swim For Peace with WWII veterans
 - o Member: VFP statement of purpose doesn't really apply to veterans in Russia; IAWA should connect with Afghan vets there
- Michael: there is a resolution about PAHPA, but it speaks against the PAH part; have heard that VFP leadership is drifting from statement of purpose; I hope that what you saw in the documents that the work we are doing is clearly part of VFP's work; on website, there isn't anything there that isn't directly related to VFP work; hadn't heard such claims until we asked the membership to get involved in the Movement For Black Lives; the proposed resolution has the nerve to quote MLK while denouncing PAH; if we don't talk about war, keep eye on speaking against militarism and war, then who will?; we aren't trying to lead anything other than that; in order for us to be successful, we need everybody; have to work together, and that's all PAHPA is about
- Gerry: VFP is so blessed to have Michael McPhearson as our ED

Barry breaks the meeting for lunch at 12:12 PM PDT

Barry calls a closed meeting of the Board

Barry ends the closed meeting of the Board

Barry reconvenes the business meeting at 2:00 PM PDT

2016 PROPOSED BYLAWS AMENDMENTS ADVISORY VOTES

Barry briefs on bylaws policies

Barry calls for approval of the policies and rules for voting on bylaws

Membership votes approval for the policies and rules by verbal vote

Joey King and Tom Palumbo count and confirm advisory votes

2016 BL-01: Article II. Statement of Purpose

- Barry briefs the meeting on the proposed bylaw amendment
 - o Tarak comments on his proposed bylaw amendment; ran it by a number of members and they endorsed; we feel the SOP should be more inclusive; many vets don't consider themselves or wish to be labeled as "served dutifully;" many respectable members have various discharge levels and circumstances; not to

- exclude those who feel they respect their own service dutifully; more universal for international chapters
- Barry opens for discussion
 - No discussion
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **78 votes in favor**
 - **0 opposed**
 - **no abstentions**

2016 BL-02: Article II. Statement of Purpose

- Joey King briefs the meeting on his proposed bylaw amendment; question on if VFP can support organizations who may use violence in self-defense; don't think we can; UN charter authorizes defense; hard to define defense; the only case study on nonviolence found that nonviolence was twice as effective as violence
 - Kourtney reports to meeting that board does not support
 - Gerry gives the rationale for board decision not to support the amendment; we aren't a pacifist organization; we don't pass judgments; language of resolution applies that we are pacifist and pass judgment; puts a provision that could make our future relations and solidarity difficult and tricky; we already have a perfectly adequate pledge to act nonviolently as an organization
 - Michael: ongoing discussion on nonviolence; one of the board members used example of swords to plowshares; resolution is very broad regarding nonviolent orgs; there are all kinds of orgs doing difficult things
 - Member: will rationale be written for members who couldn't attend the meeting
 - Michael: yes; board meeting develops rationale, but not always written; by the time we put out the vote mailing, the written rationale will be there; as well as making sure everyone has a rationale for their resolutions and bylaws as well
- Barry calls for more discussion
 - Member asks for clarification on language and decisions
 - Fred Ptucha, member: there are nonviolent entities we may want to oppose; Koch brothers are funding a group of veterans who aim to destroy the veteran administration system; they are nonviolent, this resolution in theory would have us support them; just because they are nonviolent doesn't mean
 - Member, Tucson chapter: didactic, duplicitous; seems to me that we really need to pass this to allow for a nonviolent means
 - Tarak Kauff, board member: with all due respect, it's vague and redundant; we have a right to describe ourselves and how we intend to act; but we don't determine how others will get the boot off of their neck; just determining if the cause is just, are we in solidarity with them; once we start examining methods minutely, we get into more problems; nonviolence is not our criteria
 - David, Tacoma chapter: don't think this says we are going to support every nonviolent org; it's saying that we are going to support as agreed with our aims if

they are nonviolent; Palestinians have tried to use violence for 70 years; would like to see peace between Israel and Palestine, prefer nonviolence

- Michael McPhearson: against the bylaw amendment; in the time associated with VFP, this has not been a real issue; we haven't been trying to support violence; why do we need a bylaw; we are making an issue of it when there is no issue, it divides us; of course all of us wants nonviolent end to conflict; we aren't supporting the violence, we're supporting the people; Dr. King calls rebellions the voice of the unheard; let's not condemn them, let's talk about the state violence that started the conflict; the point is that we know what we're going to do; we aren't going to use violent means, or support those who do; when people are protecting themselves, we don't want to condemn them
- Willie Hager: it's really about our organization, not others; we should be associated with folks of a nonviolent sentiment; we support self-determination; statement of purpose is what an org lives by in a constitutional sense; shouldn't be changed every time someone wants to change it
- Member: we are not a pacifist organization; although we are nonviolent, the plowshares group who took hammers to a missile silo could be interpreted as violent means; we are headed towards the cliff; there may come a time in the future when we may need to rethink our positions
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **Joey and Tom tallies the vote**
 - **8 in support**
 - **74 against**
 - **8 abstentions**

2016 BL-03: Article III, Section 5. Restrict or expel from membership

- Barry briefs the meeting on his proposed bylaw amendment; clarifying language, removes ambiguous terms
- Barry calls for discussion
 - Gene Marx, Chapter 111: clarify terms of annual convention
 - Barry clarifies process for expelling a member
 - Michael further clarifies past precedent for expelling a member; language of the bylaw amendment does not take the authority away from the membership to override and expulsion; just clarifies ambiguous language
 - Patrick McCann: in the past we expelled someone for three years, and then that person had the right to come back afterward
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **73 in support**
 - **0 opposed**
 - **4 abstentions**

2016-04: Article X, Section 4(d). Resolutions

- Barry briefs the meeting on the proposed amendment

- Michael requests to return to this amendment pending grammatical changes on-site

2016-05: Article XII, Section 4. Chapter dues

- Barry reads the proposed changes to the bylaw
 - o Nate Goldshlag, Chapter 9: briefs the meeting on his proposed changes; policy of the board is that you aren't a member of VFP unless you pay national dues; some chapters feel like local dues replace national dues; you have to be a national member of VFP by paying national dues; two conflicting sections in the bylaws
 - o Member: we just made a big deal about self-determination; national is trying to meddle in the affairs of chapters; fully support self-determination for local chapters
 - o Patrick McCann: supports the amendment
 - o Joey King: supports this amendment; if a member is in your area, then that member is a part of your chapter; has always been the policy of the board
 - o Bernie, LA chapter: speaking against it; voluntary at what level, the chapter level?; too vague, needs to be specified; voluntary and optional are the same; the clarification needs to be whether or not a chapter can assess local dues; the next step is if a member can opt-out of chapter dues
 - o Member: dues are a can of worms; local people have no relation to the national body; if you join at the national level, you can be a member of any chapter in your area
 - o Member: nature of VFP is very chapter-oriented; autonomy of the chapters
 - o Miles, at-large member: supports this change; this issue is up to the national organization; people look to it and support it because it makes the groups powerful; chapters make the national organization strong
 - o Michael clarifies the bylaw does not change the fact that a national member cannot be kicked out of a chapter in their region if they are dues paying at national level
 - o Travis Weiner, Chapter 125 Boulder, CO: in theory I can support this; but as written cannot support; what this does is make dues optional; no chapter has a ton of money sitting around, we're on tight budgets; national allows autonomy; puts chapters in danger of losing funds from losing dues; needs to allow more flexibility
 - o Dan Shea, Chapter 72 Portland, OR, board member: in support of this; our chapter we don't charge any dues; we have members who cannot afford dues; our chapter raises money and pays the dues for the member at national level; if you believe in your chapter, you will give money to the chapter, makes the chapter stronger; we raise money for the chapter on larger projects; when a chapter is raising money and reporting taxes using the national 501c(3); why would you want to kick someone out of the chapter just because they cannot afford local dues
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - o **46 in favor**
 - o **25 against**

- **11 abstentions**

2016-06: Article XV. Funding

- Barry reads the proposed amendment
 - Open for discussion
 - Joey King: one problem is the language regarding “incompatible with VFP statement of purpose;” there is no retribution listed here; no judge to determine if we are keeping with the statement of purpose; no ramifications
 - Gene Marx, Chapter 111: this goes way before USAID; that’s just one example; there are many in the organization who reflect the dissatisfaction; wanted to start a discussion that would begin and end on the board
 - Dave, Chapter 134: maybe times we are being too idealistic
 - Ben Griffin, UK chapter: we discussed this issue in terms of USAID; but it’s much bigger than that; we are compromised by the state in our daily lives, but we join organizations that are not so influenced; at the moment, there’s nothing in our bylaws that says we can’t take money from controversial orgs; proposed to ask if taking money from those orgs is this compatible with what we are doing if it compromises the organization
 - Fred Ptucha: we live in complex world; against this bylaw change because it could be counter-productive in our efforts to help needy people
 - Adrian Kinney, VT chapter: in favor of amendment; in time with IAW and VFP board, was proud of the fact that the money came from orgs and members and grassroots causes; appreciate that we want to expand and grow with programs, we will have to go after bigger donations and grants; should be something on paper for a check and balance; ensure the public that we are who we say we are
 - Bernie, LA chapter: agree with the intentions; but it’s too vague; no procedure for carrying out; should be fleshed out
 - Travis Weiner: the language is not vague; the board deals with the judgment for accepting funds; sometimes the money is nothing compared to the members we lose because of accepting some funds
 - Fred, Chapter 162: our convention is on the campus of a university that runs a nuclear weapons lab; ruling body of university is against BDS
 - John, SF chapter: supports the bylaw amendment; you don’t want to be seen taking money from some orgs; we have faith the board would vett the money; it’s our reputation
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **55 in favor**
 - **17 opposed**
 - **5 abstaining**

2016 BL-4: Article X, Section 4(d). Resolutions

- Barry briefs on the proposed bylaw amendment
- Barry calls for opposition; none heard
- **Barry calls for vote**

- **73 in favor**
- **0 opposed**
- **2 abstaining**

Barry breaks the meeting at 3:24 PM PDT

Barry reconvenes the meeting at 3:31 PM PDT

2016 PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS ADVISORY VOTES

Barry briefs the meeting on the policy and procedure for voting on proposed resolutions

- **Barry asks for unanimous approval of the policy and procedures**
 - **Meeting approves the policy unanimously**

2016-01: Use of Phrase "Military Service"

- Barry briefs on the proposed resolution
- Brian reads aloud board rationale for not supporting
- Barry opens for discussion
 - Jack Dresser, at large: for years I've been sick of being told thank you for your service; general public adoration of American militarism; VFP should discourage it in every way possible; doesn't require it, just suggesting it; in agreement with it
 - Joey: opposed; this makes us the thought police, and we are not the thought police
 - Jared Grammel, at large: suggest accepting this resolution; people see service as serving something like the community; myself and other vets don't see our service as serving the greater good; use the term
 - Ken Mayers, Santa Fe chapter: opposed; service is what we do; we serve the military industrial complex, imperialist foreign policy
 - Margaret Stevens, New Jersey: do agree with the resolution; if we are going to use the word service, we should be in the habit of saying who we serve; we serve the rich, say it that way; other than that, it's a bland euphemism
 - Paul Cox, Chapter 69: we were in service, it was military service; this is the kind of resolution that wastes our time
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **8 in support**
 - **58 opposed**
 - **7 abstaining**

2016-02: Normalization of US-Iran Relations

- Barry briefs the meeting on the proposed resolution
- Barry opens for discussion; no discussion
- **Barry calls for vote by acclamation**
 - **Barry confirms advisory approval of resolution by acclamation**

2016-03: For A Just Resolution of the War in Syria

- Barry briefs on the proposed resolution
- Gerry reads aloud board rationale for not supporting the resolution
- Barry opens for discussion
 - o John, Iowa chapter 161: based on research, there is propaganda operating on all sides of this conflict; we need to use critical thinking rather than accept on faith; there is Russian propaganda
 - o Michael, DC chapter: there is a group that provides relief to Syria; www.syriarelieff.org;
 - o Jack Dresser: UN charter prohibits the threat or use of force against sovereign states; Syria is a sovereign state being attacked by outside forces; held elections, Assad was re-elected by a large margin; thief doesn't get to negotiate on how much stolen land to keep
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - o **3 in support**
 - o **59 opposed**
 - o **13 abstained**

2016-04: Peace Conversion: Petition for a United Nations Peace Conversion Conference

- Barry briefs the meeting on the proposed resolution
- Barry opens for discussion
 - o Joey King: opposed; do not think it should be a resolution; we sign petitions everyday; we don't need a resolution to sign a petition
 - o Tom Palumbo: we are actually an NGO with the UN; important to support UN peace work
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - o **66 supporting**
 - o **3 opposed**
 - o **7 abstaining**

2016-05: Climbers For Peace In Iran

- Barry briefs on the resolution
 - o John, Iowa City chapter 161: if we are going to be primary sponsors, then we need to put some money into it; not leave the expenses totally up to those who want to climb
 - o Member, OR chapter: effort has a benefit for us; get our name out there; if we want to contribute money, the board can decide, that's a separate issue
- **Barry calls for vote by acclimation**
 - o **Barry confirms approval by acclimation**

2016-06: Oppose US Policy of Using Antipersonnel Landmines in Korea

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Barry calls for opposition; none heard
- **Barry calls for vote by acclimation**

- **Barry confirms approval by acclimation**

2016-07: Support Haitian People's Demand for Free & Fair Elections

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Barry calls for opposition; none heard
- **Barry calls for vote by acclimation**
 - **Barry confirms approval by acclimation**

2016-08: Defend the Public Post Office

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Barry calls for opposition; none heard
- **Barry calls for vote by acclimation**
 - **Barry confirms approval by acclimation**

2016-09: Asia-Pacific Pivot For Peace And Sustainable Democracy

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Barry calls for opposition; none heard
- Barry allows call for information from member
 - Doug Lummis, Okinawa chapter: resolution supported by full chapter; two local newspapers in Okinawa, both have foreign correspondence present at this meeting waiting on the result; passing this resolution will be printed in the newspapers; addressed to the chapters, not the governments; go to your chapters and try to lobby
- **Barry calls for approval by acclimation**
 - **Barry confirms approval by acclimation**

2016-10: Post 9/11 Veterans

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Barry calls for opposition; none heard
- **Barry calls for vote by acclimation**
 - **Barry confirms approval by acclimation**

2016-11: Political Affiliations of Veterans For Peace

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Kourtney reads rationale for board decision for not approving
- Barry opens for discussion
 - Travis Weiner: wrote the resolution and disagree with the board; Bacevich explained that he thought his political positions differed from our members, you can visibly hear disapproval from members; this resolution addresses that mindset; most members are similar in our politics; resolution doesn't require anything, just think about the issue; right now there's no requirement
 - Nate Goldshlag, Boston: resolution is very vague; we are a left-wing veterans organization; we have many positions that are considered left-wing; when we recruit people, we don't want to hide the fact that those are our positions; they

can go to our website and see all of our positions; let's be straight-forward when we recruit

- **Barry calls for opposition by acclimation**
 - o **Barry confirms disapproval by acclimation**

2016-12: Resolution to Clarify VFP Mission and Priorities

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- John Heuer reads aloud the board's rationale for disapproving
- Barry opens for discussion
 - o Jack Dresser, Eugene: we wrote this in response to something we observed; it arose as a result from a disagreement we had in terms of the Iran peace deal; VFP should be more sophisticated than the general peace movement; movement has been an abject failure since Vietnam; we haven't stopped anything
 - o Ken Mayers, Santa Fe NM: asked Bacevich how he thought VFP could best influence American people on war and peace; he said we have the greatest leverage of focusing on the impact of people in the US; that's the PAHPA side of it
- **Barry calls for vote by acclimation**
 - o **Barry confirms disapproval of resolution by acclimation**
 - o **Member requests count vote**
 - o **Hands show disapproval of resolution**

2016-13: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Hezbollah

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Kourtney reads board disapproval rationale
- Barry calls for discussion
 - o Jack Dresser: Hezbollah was formed in 1982 to repel the invasion of Israel; keep them from occupying their country; we have no right to say anything about that; Clinton cabinet is targeting Hezbollah for destruction; important to take a position by opposing aggression
 - o Dave, Tacoma chapter 134: written to make something that's upside down to sound legitimate
 - o Bernie, LA chapter: earlier today it was stated we should have no involvement in how independent orgs in other countries decide how to get their justice; we said we won't choose to interfere; we have to accept that is their choice
 - o Member: Hezbollah is a political party and a militia; militias are recognized in Lebanon; we're asking that we respect international law
 - o Tara, Tucson chapter: the "whereas" statement on UN charter is against what we are about; we as an organization do not believe that
 - o Bill, chapter 14: Hezbollah is like the Abe Lincoln brigade, they are fighting fascism
 - o Douglas Lummis: this resolution misquotes the UN charter article; the word aggression is not included in the charter, just self-defense

- Monique reads aloud the UN charter as stated on the UN website; Barry agrees that the resolution incorrectly quotes the UN charter
- **Barry calls for hands vote**
 - **19 in favor**
 - **46 opposed**
 - **11 abstaining**

2016-14: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Hamas

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Kourtney reads aloud board rationale for not supporting
 - Sally Alice Thomson, Albuquerque: we have to resist our country's decisions in arbitrarily labeling organizations in other countries as terrorists; they are defending themselves which they have the right to do
 - Joey King: for the same reasons of the previous resolution, we should reject
 - Jack Dresser: Article 55 is misquoted, which is the right of return; Hamas is the democratically elected government of Palestine, opposed by US and Israel; they are the only government of Palestine, they have a right to resist; we have no right to say anything else
- **Barry calls for hands vote**
 - **16 supporting**
 - **43 opposed**
 - **12 abstaining**

2016-15: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Iran

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Barry calls for discussion; none heard
- **Barry calls for vote by acclamation**
 - **Barry confirms approval by acclamation**

2016-16: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Syria

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Barry calls for discussion
- **Barry calls for vote by acclamation**
 - **Barry confirms approval by acclamation**

2016-17: Resolution to Reduce US Support of Israeli Aggression

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Barry calls for discussion; none heard
- **Barry calls for vote by acclamation**
 - **Barry confirms approval by acclamation**

2016-18: Support For An Independence Referendum In Northern Ireland and an All-Ireland Re-Unification Referendum

- Barry briefs on the resolution

- Barry briefs the meeting on the board rationale for not supporting
- Barry opens for discussion
 - o Nadya Williams, author: based on past resolution that supported steps to be taken for a united resolution; this not the same, it's only supporting the right to vote on independence for Northern Ireland, or an all-Ireland unification
 - o Ben Griffin, UK chapter: the people of the north would decide when and if they would join with the south; think it's wrong to try and interfere with something like this from afar; it's talking about the EU, it's a highly complex situation that will be sorted over a long time; don't think Ireland people will appreciate an American veterans organization telling them what to do
- **Barry calls for vote by acclamation**
 - o **Barry confirms disapproval by acclamation; one abstention**

2016-19: Resolution on Deported Veterans

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Nate: point of info; does the resolutions committee check to ensure accuracy of the U.S. code
- **Barry calls for vote by acclamation**
 - o **Barry confirms approval vote by acclamation**

2016-20: Emergency Resolution Opposing Arbitrary Resumption of Helipad Construction at Take, Okinawa

- Barry briefs on the resolution
- Barry calls for discussion; none heard
- **Barry calls for vote by acclamation**
 - o **Barry confirms approval vote by acclamation**

2016-21: Veterans For Peace Calls For An End To U.S. Wars In The Middle East And Afghanistan

- Barry briefs on the resolution as submitted by the Board
- Member requests further explanation of the resolution, or for Barry to read "Whereas" statements aloud to the meeting
 - o Barry reads aloud the resolution to the meeting
- Barry calls for discussion; none
- **Barry calls for vote by acclamation**
 - o **Barry confirms approval of the advisory vote by acclamation**

Barry concludes voting section of the meeting

Barry opens the floor for statements by members who are planning to run for the Board of Directors

- Willie Hager: current board member, serving two and a half years; brings organizational skillsets; how to manifest them into actual on-the-ground events; have organized two chapters; have brought forth the National Veterans Support House project, adopted by

- VFP as a national project; bringing experience to the Board; also bringing the association with the other Board members; need to have good relations with the chapters
- Adrian Kinney, VFP chapter in Vermont: active in anti-war since 2007 with IVAW; was regional northeast coordinator and was winter soldier testifier; co-chair of IVAW board; lifetime VFP member since 2011; former VFP board member for two years; have learned a lot over my time in organizing; carrying the org forward nationally and internationally; helping to keep the momentum going forward
 - Maurice Martin, Berkeley student in peace and conflict studies; have known and worked with a number of board members over the years; the organization is the right organization, at the right time and place; we as veterans have ability to end structural systemic issues and the costs of wars; can bring unique skillset; have organized and mediated for over forty years; have served on several boards; have sat with three VFP chapters; former president and outreach coordinator of San Diego chapter; co-chair of the National Homeless coalition; and have worked on Howard Zinn fund committee as well
 - Jared Grammel, DC: conscientious objector in 2015; working with Center for Conscience and War to help other military members gain CO status; also working with refusers in Israeli army; also working to end selective service, prevent female inclusion in selective service; looking forward to implementing the skills I've learned; have done newspaper and PR with the military; youngest member running, going to bring youth on the board
 - Patrick McCann, immediate past president of VFP: have done several stints on board; twelve conventions, hosted two, presided over two; along with Margaret Stevens, initiated PAHPA; mutual self-respect of people, and bringing in diverse membership; have been president of DC and Miami chapters; organized 11 consecutive MLK marches in Miami; chapter building workshops; brought in many notable speakers at the convention
 - Gerry Condon, VFP Vice President: Vietnam veteran war resister; very involved with the successful mission of the Golden Rule, national project; strongly support PAHPA perspective in our work; very committed to strengthening anti-war work of VFP; excited that we as a board and as an org that we are recruiting young and POC and female veterans; would like to be re-elected because it's an honor to serve alongside the most diverse board in our history
 - Barry Ladendorf, VFP President: appointed in 2013, elected in 2014; wanted to have an advisory board, it was essential; recruited and established the advisory board, and the fruit of that work is the prominent members who are speaking at the convention; have been president for two years; increase membership, funding, and outreach; strong supporter of GR; VCI campaign; we have a good working relationship; very proud to be working with this group
 - Lloyd Hines, Virginia: army veteran; like the ideas and mission statement of VFP; idea that struck me is the attempt to intersect with other movements, especially the Black Lives Matter movement, which is imaginative concept to bring the veterans into the fight for equality; would like to be a part of that; would like to be a part of our initiative on Islamophobia

Barry moves to adjourn; seconded
Convention votes to adjourn the meeting at 5:19 PM PDT

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, August 11, 2016
Berkeley, CA USA

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Andar, Secretary
Tom Palumbo
Monique Salhab
Brian Trautman
Joey King
Tarak Kauff
Dan Shea
Willie Hager
John Heuer

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry chairs the meeting.

Barry convenes the meeting at 9:21 AM PDT

Brief discussion on success of event at veterans building in San Francisco

2016 Convention updates and finalize plans

- Joey finalizing awards and will propose a new award during October meeting for Board approval
- Barry: committee reports at business meeting; briefs on plans to inform membership of Vietnam Chapter 160 fiscal issues; Palazzo falsified Vietnam combat record, never was in Vietnam; Barry gives further briefing on new info regarding Palazzo military record
 - o Board discusses how to communicate to membership
 - o Tom: have to talk about damage control with this information
 - o Tarak: have to be totally transparent
 - o Barry: developing committee for determining fiscal reporting guidelines for chapters; different specifics for each chapter regarding how much money they are handling; let membership know we are doing asset search for recovery; criminal complaint filed in Da Nang, Vietnam; what is our legal obligation to replace the donations, the answer is no
 - o Gerry: Palazzo military record is not the primary information, don't necessarily want that info out to become the juicy story of the convention

- Tom: emphasize specifics for chapter funds reporting
- Monique: inevitably could become the focal point of the convention; how to manage this info during the convention
- Willie: needs to be low profile; focus on the aspects of the project instead of focusing on Palazzo
- Barry: have to take responsibility for the stolen money; do what we can to recover; policies and procedures and protocols
- Brian: direct, straight-forward, explains what happens in a short way and prevent it from happening in the future
- Tarak: two ways this info can spread during the convention, talking about it by word-of-mouth
- John: a member who has sour grapes on another issue can raise the Palazzo issue just to stick it to us; do we know the dollar amount of the loss
- Barry: preliminary accounting info shows around \$100-110 thousand
- Mark: the committee is being charged with creating policy and procedures; does this get into a resolution?
 - Barry: no, just org responsibility and individual chapter responsibility and threshold amounts; a template for different categories of funds held by chapters
- Joey: need to release info about military record of Palazzo; it's going to get out; the reporter has written a story about it, so it's out; we have to control message; we're not a secret org
 - Barry: was not a report, was just a letter to chapter members
 - Joey: it is against the law – it's the stolen valor law; we could prosecute if we wanted, not that we should
- Willie: with the litigation, can't we agree to not discuss details with others and frame the message
 - Barry: currently no litigation at this time; relevant issue is that money was stolen and we have to figure out how and gain recovery and what steps to take
- Michael: what makes it relevant, though not a gigantic discussion, we want to relook at what we use as verification for military service; website shows a long list for verification; we might not want to make it too stringent but instead have at least two tiers; loose for members but stricter for leadership positions like Board and project leaders; relevant is because a person who would lie like that is not trustworthy; speaks to a process of this not happening again; make sure someone is telling the truth about their military service; one way to talk about it at the business meeting is that Palazzo lied to us about his service, there are discrepancies, won't get into particulars, but it's another opportunity to make sure we have trustworthy people working on our projects
 - Tarak: that's a succinct way to present it; it's complete, not a big discussion
 - Michael: at least one other instance of lying about military service

- Barry: briefs meeting on the policy regarding verification of military records for members; what we relied on is an older VA card without dates of military service
- Joey: two-tiered approach is a good idea; associate membership is inflated, numbers are not accurate because of some members' failure to submit military record for verification; how to present the embellishment of record at the meeting
- Michael: it's already a policy; bylaw change is an entire new process; can be a new policy and the Board can approve it
- Mark: what committee is going to write this; Membership committee can take this on, Kourtney confirms
- Michael clarifies process for changing or adding policy; in the past, Secretary has changed the policy manual and updated; Board can design and approve changes and change the book

DISCUSSION ON 2016 PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2016-01: Use of Phrase "Military Service"

- Barry briefs on proposed resolution and reminds of previous Board vote not to recommend
 - **Board upholds decision to not recommend the resolution**
 - Brian agrees to draft Board rationale

Resolution 2016-02: Normalization of United States-Iran Relations

- Barry briefs on resolution and reminds of previous Board vote to recommend
 - **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

Resolution 2016-03: For A Just Resolution of the War in Syria

- Barry briefs on Board decision for Gerry to draft substitute resolution
 - Gerry: drafted comprehensive resolution on wars in Middle East; original resolution was intentionally omitting call for withdrawal of US in Syria
 - Barry: is the rest of the resolution without a call for withdrawal is something VFP should support?
 - Gerry: no, don't think so; other language is problematic as well; to casual observer it looks benign, but it's actually trying to shift focus to war crimes of Assad and ignore US intervention in Syria; alternative resolution is not substantially about Syria; sent to Board via email; covering entire Middle East and Afghanistan
 - Joey: understand with what Gerry is saying; but SOP says we are non-interventionist; absence of call for withdrawal is not necessarily a big concern
 - John: we should include Gerry's observations from his peace delegation trip to Syria, in addition to including language about relief for refugees

- Gerry: alternative resolution mentions refugees but does not offer specific suggestions; certainly we could include that in this resolution
- Mark: clarify procedure at the business meeting; will we present the original resolution first
 - Michael clarifies process
- Willie: resolutions should be succinct and actionable; clarify process of adding resolution
- Michael: in the past we have made blanket statements on US foreign policies in different regions; somewhat different than looking at individual combat organizations in a resolution; tension about that, so we asked authors of previous resolutions to separate that out
- Tarak: our rationale for not supporting original resolution has to be very clear
- Michael: Syrian war is one of the worst events happening right now; a flashpoint for US and Russia; constantly in news and ISIL also; worthy of being addressed on its own because of what's happening; if a resolution is going to replace original, then it needs to be about Syria
 - Barry: would be good to have our own statement on Syria
 - Michael: our resolution has to hold everyone accountable; Assad regime is not totally clear
 - Gerry: Syrian government is defending its future as a state and nation; up against such a huge one-sided media propaganda campaign; some believe Assad is completely wrong because of media reports; peace delegation to Syria had meeting with Assad, and we asked him how to build bridges; the more detail we get into about it, the more division we have; that's why I approach the context as the entire war in the Middle East; war in Syria is foreign-funded and foreign-lead against Assad government; psychological war campaign aimed at US people and it's effective
- Willie: need succinct and actionable resolution; sounds like we are choosing sides, but that's not who we are as VFP; clarify Board reasoning for not supporting
- Board reviews Gerry's proposed resolution: Veterans For Peace Calls for an End to U.S. Wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan, as presented to the Board via email
 - Barry: justification for getting out of these wars is that none of them have been authorized by U.S. Congress; unchecked power to wage war; Barry agrees to help word specific point
 - Joey: suggests adding to the first "Resolved" statement that we are the biggest war organization and Syria is biggest proxy war in a long time; all other players need to exit Syria; Joey emphasizes artificial creation of certain nations created after proxy wars
 - Michael: every country is artificially created
 - Willie: U.S. imperialism is the primary point
 - Tarak: no question that U.S. is primary and main perpetrator of violence in the Middle East region; that's where our focus should be
- Barry reminds that Board voted not to approve original resolution 2016-03

- Gerry: rationale is that it doesn't adequately address U.S. intervention; Gerry agrees to write the rationale
- For Gerry's resolution, Barry will write legal "whereas" statement; Brian will write environmental "whereas" statement; Gerry to incorporate changes
- Dan: add something regarding policy of regime change, that's the main U.S. point; Gerry confirms that it's mentioned but could be strengthened; Gerry to make further changes to the proposed resolution
- Michael: regarding Joey's suggestion to add a "whereas;" if we had an alternative resolution on Syria specifically, we could call for other nations to leave the war and region; but Gerry's is not about Syria specifically; we can't call for Iran to leave the Middle East; there are things specifically happening for Syria and it's to some extent different than what's happening in Iraq in some ways
- Gerry: do we want to draft a separate resolution on Syria specifically; with level of misinformation currently out there, a separate resolution could spark a big passionate debate that maybe we want to avoid
- Dan and Tarak state that it could be straight-forward calling just for U.S. to exit the war in region
- Gerry agrees to draft resolution
- John: add in support for refugees in the region; Gerry agrees

Resolution 2016-04: Petition for a United Nations Peace Conversion Conference

- Michael briefs that he spoke with author to include information about Roots Action petition and add language to resolution to reflect that
- Barry calls for opposition to resolution as it is re-drafted
 - Joey: it should be a petition, not a resolution; don't need this as a resolution
 - Gerry: nothing bars us from submitting or approving such a resolution
 - **Joey votes against this resolution**
 - **Board votes 11-1-0 to support this resolution**

Resolution 2016-05: Climbers For Peace In Iran

- **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

Resolution 2016-06: Oppose US Policy of Using Antipersonnel Landmines in Korea

- **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

Resolution 2016-07: Support Haitian People's Demand for Free & Fair Elections

- Dan provides copies of resolution with author's changes, re-submitted for consideration by the Board; Board reviews the updated resolution
 - Joey: suggests grammatical edits; Dan agrees
 - Barry: is there overwhelming evidence that the facts are accurate
 - Willie: we're talking about U.S. imperialism; not supporting anyone's movements or uprising around the world, just supporting the withdrawal of U.S. involvement in Haitian affairs; rhetoric and suppositions should not be in resolutions, only

- facts; not to be involved in the politics of other countries; we're about providing a peaceful resolution to that situation
- Dan: I do think this is very important; in regards to PAHPA; when resolution is presented to us and how the membership will look at it; history of the first slave movement in an imperial power; constantly the Haitian people have been fighting for freedom and self-determination; we have supported it for Gaza and Vietnam and other countries; it's not about revolution, just about those people's rights not to be affected by U.S. intervention; our rationale is our mission statement
 - Tarak: we're accepting the statement on good faith and common knowledge; absence of disproving it, we can accept it and the membership can choose to accept it; self-determination is important to ending war and advocating for peace
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **Vote shows 10 in favor of the resolution**
 - **One opposed – Willie; one abstained – Barry**
 - **Board votes 10-1-1 to approve the resolution with Dan's suggested edits**
 - Michael asks for clarification that if we can't get in touch with author to make revisions or author says no to revisions, then we have to put their original resolution before the body; we can fix grammatical errors just fine, but can't submit another resolution to replace it
 - Gerry suggests Dan's changes are good but if author does not approve then we can approve this resolution as-is
 - **Barry calls for vote on original resolution**
 - **7 in favor, one opposed, four abstentions**
 - **Board votes to support the original resolution prior to edits**

2016-08: Defend the Public Post Office

- **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

2016-09: Asia-Pacific Pivot For Peace And Sustainable Democracy

- **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

2016-10: Post 9/11 Veterans

- Michael contacted author and author agreed to add clarifying changes; Michael briefs on changes made
- Gerry: some sentiment that we are already doing these things, but so what; it's good that we are doing it, and we can reconfirm
- **Barry calls for vote**
- **Board votes 12-0-0 to support the resolution**

2016-11: Political Affiliations of Veterans For Peace

- **Board confirms not to support; Tarak drafted rationale, accepted by Board**

2016-12: Resolution to Clarify VFP Mission and Priorities

- **Board confirm not to support; John drafted rationale, accepted by Board**

2016-13: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Hezbollah

- Tarak: we all support people's right of self-defense and self-determination; but not sure we want to support a particular element that is highly controversial such as Hezbollah; that's specific, it's thin ice
 - o Joey: agree with Tarak; clarify that Hezbollah is an established political organization
 - o Michael: they are accepted as part of Lebanese society
 - o Gerry: similar sentiment as to Tarak; personally agree with the statement from my own opinion; but question the value of resolutions which essentially include support for armed resistance; don't see why we want someone writing a press release that VFP supports Hezbollah; it's not germane to our statement of purpose
 - o Willie: we're not in the business of supporting other groups who are acting in self-defense and determination; in 1973, VVAW in California came to this following the Panther shootings; had to determine how we stood as anti-war vets in supporting armed self-defense; we had referendum, stated that we determined that if authorities came without a warrant we would stand our ground; where we stand on issues of peace and how we can determine which paths to take; not very smart to say those things in resolutions because you're opening the door for others to take you off your target
 - o Barry: issue with statement that we have identical mission of UN; true partially, but not true in totality
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - o **0 in support; 10 opposed; 2 abstentions (Dan and Brian)**
 - o **Board votes to not support the resolution**
 - o Willie agrees to write rationale; Gerry offers assistance

2016-14: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Hamas

- Tarak: this is a vote of approval, basically; could get us in trouble; Palestinian people are largely more secular than Hamas; true that they are not terrorist organization and shouldn't be on the list; but this is troubling
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - o **0 supporting; 10 opposed; 2 abstained (Brian and Dan)**
 - o **Board votes to not support the resolution**
 - o Willie to write rationale

2016-15: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Iran

- Joey: depends on where you want to draw the line regarding Iran threats to attack the US
- Gerry: solid; keeps with statement of purpose; see no problems

- Barry: the first paragraph regarding missions of UN and VFP; would not reject based only on that
- Further discussion on specifics of VFP and UN charter being identical regarding preventing war
- Michael: provisions for allowing violence in self-defense doesn't negate the purpose to prevent war
- Barry: makes it sound simple; need to be consistent
- Tom: problems with the term "threatened;" US Embassy attack was US property
- Ellen Davidson, Member: reads aloud relevant portion of UN charter; I would say that the charter language does authorize use of war
- Barry: therefore identical term is not accurate
- Gerry: for purposes of this resolution, the language works
- Jan Ruhman, Member, San Diego: what about something like VFP works in "concert" with UN as an NGO
 - Barry: we would have to go back to authors and ask them to agree with changes
- Willie calls to question
- **Barry calls for vote**
- **9 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstaining (Monique and Barry)**
- **Board votes to support the resolution**

2016-16: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Syria

- Tom: issues with calling on specific US agencies to fulfill a resolution call; precedent is to not do this
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **10 in favor, 0 disapproving; 2 abstaining (Tom and Joey)**
 - **Board votes to support the resolution**

2016-17: Resolution to Reduce US Support of Israeli Aggression

- Gerry: looks good, but frustrated with the Palestine-Middle East working group; have been asking them to provide leadership for VFP BDS campaign; they have not taken steps; we need to provide links to other good campaigns and encourage our members to participate
 - Barry: have asked them to prepare statements and I have not yet heard back
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **10 in favor; 0 disapproving; 2 abstaining (Joey, Willie)**
 - **Board votes to support the resolution**

2016-18: Support For An Independence Referendum In Northern Ireland and an All-Ireland Re-Unification Referendum

- Barry confirms previous vote to not support
- Barry: rationale is that VFP UK and Ireland did not put this forth and they are not pushing it, and there's no substantial movement in Ireland
- **Barry calls for another vote**

- **Board votes 12-0-0 not to support the resolution**

2016-19: Resolution on Deported Veterans

- **Board votes 12-0-0 to support**

2016-20: Emergency Resolution Opposing Arbitrary Resumption of Helipad Construction at Takae, Okinawa

- Barry briefs on late resolution submission; Board takes time to review resolution
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **11 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining (Willie)**
 - **Board votes to support the resolution**

Break for Lunch – 12:15 PM PDT

Barry reconvenes meeting at 1:54 PM PDT

DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONS FOR 2016

2016 BL-01: Article II. Statement of Purpose

- Barry briefs on the proposed changes to the statement of purpose
 - Tarak: more honest with changes; more inclusive statement; since we have international chapters, we added that part on; no longer U.S.-centric, inclusive so everyone can feel good about it
 - Kourtney: Board previously voted to support
 - Mark: dislike the term “dutifully served;” great teaching moment; supports bylaw change
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **Board votes 12-0-0 to support the proposed bylaw change**

2016 BL-02: Article II. Statement of Purpose

- Joey: briefs on his proposed change; nothing works a hundred percent, but violence is twice as ineffective as nonviolence; what is considered defense changes over time; we previously talked about this idea with resolutions on Hamas and Hezbollah; in every country except Haiti and U.S., slavery ended nonviolently; I don’t think we as an org can support the idea that we can’t use nonviolence but others cannot
 - Willie: JAX progressive coalition faces this issue as well; we have a lot of other groups that represent certain issues and some of them have our allegiance and work with us but end up participating actions that gets people arrested without organizing; we have to agree not to support violent insurrection
 - Gerry: oppose this change; nothing in there to begin with about supporting violent organizations; it takes what we have, which is already good, and all VFP members support, and attempts to expand it to what people see as a pacifist

- manifesto; what it's actually saying is that we don't support some orgs that use violent means; peace activists in the past have pledged nonviolence but resisted condemning other groups who choose to do so for self-defense; we have a whole spectrum of ideas in VFP; don't see why we should open this up; we already have a statement that commits us to acting nonviolently
- Tarak: agree with Gerry; feel it does open a can of worms; we make decisions on an individual basis; don't want to put us in a position that we start telling oppressed people how to resist; our statement is already tight, it defines who we are; our statement doesn't pass judgment on other people who are struggling for liberation
 - Mark: we don't take stand of support when a country is using violent means; we have no responsibility to respond towards that behavior; what we respond to is positive reinforcement of nonviolent means; would change the wording to read better – "...as well as supporting organizations who also use nonviolent means..."
 - Joey: open to that change; want to keep the discussion peaceful
 - Monique: brings up a good opportunity for us to have awareness as an org on how we act towards each other as members; there are moments when our actions and language can be levels of violence towards one another; bring some mindfulness into how we interact; asking members to be more aware of how we are treating one another; the work we all do is important and we are passionate; sometimes we excuse language and tone without thinking about the impact on VFP itself
 - Michael: doesn't make sense for us to put forth something that will cause controversy when it's unnecessary; members have different perspective on self-defense; trying to find places of unity and not accentuating places of disunity; not going to impact what we do; we haven't had this problem of working with violent organizations, I haven't ever seen it happen in VFP; how do we really define what is violent; the proposed language is too general, what are the parameters for supporting orgs that use nonviolent means; which orgs do we support?; I think it's kind of arrogant; like we are superior looking at others when we should look at ourselves; we should tighten ourselves up; act as example to others, so they see that we shouldn't be violent
 - Tom: sympathetic to the idea and premise; but is property damage violence, some would argue it is; swords to plowshares people have been accused of aggression
 - Tarak: personally I have a higher purpose; we want liberation and freedom, end of oppression and exploitation; these are the goals, but not all the same methods; sometimes you have to use force; don't want to make a universal statement
 - Dan: VFP being marked as an "extremist" group; we would be considered by this country as extremist and violent against the U.S.; don't want to complicate this
 - Will, Member: think of the statement as inspired; should be updated very infrequently

- Fred, Member: proposed change muddies the water; doesn't flow well from a language point of view; some orgs use nonviolence in a negative way, as coercive method; the original statement has beauty in the language
- Barry, Member: if it works, don't fix it; sometimes violence does come up with orgs we work with
- Adrian, Member: there is a policy on who VFP who is allowed to endorse or work with; does disturb the flow of the language to include this resolution; our country often uses the defense of women as justification for war; have heard members here twice use their daughters as justification for violence
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **2 in favor, 7 opposed, 3 abstentions**
 - **Board votes not to support the bylaw change 2016 BL-2**
 - Joey expresses intent to allow proposed bylaw change to go forward to the convention

2016 BL-3: Article III, Section 5. Restrict or expel from membership

- Barry briefs on his proposed bylaw change; clarifies differences in terms
 - Gerry: clarify who can appeal at the convention
 - Barry: if we expel, we have to present to the convention; the person who was expelled or denied membership can appeal
 - Gerry: has only happened twice in twelve years; very rare instance
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **Board votes 12-0-0 to support the change**

2016 BL-4: Article X, Section 4(d). Resolutions

- Nate Goldshlag, Member: briefs on proposed change; clean-up language; original language was ambiguous; new language makes it clear that associate members can submit and vote on resolutions
- Discussion on specific wording for clarity
- Barry reads aloud current bylaw section on voting on resolutions and bylaws
- Michael clarifies three levels of Full membership
- Gerry: consistency with the other sections of the bylaws, use same language
 - **Gerry: motion to adopt the amendment of following language: "Full Members and Associate Members shall have the right to submit resolutions."**
 - **Joey seconds**
 - **Barry calls for vote: 12-0-0 to support the bylaw change**

2016 BL-5: Article XII, Section 4. Chapter dues

- Barry reads proposed change aloud
- Nate: briefs on his proposed changes
 - Willie: in our chapter, that's how they become members, by paying national dues

- Gerry: surprised to find that several chapters collect local dues and they feel like their members don't need to pay national dues; thus they are not being counted in our membership rolls
- Dan: if they are not paying national dues but are filing taxes as a chapter under our 501c(3); that would be inappropriate
- Further discussion on chapters excluding members based on dues; creating hardships for struggling members
- **Barry calls for vote**
- **Board votes 12-0-0 to support the bylaw change**

Barry calls for break at 3:05 PM PDT

Barry reconvenes the meeting at 3:50 PM PDT

2016 BL-6: Article XV. Funding

- Barry briefs on the proposed bylaw
 - Michael: the board would still have to make the decision; nothing there keeping the Board from holding responsibility for the decision; anyone who acts in violation of our statement of purpose, we wouldn't want to take money from them anyway; this proposal makes it clearer that the Board has the responsibility; not worth the kind of conflict that would ensue should the Board vote against it; those who did not support the USAID vote will be even more suspect against us
 - Tarak: like the direction of this; agree with Michael; only reservation I have is being locked and placed in a corner in which it is difficult for us to use judgment
 - Joey: heard arguments both ways on USAID; it's a judgment call
 - Dan: we as a board still have the opportunity to vet whoever we are dealing with, individually; supporting this proposal
 - Mark: "inconsistent, incompatible" are subjective terms; one aspect of USAID is empire building; the other aspect is saving millions of lives
 - Brian: echoes Michael's point about taking the bylaw addition on its face; future boards will make the decision as to whether or not donations met our SOP; inclined to support this
 - Gerry: good principle, hard to argue with; layer of consistency; could have the side effect of aiding in healing in this organization; good guiding principle; when we took the VCI money, we didn't have a discussion about Soros, but next time we will
 - Joey: what are the ramifications if the Board does accept money from orgs that are inconsistent or incompatible with SOP?; there should be a process
 - Willie: we are not going to reach perfection on anything; the subjectivity of this worries me, it's using the bylaws as a tool to further their agenda; without the controversy it looks good on its face; bylaws shouldn't be used to politicize an issue, just guidelines for the leadership of our org; membership should look to them and evaluate our performance

- Mark: the MOU was fail safe for us in regards to USAID; we had right to cancel the contract; but this bylaw limits our fundraising capability
- Dan: subjectivity is us making decisions; could still support USAID decision even with this bylaw; members make the final decision, we just make the recommendation
- Tarak: will vote for this; can't really vote against it; evaluating these decisions, we can look at source, any strings attached, and the amount of money; but can't vote for USAID decision with this bylaw in place
- Gerry: association should be another criteria; membership is sometimes frustrated and disempowered; they may think we are not considering the SOP when we actually are; builds confidence; make the members more assured and empowered
- Michael: there are few orgs that will be totally clean; blurry language, each one of us would have to make a decision; hopefully we get the chance because someone wants to give us money
- Willie: in the future, it could hamper our fundraising growth; not in support
- Fred, Member: part of organization that received a USAID grant to build a women's shelter in sister city of Ukraine; no such thing in the real world as purity; cutting off source of funds that could be put to use; would not approve this proposal
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **8 in support; 3 opposed; 1 abstain (Kourtney)**
 - **Board votes to support the proposed bylaw change**

Late bylaw amendment on e-voting

- Tom: asking for suspension of the rules of order and institute special rules of order to waive the thirty-day requirement to submit bylaws to the Board for his resolution on e-voting; would mean we are waiving our own bylaw
- Meeting clarifies that Tom is the committee the Board designated to review bylaws and was done in the thirty-day timeframe
- Michael: bylaw wouldn't be passed until October, so would be effective next year; who can really vote to suspend the rules; is it really so important that we can't wait two more years
- Barry: would not vote to suspend it; we can do it more orderly and give it to the convention next year to pass it
- John: issue was raised in 2012 in Miami; would show less preparation to present this year to the convention
- Tom: would be okay with tabling
- **Dan motions to table**
- **Barry agrees; Barry tables the bylaw proposal**
- Willie to sit on committee to explore policy on e-voting

Fred Ptucha presents letter submitted to Iran – Climbers For Peace

- VFP has been invited to participate in climb in Iran by I.R. Iran Mountaineering & Sport Climbing Federation

Barry adjourns the meeting at 5:06 PM PDT

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, August 11, 2016
Berkeley, CA USA

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Andar, Secretary
Tom Palumbo
Monique Salhab
Brian Trautman
Joey King
Tarak Kauff
Dan Shea
Willie Hager
John Heuer

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry chairs the meeting.

Barry convenes the meeting at 9:21 AM PDT

Brief discussion on success of event at veterans building in San Francisco

2016 Convention updates and finalize plans

- Joey finalizing awards and will propose a new award during October meeting for Board approval
- Barry: committee reports at business meeting; briefs on plans to inform membership of Vietnam Chapter 160 fiscal issues; Palazzo falsified Vietnam combat record, never was in Vietnam; Barry gives further briefing on new info regarding Palazzo military record
 - o Board discusses how to communicate to membership
 - o Tom: have to talk about damage control with this information
 - o Tarak: have to be totally transparent
 - o Barry: developing committee for determining fiscal reporting guidelines for chapters; different specifics for each chapter regarding how much money they are handling; let membership know we are doing asset search for recovery; criminal complaint filed in Da Nang, Vietnam; what is our legal obligation to replace the donations, the answer is no
 - o Gerry: Palazzo military record is not the primary information, don't necessarily want that info out to become the juicy story of the convention

- Tom: emphasize specifics for chapter funds reporting
- Monique: inevitably could become the focal point of the convention; how to manage this info during the convention
- Willie: needs to be low profile; focus on the aspects of the project instead of focusing on Palazzo
- Barry: have to take responsibility for the stolen money; do what we can to recover; policies and procedures and protocols
- Brian: direct, straight-forward, explains what happens in a short way and prevent it from happening in the future
- Tarak: two ways this info can spread during the convention, talking about it by word-of-mouth
- John: a member who has sour grapes on another issue can raise the Palazzo issue just to stick it to us; do we know the dollar amount of the loss
- Barry: preliminary accounting info shows around \$100-110 thousand
- Mark: the committee is being charged with creating policy and procedures; does this get into a resolution?
 - Barry: no, just org responsibility and individual chapter responsibility and threshold amounts; a template for different categories of funds held by chapters
- Joey: need to release info about military record of Palazzo; it's going to get out; the reporter has written a story about it, so it's out; we have to control message; we're not a secret org
 - Barry: was not a report, was just a letter to chapter members
 - Joey: it is against the law – it's the stolen valor law; we could prosecute if we wanted, not that we should
- Willie: with the litigation, can't we agree to not discuss details with others and frame the message
 - Barry: currently no litigation at this time; relevant issue is that money was stolen and we have to figure out how and gain recovery and what steps to take
- Michael: what makes it relevant, though not a gigantic discussion, we want to relook at what we use as verification for military service; website shows a long list for verification; we might not want to make it too stringent but instead have at least two tiers; loose for members but stricter for leadership positions like Board and project leaders; relevant is because a person who would lie like that is not trustworthy; speaks to a process of this not happening again; make sure someone is telling the truth about their military service; one way to talk about it at the business meeting is that Palazzo lied to us about his service, there are discrepancies, won't get into particulars, but it's another opportunity to make sure we have trustworthy people working on our projects
 - Tarak: that's a succinct way to present it; it's complete, not a big discussion
 - Michael: at least one other instance of lying about military service

- Barry: briefs meeting on the policy regarding verification of military records for members; what we relied on is an older VA card without dates of military service
- Joey: two-tiered approach is a good idea; associate membership is inflated, numbers are not accurate because of some members' failure to submit military record for verification; how to present the embellishment of record at the meeting
- Michael: it's already a policy; bylaw change is an entire new process; can be a new policy and the Board can approve it
- Mark: what committee is going to write this; Membership committee can take this on, Kourtney confirms
- Michael clarifies process for changing or adding policy; in the past, Secretary has changed the policy manual and updated; Board can design and approve changes and change the book

DISCUSSION ON 2016 PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 2016-01: Use of Phrase "Military Service"

- Barry briefs on proposed resolution and reminds of previous Board vote not to recommend
 - **Board upholds decision to not recommend the resolution**
 - Brian agrees to draft Board rationale

Resolution 2016-02: Normalization of United States-Iran Relations

- Barry briefs on resolution and reminds of previous Board vote to recommend
 - **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

Resolution 2016-03: For A Just Resolution of the War in Syria

- Barry briefs on Board decision for Gerry to draft substitute resolution
 - Gerry: drafted comprehensive resolution on wars in Middle East; original resolution was intentionally omitting call for withdrawal of US in Syria
 - Barry: is the rest of the resolution without a call for withdrawal is something VFP should support?
 - Gerry: no, don't think so; other language is problematic as well; to casual observer it looks benign, but it's actually trying to shift focus to war crimes of Assad and ignore US intervention in Syria; alternative resolution is not substantially about Syria; sent to Board via email; covering entire Middle East and Afghanistan
 - Joey: understand with what Gerry is saying; but SOP says we are non-interventionist; absence of call for withdrawal is not necessarily a big concern
 - John: we should include Gerry's observations from his peace delegation trip to Syria, in addition to including language about relief for refugees

- Gerry: alternative resolution mentions refugees but does not offer specific suggestions; certainly we could include that in this resolution
- Mark: clarify procedure at the business meeting; will we present the original resolution first
 - Michael clarifies process
- Willie: resolutions should be succinct and actionable; clarify process of adding resolution
- Michael: in the past we have made blanket statements on US foreign policies in different regions; somewhat different than looking at individual combat organizations in a resolution; tension about that, so we asked authors of previous resolutions to separate that out
- Tarak: our rationale for not supporting original resolution has to be very clear
- Michael: Syrian war is one of the worst events happening right now; a flashpoint for US and Russia; constantly in news and ISIL also; worthy of being addressed on its own because of what's happening; if a resolution is going to replace original, then it needs to be about Syria
 - Barry: would be good to have our own statement on Syria
 - Michael: our resolution has to hold everyone accountable; Assad regime is not totally clear
 - Gerry: Syrian government is defending its future as a state and nation; up against such a huge one-sided media propaganda campaign; some believe Assad is completely wrong because of media reports; peace delegation to Syria had meeting with Assad, and we asked him how to build bridges; the more detail we get into about it, the more division we have; that's why I approach the context as the entire war in the Middle East; war in Syria is foreign-funded and foreign-lead against Assad government; psychological war campaign aimed at US people and it's effective
- Willie: need succinct and actionable resolution; sounds like we are choosing sides, but that's not who we are as VFP; clarify Board reasoning for not supporting
- Board reviews Gerry's proposed resolution: Veterans For Peace Calls for an End to U.S. Wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan, as presented to the Board via email
 - Barry: justification for getting out of these wars is that none of them have been authorized by U.S. Congress; unchecked power to wage war; Barry agrees to help word specific point
 - Joey: suggests adding to the first "Resolved" statement that we are the biggest war organization and Syria is biggest proxy war in a long time; all other players need to exit Syria; Joey emphasizes artificial creation of certain nations created after proxy wars
 - Michael: every country is artificially created
 - Willie: U.S. imperialism is the primary point
 - Tarak: no question that U.S. is primary and main perpetrator of violence in the Middle East region; that's where our focus should be
- Barry reminds that Board voted not to approve original resolution 2016-03

- Gerry: rationale is that it doesn't adequately address U.S. intervention; Gerry agrees to write the rationale
- For Gerry's resolution, Barry will write legal "whereas" statement; Brian will write environmental "whereas" statement; Gerry to incorporate changes
- Dan: add something regarding policy of regime change, that's the main U.S. point; Gerry confirms that it's mentioned but could be strengthened; Gerry to make further changes to the proposed resolution
- Michael: regarding Joey's suggestion to add a "whereas;" if we had an alternative resolution on Syria specifically, we could call for other nations to leave the war and region; but Gerry's is not about Syria specifically; we can't call for Iran to leave the Middle East; there are things specifically happening for Syria and it's to some extent different than what's happening in Iraq in some ways
- Gerry: do we want to draft a separate resolution on Syria specifically; with level of misinformation currently out there, a separate resolution could spark a big passionate debate that maybe we want to avoid
- Dan and Tarak state that it could be straight-forward calling just for U.S. to exit the war in region
- Gerry agrees to draft resolution
- John: add in support for refugees in the region; Gerry agrees

Resolution 2016-04: Petition for a United Nations Peace Conversion Conference

- Michael briefs that he spoke with author to include information about Roots Action petition and add language to resolution to reflect that
- Barry calls for opposition to resolution as it is re-drafted
 - Joey: it should be a petition, not a resolution; don't need this as a resolution
 - Gerry: nothing bars us from submitting or approving such a resolution
 - **Joey votes against this resolution**
 - **Board votes 11-1-0 to support this resolution**

Resolution 2016-05: Climbers For Peace In Iran

- **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

Resolution 2016-06: Oppose US Policy of Using Antipersonnel Landmines in Korea

- **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

Resolution 2016-07: Support Haitian People's Demand for Free & Fair Elections

- Dan provides copies of resolution with author's changes, re-submitted for consideration by the Board; Board reviews the updated resolution
 - Joey: suggests grammatical edits; Dan agrees
 - Barry: is there overwhelming evidence that the facts are accurate
 - Willie: we're talking about U.S. imperialism; not supporting anyone's movements or uprising around the world, just supporting the withdrawal of U.S. involvement in Haitian affairs; rhetoric and suppositions should not be in resolutions, only

- facts; not to be involved in the politics of other countries; we're about providing a peaceful resolution to that situation
- Dan: I do think this is very important; in regards to PAHPA; when resolution is presented to us and how the membership will look at it; history of the first slave movement in an imperial power; constantly the Haitian people have been fighting for freedom and self-determination; we have supported it for Gaza and Vietnam and other countries; it's not about revolution, just about those people's rights not to be affected by U.S. intervention; our rationale is our mission statement
 - Tarak: we're accepting the statement on good faith and common knowledge; absence of disproving it, we can accept it and the membership can choose to accept it; self-determination is important to ending war and advocating for peace
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **Vote shows 10 in favor of the resolution**
 - **One opposed – Willie; one abstained – Barry**
 - **Board votes 10-1-1 to approve the resolution with Dan's suggested edits**
 - Michael asks for clarification that if we can't get in touch with author to make revisions or author says no to revisions, then we have to put their original resolution before the body; we can fix grammatical errors just fine, but can't submit another resolution to replace it
 - Gerry suggests Dan's changes are good but if author does not approve then we can approve this resolution as-is
 - **Barry calls for vote on original resolution**
 - **7 in favor, one opposed, four abstentions**
 - **Board votes to support the original resolution prior to edits**

2016-08: Defend the Public Post Office

- **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

2016-09: Asia-Pacific Pivot For Peace And Sustainable Democracy

- **Board upholds decision to support resolution**

2016-10: Post 9/11 Veterans

- Michael contacted author and author agreed to add clarifying changes; Michael briefs on changes made
- Gerry: some sentiment that we are already doing these things, but so what; it's good that we are doing it, and we can reconfirm
- **Barry calls for vote**
- **Board votes 12-0-0 to support the resolution**

2016-11: Political Affiliations of Veterans For Peace

- **Board confirms not to support; Tarak drafted rationale, accepted by Board**

2016-12: Resolution to Clarify VFP Mission and Priorities

- **Board confirm not to support; John drafted rationale, accepted by Board**

2016-13: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Hezbollah

- Tarak: we all support people's right of self-defense and self-determination; but not sure we want to support a particular element that is highly controversial such as Hezbollah; that's specific, it's thin ice
 - o Joey: agree with Tarak; clarify that Hezbollah is an established political organization
 - o Michael: they are accepted as part of Lebanese society
 - o Gerry: similar sentiment as to Tarak; personally agree with the statement from my own opinion; but question the value of resolutions which essentially include support for armed resistance; don't see why we want someone writing a press release that VFP supports Hezbollah; it's not germane to our statement of purpose
 - o Willie: we're not in the business of supporting other groups who are acting in self-defense and determination; in 1973, VVAW in California came to this following the Panther shootings; had to determine how we stood as anti-war vets in supporting armed self-defense; we had referendum, stated that we determined that if authorities came without a warrant we would stand our ground; where we stand on issues of peace and how we can determine which paths to take; not very smart to say those things in resolutions because you're opening the door for others to take you off your target
 - o Barry: issue with statement that we have identical mission of UN; true partially, but not true in totality
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - o **0 in support; 10 opposed; 2 abstentions (Dan and Brian)**
 - o **Board votes to not support the resolution**
 - o Willie agrees to write rationale; Gerry offers assistance

2016-14: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Hamas

- Tarak: this is a vote of approval, basically; could get us in trouble; Palestinian people are largely more secular than Hamas; true that they are not terrorist organization and shouldn't be on the list; but this is troubling
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - o **0 supporting; 10 opposed; 2 abstained (Brian and Dan)**
 - o **Board votes to not support the resolution**
 - o Willie to write rationale

2016-15: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Iran

- Joey: depends on where you want to draw the line regarding Iran threats to attack the US
- Gerry: solid; keeps with statement of purpose; see no problems

- Barry: the first paragraph regarding missions of UN and VFP; would not reject based only on that
- Further discussion on specifics of VFP and UN charter being identical regarding preventing war
- Michael: provisions for allowing violence in self-defense doesn't negate the purpose to prevent war
- Barry: makes it sound simple; need to be consistent
- Tom: problems with the term "threatened;" US Embassy attack was US property
- Ellen Davidson, Member: reads aloud relevant portion of UN charter; I would say that the charter language does authorize use of war
- Barry: therefore identical term is not accurate
- Gerry: for purposes of this resolution, the language works
- Jan Ruhman, Member, San Diego: what about something like VFP works in "concert" with UN as an NGO
 - Barry: we would have to go back to authors and ask them to agree with changes
- Willie calls to question
- **Barry calls for vote**
- **9 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstaining (Monique and Barry)**
- **Board votes to support the resolution**

2016-16: Resolution on Normalization of US Relations with Syria

- Tom: issues with calling on specific US agencies to fulfill a resolution call; precedent is to not do this
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **10 in favor, 0 disapproving; 2 abstaining (Tom and Joey)**
 - **Board votes to support the resolution**

2016-17: Resolution to Reduce US Support of Israeli Aggression

- Gerry: looks good, but frustrated with the Palestine-Middle East working group; have been asking them to provide leadership for VFP BDS campaign; they have not taken steps; we need to provide links to other good campaigns and encourage our members to participate
 - Barry: have asked them to prepare statements and I have not yet heard back
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **10 in favor; 0 disapproving; 2 abstaining (Joey, Willie)**
 - **Board votes to support the resolution**

2016-18: Support For An Independence Referendum In Northern Ireland and an All-Ireland Re-Unification Referendum

- Barry confirms previous vote to not support
- Barry: rationale is that VFP UK and Ireland did not put this forth and they are not pushing it, and there's no substantial movement in Ireland
- **Barry calls for another vote**

- **Board votes 12-0-0 not to support the resolution**

2016-19: Resolution on Deported Veterans

- **Board votes 12-0-0 to support**

2016-20: Emergency Resolution Opposing Arbitrary Resumption of Helipad Construction at Takae, Okinawa

- Barry briefs on late resolution submission; Board takes time to review resolution
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **11 in favor; 0 opposed; 1 abstaining (Willie)**
 - **Board votes to support the resolution**

Break for Lunch – 12:15 PM PDT

Barry reconvenes meeting at 1:54 PM PDT

DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONS FOR 2016

2016 BL-01: Article II. Statement of Purpose

- Barry briefs on the proposed changes to the statement of purpose
 - Tarak: more honest with changes; more inclusive statement; since we have international chapters, we added that part on; no longer U.S.-centric, inclusive so everyone can feel good about it
 - Kourtney: Board previously voted to support
 - Mark: dislike the term “dutifully served;” great teaching moment; supports bylaw change
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **Board votes 12-0-0 to support the proposed bylaw change**

2016 BL-02: Article II. Statement of Purpose

- Joey: briefs on his proposed change; nothing works a hundred percent, but violence is twice as ineffective as nonviolence; what is considered defense changes over time; we previously talked about this idea with resolutions on Hamas and Hezbollah; in every country except Haiti and U.S., slavery ended nonviolently; I don’t think we as an org can support the idea that we can’t use nonviolence but others cannot
 - Willie: JAX progressive coalition faces this issue as well; we have a lot of other groups that represent certain issues and some of them have our allegiance and work with us but end up participating actions that gets people arrested without organizing; we have to agree not to support violent insurrection
 - Gerry: oppose this change; nothing in there to begin with about supporting violent organizations; it takes what we have, which is already good, and all VFP members support, and attempts to expand it to what people see as a pacifist

- manifesto; what it's actually saying is that we don't support some orgs that use violent means; peace activists in the past have pledged nonviolence but resisted condemning other groups who choose to do so for self-defense; we have a whole spectrum of ideas in VFP; don't see why we should open this up; we already have a statement that commits us to acting nonviolently
- Tarak: agree with Gerry; feel it does open a can of worms; we make decisions on an individual basis; don't want to put us in a position that we start telling oppressed people how to resist; our statement is already tight, it defines who we are; our statement doesn't pass judgment on other people who are struggling for liberation
 - Mark: we don't take stand of support when a country is using violent means; we have no responsibility to respond towards that behavior; what we respond to is positive reinforcement of nonviolent means; would change the wording to read better – "...as well as supporting organizations who also use nonviolent means..."
 - Joey: open to that change; want to keep the discussion peaceful
 - Monique: brings up a good opportunity for us to have awareness as an org on how we act towards each other as members; there are moments when our actions and language can be levels of violence towards one another; bring some mindfulness into how we interact; asking members to be more aware of how we are treating one another; the work we all do is important and we are passionate; sometimes we excuse language and tone without thinking about the impact on VFP itself
 - Michael: doesn't make sense for us to put forth something that will cause controversy when it's unnecessary; members have different perspective on self-defense; trying to find places of unity and not accentuating places of disunity; not going to impact what we do; we haven't had this problem of working with violent organizations, I haven't ever seen it happen in VFP; how do we really define what is violent; the proposed language is too general, what are the parameters for supporting orgs that use nonviolent means; which orgs do we support?; I think it's kind of arrogant; like we are superior looking at others when we should look at ourselves; we should tighten ourselves up; act as example to others, so they see that we shouldn't be violent
 - Tom: sympathetic to the idea and premise; but is property damage violence, some would argue it is; swords to plowshares people have been accused of aggression
 - Tarak: personally I have a higher purpose; we want liberation and freedom, end of oppression and exploitation; these are the goals, but not all the same methods; sometimes you have to use force; don't want to make a universal statement
 - Dan: VFP being marked as an "extremist" group; we would be considered by this country as extremist and violent against the U.S.; don't want to complicate this
 - Will, Member: think of the statement as inspired; should be updated very infrequently

- Fred, Member: proposed change muddies the water; doesn't flow well from a language point of view; some orgs use nonviolence in a negative way, as coercive method; the original statement has beauty in the language
- Barry, Member: if it works, don't fix it; sometimes violence does come up with orgs we work with
- Adrian, Member: there is a policy on who VFP who is allowed to endorse or work with; does disturb the flow of the language to include this resolution; our country often uses the defense of women as justification for war; have heard members here twice use their daughters as justification for violence
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **2 in favor, 7 opposed, 3 abstentions**
 - **Board votes not to support the bylaw change 2016 BL-2**
 - Joey expresses intent to allow proposed bylaw change to go forward to the convention

2016 BL-3: Article III, Section 5. Restrict or expel from membership

- Barry briefs on his proposed bylaw change; clarifies differences in terms
 - Gerry: clarify who can appeal at the convention
 - Barry: if we expel, we have to present to the convention; the person who was expelled or denied membership can appeal
 - Gerry: has only happened twice in twelve years; very rare instance
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **Board votes 12-0-0 to support the change**

2016 BL-4: Article X, Section 4(d). Resolutions

- Nate Goldshlag, Member: briefs on proposed change; clean-up language; original language was ambiguous; new language makes it clear that associate members can submit and vote on resolutions
- Discussion on specific wording for clarity
- Barry reads aloud current bylaw section on voting on resolutions and bylaws
- Michael clarifies three levels of Full membership
- Gerry: consistency with the other sections of the bylaws, use same language
 - **Gerry: motion to adopt the amendment of following language: "Full Members and Associate Members shall have the right to submit resolutions."**
 - **Joey seconds**
 - **Barry calls for vote: 12-0-0 to support the bylaw change**

2016 BL-5: Article XII, Section 4. Chapter dues

- Barry reads proposed change aloud
- Nate: briefs on his proposed changes
 - Willie: in our chapter, that's how they become members, by paying national dues

- Gerry: surprised to find that several chapters collect local dues and they feel like their members don't need to pay national dues; thus they are not being counted in our membership rolls
- Dan: if they are not paying national dues but are filing taxes as a chapter under our 501c(3); that would be inappropriate
- Further discussion on chapters excluding members based on dues; creating hardships for struggling members
- **Barry calls for vote**
- **Board votes 12-0-0 to support the bylaw change**

Barry calls for break at 3:05 PM PDT

Barry reconvenes the meeting at 3:50 PM PDT

2016 BL-6: Article XV. Funding

- Barry briefs on the proposed bylaw
 - Michael: the board would still have to make the decision; nothing there keeping the Board from holding responsibility for the decision; anyone who acts in violation of our statement of purpose, we wouldn't want to take money from them anyway; this proposal makes it clearer that the Board has the responsibility; not worth the kind of conflict that would ensue should the Board vote against it; those who did not support the USAID vote will be even more suspect against us
 - Tarak: like the direction of this; agree with Michael; only reservation I have is being locked and placed in a corner in which it is difficult for us to use judgment
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 - Dan: we as a board still have the opportunity to vet whoever we are dealing with, individually; supporting this proposal
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 - Brian: echoes Michael's point about taking the bylaw addition on its face; future boards will make the decision as to whether or not donations met our SOP; inclined to support this
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- Fred, Member: part of organization that received a USAID grant to build a women's shelter in sister city of Ukraine; no such thing in the real world as purity; cutting off source of funds that could be put to use; would not approve this proposal
- **Barry calls for vote**
 - **8 in support; 3 opposed; 1 abstain (Kourtney)**
 - **Board votes to support the proposed bylaw change**

Late bylaw amendment on e-voting

- Tom: asking for suspension of the rules of order and institute special rules of order to waive the thirty-day requirement to submit bylaws to the Board for his resolution on e-voting; would mean we are waiving our own bylaw
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- Barry: would not vote to suspend it; we can do it more orderly and give it to the convention next year to pass it
- John: issue was raised in 2012 in Miami; would show less preparation to present this year to the convention
- Tom: would be okay with tabling
- **Dan motions to table**
- **Barry agrees; Barry tables the bylaw proposal**
- Willie to sit on committee to explore policy on e-voting

Fred Ptucha presents letter submitted to Iran – Climbers For Peace

- VFP has been invited to participate in climb in Iran by I.R. Iran Mountaineering & Sport Climbing Federation

Barry adjourns the meeting at 5:06 PM PDT

Veterans For Peace, Inc.
National Board of Directors Meeting
Conference Call
Tuesday, September 20, 2016

Board members present on the call:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Andar, Secretary
Tarak Kauff
Monique Salhalb
Brian Trautman
Joey King
Dan Shea
John Heuer
Willie Hager

Board members excused from the call:

Tom Palumbo
Jason Cardenas
Gerry Condon, Vice President

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry chairs the meeting.
Barry convenes the meeting at 6:07 PM EDT

Agenda Review

- Barry briefs the meeting on the proposed agenda
 - o Additions to agenda:
 - Possibility of scheduling Board calls for weekends instead of weekdays

Board approves the minutes for the August Board Meeting and the August National Convention Business Meeting

Michael to check on status of dues and DD214 copies in national office for each Board member; will report back to Board

SOAW 2016 Convergence in Nogales

- Willie: we need to get as many people as possible to attend in Nogales; how to rally chapters in on the action; have done a lot of outreach, we have maybe 15 people attending from VFP; will forward Deported Veterans Support House some cash for their

travel expenses to attend; Hector Barajas will be a keynote speaker on the Mexican side once we cross; trying to get Michael on the agenda to speak – Michael confirms; event will be on that Saturday morning and will take up most of the day besides the workshops; tabling will be set up on both sides of border; do not have final resolution on where to hold VFP meeting at the event, but will definitely hold one once room is secured; Michael to secure the room for the meeting; Monique states she will attend with two other ABQ chapter members; Casey Stinemetz from national office as back up along with Michael; Chapter 72 members planning to attend; Willie does not have update on availability of secured lodging rooms at the local hotel

- Tarak: Mike Tork has been directly involved in the organizing; Willie confirms he's in contact with Tork, will be making on-the-ground decisions with Willie and Casey
- Joey: Tork is the VFP rep for the SOAW Council
- Willie: no reason to spend more money on banners; we have plenty of banners; would suggest the banner regarding supporting the legislation, can get people to do a call-to-action
 - Tarak: a lot online about signs and banners; Tork asked Ellen and Tarak to design something that wouldn't be repetitive; Ellen is designing something tonight, we will order it, it will cost about \$140
 - Willie: have a lot of banners and we will need to have people to carry them all; we need to have VFP National banner; Michael confirms he will make sure
- Barry: will be pretty good contingent from San Diego; will be a couple cars bringing people
- Dan: who should people call for lodging
 - Willie: sent info via email; Holiday Inn Express in Nogales front desk attendant; discounted rate for attendees from VFP
 - Michael: Casey is organizing caravan from Santa Fe to Nogales, along with Monique; trying to organize a kick-off event in Santa Fe and maybe Tucson; she's looking at bringing another banner as well as signs for folks to carry
 - Willie: have secured tables for chapter, National and Deported Vets on US side

Membership Sub-Committee Investigation of Robert Funke

- Kourtney: briefs meeting on subcommittee report and recommendation; briefs on specifics of discrepancies between different versions of DD214
 - Barry: clarify which DD214 we're referring to; and also which is his real Social Security number
 - Joey confirms which is the correct SSN; when he requested his own docs for the news article, he mentioned a different number than the one he told us on our investigation conference call; wouldn't make any sense;

- Kourtney: further briefing on discrepancies; differences in fonts used between the documents; lack of recognized formal structure used by Department of Defense and Army; clearly failed to replicate form used by Army
- Tarak: go through the documents, you will find a number of inconsistencies that cannot be valid from his standpoint; two people with his name and SSN except for the last number; subcommittee spoke with Bob on a conference call to give him opportunity to respond intelligently, but he defended many dubious claims; he claimed he was cut with a certain kind of knife in the neck twice by Vietcong, changed the kind of knife it was; he has no visible scar; after taking two blows, he claimed he fired a thirty-round clip killing the Vietcong; there were no thirty round clips in Vietnam, they were instead twenty round clips; Bob Funke tried to defend that discrepancy; he claimed he stabbed someone with an ice pick on patrol in Vietnam; why would you carry an ice pick?; there are a number of his claims that don't make sense; we didn't find any reasonable doubt, and we would have liked to find some; we didn't relish it, just doing our duty
- Brian: misspellings of terms on the two contradictory DD214 documents; for instance, the word "separated" is misspelled; inconsistency between the signatures of Lt. Bonnie Bossart; further briefing on specified discrepancies
- Willie: after forty years of this, I've seen a lot of wanna-be; this is the biggest example;
call to question, take a vote
 - o Barry asks for further discussion
- Joey: my ETS separation docs are the same DD214 version as Bob Funke's at the time, but they don't match; clarify which is the real DD214 and which is the fake one
- Further discussion on discrepancies between the two versions
 - o Michael: reason for circling particular sections is to show mistakes made; the heading itself is incorrect; if a person was trying to duplicate the form, that's a place where they made a mistake in the duplication
 - o Barry: completely different heading in that box
- Barry calls for more discussion
 - o Dan: when you talked to him on the phone; did he have a legitimate DD214, why did he submit a different one, any explanation from him
 - o Discussion on reasoning
- Barry explains Funke's rights to respond to board decision, appeal to convention; calls for more discussion
 - o Tarak: if we vote to expel him, how is that carried out, how is the information made available and to whom; Boston chapter is waiting on National's decision; should take place immediately once we decide
 - o Barry: per bylaws and policy; we have to send him a letter, email won't suffice; Michael confirms it's a certified letter; include his appeal rights in the letter
 - o Michael: president should write the letter, send it from the national office and keep notification on file; tell him what the process is in the letter
 - o Dan: should also be sent to the chapter
 - o Barry: chapter is entitled to know he's been expelled from organization; a couple of problems with propagating it; there is case law on this kind of thing
- **Willie calls to question**

- **Barry calls for roll-call vote on expulsion of Bob Funke from VFP**
 - **Kourtney conducts the roll-call vote**
 - **Mark Foreman: yes**
 - **Tarak Kauff: yes**
 - **Monique Salhalb: yes**
 - **Brian Trautman: yes**
 - **Joey King: yes**
 - **Dan Shea: yes**
 - **John Heuer: yes**
 - **Willie Hager: yes**
 - **Kourtney Andar: yes**
 - **Barry Ladendorf: yes**
 - **Board votes 10-0-0 to expel Bob Funke from VFP**

National Budget Review

- Mark: we're doing well; not super well, but not losing money, unless convention is a big loss
 - assets as of July, more than this time last year
 - member dues are less than budgeted
 - donations are more than budgeted; Craigslist donation of \$50k
 - doing well in expenses; spent less than budgeted as of August 31st
 - don't know what we made or loss from the 2016 convention
- Michael: we actually do have more expenses since payment to Helen Jaccard for GR was not put in general operation budget, it was put in separate line; Virginia originally did that because GR is a project, but that means ten grand is not appropriately reflected; but we will still be above expenses; bad news is that we will definitely lose money on the convention, it will be somewhere between \$20-50k; don't yet know, that's a big difference; there are some things they tried to charge us for that we are currently negotiating; will send them a letter with a check telling them what we will and won't pay; in the next two days, will have a better idea and will send numbers to the Board
 - Michael: paid for a lot of rooms for people to attend, and airfare; not sure if the loss came from facilities, or from trying to support our members; that would be a good investment in the latter; but the former means we have to be more careful about our site host and how much we spend; will ask Casey for update on posting convention video and media production
- Barry: any comments on feedback from members and attendees at the convention; lodging, food, speakers, schedule, time frames
 - Dan: overall the convention was pretty incredible; workshops were completely full, that's good to see; everyone I talked to who attended workshops enjoyed it; WWII veteran attendee enjoyed meeting people outside of workshops; speakers were of course pretty depressing though Daniel Ellsberg was more positive; outside meetings were excellent also

- Tarak: excellent convention; I liked and disliked the Friday night event; had reservations about having four white speakers; but glad they were there, they are terrific people; in the future, we want people to give us more positive messages; each one of them spoke really well; we really need to hear revolutionary stuff, inspires to action, what we are doing and what we can and need to do; we know how bad it is; not impressed with just getting big names; many local progressives who can speak; strategic thinking on action; from this last delegation in Okinawa, it's important to be doing stuff; forget about the odds, I want to know what I can do; but I laud everyone who worked on the convention, great work; we had a convention in the Bay Area with lots of diversity and lots of action going on, and somehow we didn't wind up with any of the local people; in Chicago we need to have more young, people of color
- Joey: when we had the convention six years ago with Chris Hedges, same complaint, too much negativity and the Board caught hell for that; important we get upbeat people
- Brian: my first convention; overall it was incredible awesome experience; speakers, workshops, venue itself; three concerns brought to my attention we can use to approve future conventions
 - consider adding community agreements regarding conduct at convention
 - healthy spaces facilitated by folks in the psychology field to help attendees who are having hard time processing the information from the convention
 - logistical problems with registration
- Monique: beneficial if possible for the hosting chapter to be able to have as much input as possible; more diverse elements on the convention planning committees, maintain level of recognition of various marginalized communities; predominantly white planning committee means their lens is more narrow
- Michael: agree with Monique, but our organization is what it is; most of our chapters will be white people; a lot of times POC are real busy, in part because they are doing this type of work; don't know who the diversity would have been from the San Francisco chapter; it's a challenge because of our make-up; that means we have to educate white members to be more thoughtful; we can't always fill that gap; other parts of the convention were fairly diverse; we had some but not enough of the local activists with a few workshops and with the Sunday night concert; a lot of our conventions don't include as many local activists as we want; part of it is because I don't think our chapters are as plugged into other activism as they should be; that's part of the PAHPA, Peace Is Possible lens we're pushing; get the peace movement to connect more with other movements; for Chicago, we should work on connecting with local activists now, take inventory of what local activists and our chapters are already engaged; see where the gaps are; plug in with them now; let them know we're coming and get them involved early; that will help some of the diversity and make our convention better; provide a platform for chapters in the future because we will have already started the relationships

- Barry: talked to folks from San Diego chapter, they were thrilled; one pointed out that Friday night event message was something we ought to hear; another person said they had never been to a VFP business meeting, but happened to walk into the meeting and thought it was such a good thing and stayed the whole meeting, said she saw it as democracy in action

VFP National Project: Golden Rule Anti-Nuclear Sailboat

- John: went to Port Townsend wooden boat festival; GR was a real magnet for people; crew was on board; they had just won Victoria working boat award; doing fantastic work out there
- Barry: fundraiser brought in more money than they originally thought; had some significant repairs that needed to be made, and then had to get further repairs; they have held their own financially, haven't made money but hanging in there
- Secretary's Note: Gerry absent from meeting; requests to make GR financial update available to the Board; provided below:
 - The Golden Rule fundraising event September 14th in Seattle far exceeded our somewhat lowered expectations. We raised over \$1,200, (after paying about \$1,000 in expenses, primarily for the venue). More monies are reportedly coming in online. Originally, we had hoped to raise thousands; more recently we were hoping to break even. We did a lot better than that. We also had a wonderful event, with the Seattle Labor Chorus and antinuclear singer/songwriter Mike Stern. Helen has accessed more financial data from Eureka and I can now give a significantly rosier picture than I presented on our recent Excom call:
 - Expenses (including boat repairs) of our 2016 journey are approximately \$14,000
 - Monies raised as we have traveled are approximately \$14,000
 - Our Pacific Northwest voyage has been more or less sustainable, after all
 - This does not count other monies that the VFP Golden Rule Project has raised during this period. For example, it does not include the \$4,000 donation from Humboldt Bay VFP Chapter 56, the \$1,200 donation from San Diego VFP, or the \$1,000 grant from the Abe Keller Foundation.
 - Another big number not included in expenses, however, is Helen's contracting fee of \$1,600 per month, which is paid by national VFP.
 - Helen believes there is now as much as \$8,000 in the Golden Rule bank account. We will have a full Treasurer's report as of this coming Monday's (September 19th) monthly meeting of the Golden Rule Committee.

VFP Plans to Address Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament

- Barry: attended international conference in Astana, Kazakhstan addressing nuclear disarmament, organized by Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament; sent along conference declaration called the Astana Vision; conference went well; Barry spoke on panel for civil society members, attendees were very

interested in VFP and Golden Rule; very informative conference, made good connections; we have never had a set program putting forward our position on nuclear weapons; we haven't been as engaged on this issue as we could be; we can come up with a program; one of the first things that is recommended is to get U.S. to sign test ban treaty; important for U.S. to set example for world and join other countries in signing; might be able to draw in other powers who have not signed; second thing is non-proliferation treaty; negotiate in good faith; we need to push U.S. to earnestly move forward; push the Middle East to be a nuclear free zone; Northern hemisphere has the nuclear weapons and is pushing wars around world; Southern hemisphere doesn't have the nuclear weapons; push the idea of nuclear free zones; get countries away from the launch-on-ready status; Obama was seriously considering a no-first-use policy, but was influenced by many of our allies to back away from that; we should push our presidential candidates to adopt no-first-use; working on revising the VFP Nuclear Weapons Working Group to develop a cogent plan for VFP moving forward

- Dan: regarding first-use idea, Daniel Ellsberg talked a lot about this at the luncheon; General Carter recommended to Obama to adopt no-first-use policy; Ellsberg's next book is going to talk about this; accidents have come to the point of near use of nuclear weapons
- Barry: David Krieger of Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, on our advisory board, another good resource and ally
- Tarak: glad Barry went to the conference in Kazakhstan; important you do these kinds of things; represents us very well and makes good international connections; connections will have ramifications; they will ripple; feel the same way about Michael traveling as well; critically important
- Brian: agree on Barry's influence in this issue; adopt a vision of our own regarding nuclear weapons; Astana vision calls for complete abolition of nuclear weapons; we should certainly incorporate this in any statement or campaign we develop; a timeline resonates more than abstract ideas; Brian offers to help serve on committee for this issue in VFP
- Tarak: abolition of nuclear weapons is of critical importance; we can make a lot of sense of no first strike, but our government won't listen to anything other than pressure; mobilize our people to take public stances; march demanding nuclear abolition, no first strike, march on the White House, etc; more publicity, more actions; we don't have to prove that we're right, the world already knows; we have to make stances in-person; Tarak willing to work on developing this
- Michael: agree with Tarak but I don't know if everyone knows we're right; a lot of people don't believe peace is possible; some people do believe we need nukes to protect ourselves; we have to lay down the foundation for the new vision of security; we are in bubbles many times; some people don't agree with us
- Barry: a striking thing I learned in Kazakhstan with all of these countries represented; these countries understand the dangers of nuclear weapons better than we do; these countries are clamoring to get western nations to come to the table on nuclear weapons; two reps from U.S. on the panel in which I spoke; former Department of Energy rep, and a woman in the State Department and

former nuclear weapons negotiator; they agreed but stated we have an obligation to security and to our allies; everyone else mentioned that this is exactly what they expected from the U.S., but they felt they could not challenge the U.S.

VFP 2017 National Convention in Chicago

- Michael: Frank Fitzgerald is lead coordinator of convention committee, have talked with me quite a bit over past week; can't say we know a lot at this point; we are going to put together spreadsheet with four site possibilities; two schools, possibly two hotels; one university is in downtown Chicago, but the room rate is high, so we are going back to the hotel to get a lower rate; Loyola University wanted an answer from us by tomorrow, we will ask them for more time; worst case scenario is we go with the hotel because it's a great location, but room rate is high but we can possibly get three people in each room; on the other hand, the school is a similar situation in terms of paying for facilities; Loyola University doesn't have a banquet site, but their rooms are cheaper, so we would have to pay for another banquet site but can save money on their rooms
 - o Barry: with the schools, are there meal plans available; Michael states no info available on meal plans, will report back to Board

VFP Standing Rock Committee

- Barry: agree with supporting the Standing Rock protest encampment; how many people on the Board need to attend; we should encourage chapters in the area to attend; not essential every Board member should attend; we still have other priorities, as Board members we have to do; we have to make sure we keep the foundation of the organization moving forward; support our mission's activities
 - o Brian: Tom mentioned he may go out to camp early October; I may still attend; working with VFP member Four Arrows on his potential trip there in early November; he was given sacred items to bring to the encampment; as far as the committee, I agreed with Tarak that we would co-chair, and we have a conference call tomorrow night; Michael Sullivan will join us on the call, we have created agenda, will know more after that call
 - o Barry: other people on the committee?
 - o Brian: include VFP members who have been to encampment, also Tarak, Martin Bates, Michael Sullivan
 - o Tarak: will keep Gerry Condon posted, he's busy but he wants to be kept in the loop; he agrees Standing Rock is of critical importance; I personally am not interested in building a large committee; three or four people is enough; process is accelerated with smaller committee; disagree a little with what Barry said, this is one of the most critical events for VFP; will go with Ellen for a solid week; Matt Hoh is attending for ten days; Will Griffin will attend and film and post on YouTube and Facebook; encouraging Michael or Barry to spend a day or two to attend; a victory at Standing Rock will have huge ramifications; critically important for PAHPA, and not just side energy, but put real energy into it; we have a banner and special t-shirts to bring; we are not the lead on this stuff, we

- have to attend in deep solidarity with the people there; Okinawan people were talking about Standing Rock, they saw themselves in solidarity
- Barry: tribes from the Amazon in South America who journeyed to Standing Rock; people coming from everywhere
 - Monique: Gerry sent out notice that a UNAC conference call was sent out; one of the participants had come back from Standing Rock and stated that the encampment is planning to stay until January 1st; it's vital that VFP have a presence there; yet another example of what our communities have to deal with; we do have a large contingency of native Pueblo members who have attended from Albuquerque
 - Michael: Barry is saying that we need to have some balance; the peace movement has to do double-duty; we have to connect with people's lives, and shine spotlight on U.S. war making around the world; we need to write something and continue to put stuff out to help people understand more clearly why this is important to VFP and the peace movement; make sure our attendees have our statement as well as some underpinnings of the reasons why we are there; we want our people to be saying the same thing; there needs to be organizational reasons that are shared over and over again; connecting with whoever is providing logistical support; utilize our networks; it's going to get cold up there, we need to help out with real life things on the ground in order for people to sustain themselves
 - Brian: many of those concerns are agenda items on tomorrow's committee call
 - Barry: who is preparing another statement and who will work on it; we need to have a focused intentional statement that we can speak to; explain why VFP considers this a place to make an important stand; give the same message over and over again
 - Tarak: I think the original statement says quite a bit in that direction; speaking for myself and the five other members of VFP Okinawa delegation – we didn't make a cohesive statement or talking points; every one of us related all of this there, and we can do it in Standing Rock; PAHPA, how it relates to our experience as veterans of U.S. militarism; relates to wars around the world, and the war against indigenous people; they all know this, they speak from the heart; we don't have to give them talking points; we make sure everyone on each delegation can speak to our mission and purpose
 - Michael: that's not the issue; we are an organization, not individuals; if we are not putting out the same ideas that sound similar, then we don't have a cohesive message; one of the reasons this country is further to the right than we should be is because the right is disciplined in their message, and people start to believe it; we need to have a disciplined message; we want to make sure certain things are said and expressed in a certain way
 - Tarak: we are all playing riffs on the same theme; we didn't have to tell each other in Okinawa what to say; we are saying the same thing; we will develop a protocol on conduct and participation

- Barry: it's not necessarily easy to make the connection between Okinawa and Standing Rock; folks who have been to Okinawa, lived there or served there, they speak similarly and experience in the same way; it's not something that is foreign to us, it's easy for us who served there; but Standing Rock is different, we are not indigenous, we are not protecting sacred ground; it's important that our participants in Standing Rock have an understanding; I think we need to have a coherent message
- Kourtney: definitely understand what Tarak is saying, and though I don't plan to travel to Standing Rock, I believe I could speak to VFP mission and reason for being there; however, agree with Michael and Barry, we are an organization; I say this because I've been a member of several activists groups both nationally and internationally over the last ten years, and we thought the same thing, that we could trust members to relay organizational principles and mission, but it turned out that several members had been completely misrepresenting our positions, even though they had been attending events and actions as members; we had to let some members go because of this; we need talking points; can't force members to use them, but every member attending needs to know that VFP has a specific coherent message and reason for assisting with the struggle
- Dan: oftentimes we can hand a VFP statement to our members and we can pass it on to media and others who can use it; make it available
- Tarak: we already have the statement on the website, read the statement; it lays out clearly why VFP is there; we don't have to reinvent the wheel
- Michael: but just like with Black Lives Matter and PAHA, one statement didn't do it enough; we will have to put out more information and statements to educate our members and supporters; an organizational statement is not the same thing as talking points for delegation attendees

Northeast Ohio Chapter 39 Member Issues

- Michael: Chapter 39 member has been disruptive during meetings and has sent out provocative emails and has used sexist and racist language; chapter is asking what they could do; the National Excom had a discussion during our conference call on the extent to which a chapter can hold members accountable; we told them that a chapter has the right to tell a member he can't come to meetings until he changes his behavior; but chapters, according to bylaws, don't have the right to expel member from their chapter; only the National Board can expel a member; if the chapter wants to expel a member, they have to put together a case, bring it to the Board, and then we can make that decision; or the Board can start the investigation on our own, without waiting for a chapter; the chapter responded and said that they understand
 - Joey: do we know if this member is current on dues? Michael confirms that yes the member is current
 - Michael: we need to make our policy clearer on how chapters can deal with member misconduct; need to discuss at Chicago Board meeting

- Kourtney: reminding the Board that the Board can always direct the Membership Committee to begin an investigation into member misconduct; of course, it's always better to get the first go-ahead from the chapter because they will be more cooperative with the investigation if they give us the go-ahead; but we don't have to necessarily wait on the chapter if we already have evidence of misconduct; the Board can use email communication to direct the MC, or they can wait on further developments and make a decision in Chicago

Barry suggests tabling the rest of the agenda items for Chicago meeting; Board agrees

Barry adjourns the meeting at 8:30 PM EDT



Veterans For Peace
National Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes
Chicago, IL, USA
October 21 – 23, 2016

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Veterans For Peace
National Board of Directors
Chicago, IL
Friday, October 21, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Andar, Secretary
Jason Cardenas
Dan Shea
Tarak Kauff
Brian Trautman
Monique Salhab

Board members absent from the meeting:

Willie Hager
Tom Palumbo
Joey King
John Heuer (resigned)

VFP members at the meeting:

Frank Fitzgerald, Chicago Chapter
Mac MacDevitt, Chicago Chapter
Cameron Hales

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry chairs the meeting.
Kourtney records the minutes.
Barry convenes the meeting at 1:45 PM CDT

Agenda Review

- Barry briefs the meeting on the agenda as provided
 - o Barry: briefing on potential Board retreat in January; discussion on identifying major projects to sustain; retreat acts as welcome to new Board members; bring in facilitator for retreat.

Barry breaks the meeting for Board on-site tour of HI Chicago Hostel as possible lodging for 2017 VFP Convention in Chicago.

Kourtney requests to be excused from the meeting due to sickness.

Barry reconvenes the meeting at 3:18 PM CDT.
 Brian and Monique record the minutes.

Proposal for New Chapter in Dekalb, Illinois, USA

- Cameron Halas: Iraq War veteran, lives in Dekalb; Casey Stinemetz (VFP staff) has Dekalb listed as temporary chapter. Cameron has five members right now including himself. Three of these members are Vietnam vets. They have three maybes as well. There are 400 veterans that attend NIU. Cameron wants to recruit at NIU. Cameron's vision is to bring on younger veterans to chapter. Cameron was a member of IVAW. Cameron explains his belief about Veterans For Peace being a positive organization, about being for peace, not only against war. Sponsored by a campus group (Students for Diversity), can facilitate access to campus events and organizing. NIU Assistant Dean of College of Liberal Arts & Sciences is an Associate Member.
 - o Barry: asks about format and organization of chapter as well as leadership, is the chapter autonomous or linked to the university.
 - o Cameron: this would be a community-based chapter with campus support, but separate from university.
 - o Barry: I fully support expansion and growth of chapters.
 - o Cameron outlines plans for constitution, petition, to create and advance chapter.
 - o Tarak: Recommends using PIOT as good way to inform and recruit potential members. Tarak gives Cameron information for ordering PIOT.
 - o Barry: Asks Cameron if he got a chapter starter-kit. Cameron says yes.
- Barry asks for consensus about accepting chapter.
 - o Mark: Legally you need to have 10 full members. Mark asks about potential for 10. Mark asks how to proceed with less than 10. Barry says in bylaws we can approve chapter with less than 10.
 - o Monique: How does campus support work? Cameron says student-based organization is assisting.
 - o Board decides to table decision on approval of Dekalb, IL chapter until report back from Cameron Halas and Casey regarding number of veteran members for initial start-up

2017 VFP Convention Planning Discussion

- Barry - Palmer House Hilton will be great site. Thanks for Frank. Things we need to consider moving forward is the theme, logo. We will need to put together a convention committee. We'll begin having a conference call one time a month to start then more frequent calls as we get closer to convention. We need to finalize contract with Palmer House and HI Chicago Hostel. One of the things that has been discussed is the idea of sponsors. There could be organizations in the city that could assist financially and otherwise and become part of convention. Perhaps sponsors on Advisory Board. We could also use booklet to raise money for convention. Should we explore asking neighboring businesses to Palmer House to advertise in convention booklet to raise

funds for the convention -- like eateries, CVS, etc.? We could have folks go to places close by and approach businesses to support our mission through our convention.

- Frank - I think that's a great idea. Nearby is the Pritzker Military Museum and Library could be a place we could tap for support. Perhaps we could reach out to the Pritzker Family/Foundation. There are other organizations in Chicago as well that give money to progressive work. Frank stated they (chapter) needs some assistance with approaching prospective organizations for sponsorship. Is there a sponsorship packet? Levels of sponsorship? Barry informed Jim Driscoll and he would be available to assist. Frank informed the chapter has two new committees: Advertisement and Sponsorship.
- Gerry - Will these groups, organizations, businesses want to support a convention? Does the museum have a space we can use for convention?
 - Frank - Yes, it does.
- Mac - Suggests we consider levels of sponsorship for convention as well as booklet advertisement potential.
- Barry - Emphasizes sponsors will need certain perks to participate and join.
- Michael - We would need to figure out and develop a sponsorship plan for convention.
- Frank: What will we talk about during convention committee calls? How many people?
 - Barry/Gerry: Discusses the makeup of the committee -- maybe eight or nine people?
 - Michael: There have been times, as in Nashville, we there were calls with more than several people because of the input needed from folks with specific knowledge.
- Frank: We have an artist working on the logo. We are working on the theme. Education Not Militarization is a working theme. Perhaps we could expand it. Militarization of police, etc.
 - Barry: Draft theme can be submitted to board for review and feedback.
 - Michael: Working on the theme is a collaborative effort. We can provide initial input now on the front-end.
 - Barry: This is a good opportunity to talk to Chicago Chapter to get ball rolling on convention. We can discuss theme more in depth. How we can expand theme to include more aspects/roots/outcomes of militarization.
 - Mac: Demilitarization at home, demilitarization abroad could be included.
- Barry: We will have panels including post 9-11 veterans. As an organization, where is the convention going in terms of us deciding on major issues to push out through the convention? The logo and some of the speakers as well as public event that will focus on theme.
 - Gerry: The terms militarization and demilitarization are not catchy and may be difficult to package.
 - Michael: Whatever we do we should include topic of gun violence in Chicago.
 - Dan: Discusses Henry Giroux's book *America at War with Itself*. This concept of education and the idea of America at war with itself. Perhaps we could include this in theme, topic.

- Jason: Discusses military recruitment in schools. We need to address this. Recruiting is occurring in black and Latino schools.
- Frank: Military academies are spread throughout the city and they go into schools.
- Tarak: An overriding umbrella of militarization of schools - this country has always used racism and profit as reason to dominate and control people. War abroad starts at home. We should keep the idea of racism in theme, topic.
- Jason: Does Chicago have Project on Youth & Non-Military Opportunities (Project YANO)? Briefing on counter recruitment program in San Diego.
- Frank: American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) does that type of work in Chicago.
- Barry: One of the things we would want to think about is a workshop on counter-recruitment.
- Jason: We should have action-oriented counter recruitment workshop to encourage action.
- Gerry: Do you have agreement across Chicago on this issue?
- Mac: it's a difficult sell to get the military out of schools. The Department of Defense pays for classes, instructors, school trips.
- Barry: Kids for Peace has 5 million members. I talked with founder about coming to convention to talk about building peace studies programs in the schools.
- Frank: We have a very small team facing a very big team. We do not have a lot of human capital and resources to do the work of demilitarizing our schools. The things we've done have included going to parades to educate and inform. We also go to Board of Education. We have meetings with the head of ROTC in Chicago about critical thinking and teaching of peace. Rory goes to the schools and talks with kids. We have billboards.
- Barry: What they've done here in Chicago will billboards have amazing. Very effective communication tool.
- Dan: What about the teacher's union? Could they be an ally?
- Frank: The teacher's union has its own problems. There are lots of people in the teacher's union who are allies. But I don't feel that as an institution the teacher's union could assist. We could have Karen Lewis, head of the Chicago Teacher's Union, speak at convention.
- Dan: We need to get students on board. We are doing this work in Portland. In Portland, we try to push an equal access program to get in schools.
- Frank: Is there talk about an action with the convention?
 - Barry: Some conventions we have, and some conventions we haven't. Maybe one thing we envision is to take an area of Chicago and do a march. Have some speakers. Invite community and press. Kids of Peace could be a part of this. There is a guy who is developing a curriculum in Florida to teach peace.
 - Mac: Teachers for Social Justice - Chicago Chapter could be approached to join any potential action.
 - Barry: An action in the form of a March could reach many local veterans as well.
- Mac: How do we work together on speakers?

- Barry: One of the people we may approach as a keynote speaker is Michael Moore. We also want to bring in people that represent a diversity of the local community. As we develop the theme, then we can think more about speakers. Michael Moore would be a draw.
- Tarak: On the Michael Moore idea, we should consider diversity, as we have had many white male speakers.
- Michael: There have been discussions about the people who we want to speak at our conventions. We have agreed about speakers in the past. The local people...the local chapter...will also decide all the people they would like. We have an opening plenary at the convention. We have an official opening of convention. We have an MC from local chapter. We have a community based event. With the banquet, we have one or two major speakers. In terms of diversity, the music event that is being proposed could have community people discuss their issue and what people can do. We want to show interconnections between violence and injustice. Music can bring a diverse audience. The Empire Room at the Palmer House is a potential spot for the music event. We need to consider it.
- Barry: How far do we want the reach of the music event to be? How big? Is there a facility in Chicago that could hold a larger musical event?
- Gerry: VFP is committed to becoming a more diverse organization. We want to reflect that at our convention. We don't want what happened at public event at last convention having all white speakers to happen again.
- Mark: Maybe we could have Tavis Smiley.
- Frank: What is our decision-making flexibility on speakers, etc. as a local chapter?
- Gerry: It is a collaboration. Chapter should consider themselves an equal partner, at least, in decision making.
- Barry: Final decisions, however, rest with the board.
- Frank: We have committees in our chapter. We have a structure. But we have like 5 people who want to do workshop. Three people who want to do speakers. But we don't have anyone volunteered to organize the action.
- Barry: We have a proposal process. At local level, chapter members could have theme. It is not responsibility of chapter to organize workshops.
- Michael: The convention committee will make certain decisions. Mini-plenaries were offered during last convention. Mini-plenaries are three workshops. The board generally decides on mini-plenaries.
- Mac: I'm heading up a project with the local chapter on memorial for Vietnamese people who were killed during Vietnam. We would like to present memorial at convention. Dialogue, art work, storytelling could be part of memorial project. We are hoping this project could be something that we could move around the country. The chapter is the sponsor. It's a chapter initiative.
 - Michael: Is this something the entire chapter has decided should be at convention?
 - Mac: It was a committee decision but still needs full chapter approval.

- Dan: Mike Hastie and his mural project raised money for Mai Lai mural that needs repaired in Vietnam. Could Mack's project be combined with Mike's? Does this project fundraise?
- Mac: People could make decisions to support projects that are remedies to wounds of Vietnam, in terms of the civilian impact. Yes, in terms of being involved in how to make a difference, we are working to make a connection between various projects
- Barry: I could see a big plenary on child soldiers and the connection to how our kids are taught at a young age about the celebration of militarism and war.
 - Michael: We could also include a local former gang member on that plenary to add insight into the roots of recruitment for violence.
- Mac: Asks about agenda
 - Barry: Explains agenda for next two days - Saturday and Sunday
- Barry: Reminder of social event tonight with Chicago chapter at 7:30 at Potters Restaurant.
- Tarak: Question about Keynote speaker - What is our rationale for keynote speaker? One rationale is drawing media and people to the convention. The other rationale is revolutionary action. What's going to inspire our young veterans? A keynote that is a Black or Indigenous leader could motivate people to action. These are two rationales.
 - Barry: Michael Moore can be inspiring. I've seen Michael Moore rouse people.
 - Mark: Asks Tarak if he has a list of speaker ideas
 - Tarak: Yes, but none of the names are widely known, famous.
 - Gerry: We could have multiple keynote speakers. Michael Moore could speak at public event and we could have someone else at another event.
 - Barry: Michael Moore has been a supporter of VFP. His father is an Agent Orange victim. Michael Moore has said to stay in touch about speaking.
 - Barry: Community event would address Peace at Home, Peace Abroad. Community event allows community to think about how community problems are tied to problems outside communities and abroad.
 - Michael: Another possibility for keynote is Alicia Garza
 - Mark: Offers yet another possibility for keynote - Michelle Alexander.
- Mac: What is the timeline for decision-making?
 - Barry: There is a template that's available to us for what needs to be done when, in terms of convention planning. The sooner the better. The theme sets the framework for speakers, workshops.
 - Michael: We've discussed theme today, so we have a good start. We want to include that the city of Chicago is representative of this epidemic of violence and militarization. Demilitarization of schools and police and the epidemic of violence that Chicago represents and that we also see abroad can serve as a basis moving forward.
- Gerry: We are back to regular convention schedule this year.

Barry adjourns the meeting at 5:34 PM CDT

Veterans For Peace
National Board of Directors
Chicago, IL
Saturday, October 22, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Andar, Secretary
Jason Cardenas
Dan Shea
Tarak Kauff
Brian Trautman
Monique Salhab
Joey King

Board members absent from the meeting:

Willie Hager
Tom Palumbo

VFP members at the meeting:

Bob Gronko, Chicago Chapter
Rory Fanning, Chicago Chapter
Mac MacDevitt, Chicago Chapter
Frank Fitzgerald, Chicago Chapter

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry chairs the meeting.
Kourtney records the minutes.
Barry convenes the meeting at 9:15 AM CDT.

Introductions of Board members and VFP members

Golden Rule Northwest Voyage & Financial Status Report

- Gerry: completed second sailing season; 4 ½-month journey around the Pacific Northwest region; 23 educational/financial fundraising events; 4 actions, 4 wooden boat festivals; support boat for canoe journey around B.C. and Salish Sea region; Gerry did not attend, was attending Syrian peace delegation trip; successful journey for GR; stopped in many cities and ports, made new friends, great events; have the potential for much greater events; not big money makers; did not have huge media; more than

respectable events but greater potential; trip cost was \$14,000, about half of expected expenses; gas, diesel, supplies, food, publicity, printing, four and a half months of sailing and shore support; Helen Jaccard was coordinator and also served on crew at times; had a rotating crew, including a lot of VFP members from around the country; some uncertainty with stability and security and team cohesion, but we were very lucky to have a good crew; highly experienced and capable captains; had at least 20 different crew members; for many it was one of the high experiences of their lives; some crew members joined VFP after crewing; brought in \$14,000 in income; does not include paid 20 hours/week for Helen Jaccard; GR Project raised other money; Chapter 56 in Humboldt Bay donated \$4000-5000; bank account is around \$7000; outstanding debt for boat yard, paying month-to-month; Helen has drafted a budget and will be reviewed by Gerry and Michael; proposing \$144k budget; includes Helen's pay rate; member in Humboldt Bay is paid for GR work; Michael considering bringing in half-time staffer to assist with GR activities; have a cooperative arrangement with GR Committee who meets in Eureka, CA; responsible for rebuilding and operations; have to figure out how to arrange a common agreement and responsibilities for all parties involved; have hit a few snags with these negotiations in the past, but in practice it's headed in the right direction; hopefully we will finish a Memorandum of Understanding by end of year; plan is to sail every year around the U.S.; requests for GR to head to Marshall Islands, also Japan; have been considering going to Gulf around Texas in the spring; sail from Galveston, TX; Houston, TX; Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, maybe even Cuba; a Cuba trip would put us on the map nationally and internationally; work our way up the East Coast, eventually St. Lawrence Seaway, the Great Lakes, even in Chicago in a couple of years; Fredy Champagne's original vision was a ten-year program sailing around the U.S.; GR manifests our commitment to abolishing nuclear weapons in a very powerful way.

- Joey: how to reach the Gulf, trucking or sailing the Panama Canal?
 - Gerry: we planned to truck it, easier and cheaper and take the Canal; but recent thinking among the principle people is that it's not that cheap to truck it across; it might be cheaper, easier, and exciting to sail the Canal
 - Joey: any legalities around sailing into Cuba
 - Gerry: very easy to sail into Cuba
 - Joey: where are we on the ownership?
 - Gerry: will be resolved with the forthcoming MOU; title is in the name of VFP GR Project; from very beginning it was viewed as a VFP chapters thing; now it's a National Project; there is no such legal entity of VFP GR Project; we want to collegially decide that together with the people in Humboldt Bay; GR hasn't made it home yet, stuck on Oregon coast because of bad sailing weather; waiting on good weather window at current dock in Newport, OR; hopefully home by next week
- Mark: for 2016, it was budgeted for \$60k in the VFP national budget; the new budget for 2017 is around \$114k; does that include the cost of paying Helen Jaccard
 - Gerry: the \$60k was what VFP put in its own budget, not the entire cost

- Michael: some things in the budget paid for by GR fundraising; not necessarily a separate budget; we need one budget; figure out a real fundraising program; maximize efforts for GR
 - Gerry: preliminary draft 2017 budget
 - Mark: love the idea of Gulf voyage, but getting it there will add quite a cost
 - Gerry: that cost is included in new budget; someone had done a similar trip; daunting enough figure that we figured we could just sail it through the Canal, it's cheaper; don't know how much cheaper
 - Mark: need to have the money to do this; if GR has developed this reputation on the West Coast, it will look good to major donors; explain in detail this dream of voyage, there is real potential for major donors; could take a couple years of planning and fundraising to think about going to the Gulf; next summer seems unrealistic
 - Gerry: we recently discussed a possible break for a year; but my argument is to keep the momentum going; not exciting if it's just sitting around; I think we should keep pushing forward, but not my decision; for the Board and GR committee
- Barry requests discussion stays on status and finances and condition of GR
- Michael: there are a number of things that need to be worked out; talked with Helen about part-time staffer; events could have been more maximized; someone who is doing tasks such as organizing with ports and destinations, media outreach, and increasing visibility of boat; that's where we've fallen short the most, other than developing a strong program to present at destinations; ownership of boat is critical; if something happens on a voyage, that stuff really becomes an issue; a real fundraising program that is sure revenue coming in; critical to any efforts towards expansion of voyages; we have to have enough infrastructure and legal stuff in place first
- Brian: ask about the incident with the accident with local law enforcement
 - Gerry: early in Portland, OR journey during Fleet Week; accidentally rammed by reckless sheriffs from Washington County who didn't know how to sail and got too excited with our peace boat; swerved at the last minute and still damaged the boat; outside front hull on starboard side, a little dent, not serious; but inside, you can see it's actually cracked a major plank in the boat, will likely have to be replaced; will cost us; we are filing in the simple tort process in Oregon; we have a lawyer on pro-bono basis; we have a couple of months to complete the filing
- Dan: quick search on costs for big and small boats to sail through Canal, can find this info easy; not as if we have money ahead of time, the projects raise the money; we can do a campaign to raise the money
 - Barry: we need to get the legal stuff taken care of first
 - Michael: not necessarily sequential; we need time to set some goals, and then meet those benchmarks; maybe a year to make sure all those things are in place; create a sense of urgency to get the preliminary tasks done;

don't think it's a good idea to wait and plan year-to-year; plan ahead so you know where you're going

- Barry: need to find experienced Caribbean sailors; big hurricane season, insurance costs will be high; most people don't sail between June and October in the Caribbean

Proposal for VFP to Join U.S. Hands Off Syria Coalition

- Board introductions to Rory Fanning, Chicago Chapter; Rory will be attending Japan delegations; conscientious objector; speaking tour of local public schools to oppose militarization in schools
- Gerry distributes copies of U.S. Hands Off Syria Coalition statement
- Barry designates 15 minutes for meeting to review coalition statement; and review Rory Fanning and Brian Bean's statement on Syria as published on socialistworker.org
- Barry reconvenes the meeting, introduces guidelines for discussion; issue is the Hands Off Syria statement; Gerry attended Syria peace delegation and was involved with organizing coalition and statement
- Gerry: General Wesley Clark reported that another general informed him of five-year plan to invade and destabilize seven Middle Eastern states; control of oil was key, but didn't want independent countries who could stand up to U.S. and Israeli hegemony in the region; intervention by foreign entities in Syria has fueled the war for five years; \$100 billion supporting armed extremists in Syria; Israel has bombed Syria couple of times, and playing bigger role behind the scenes; Israeli foreign minister on record stating that the war should go on for more years; mercenaries and extremists from 150 countries fighting in Syria; many came from Europe; hell-bent on destroying one of the last remaining secular states in Middle East; Al-Qaeda last stronghold is in Aleppo; U.S. has bombed the Syrian army, gave ISIS a chance to overrun the Syrian army positions; some have speculated that U.S. is undermining the cease-fire; VFP has issued several statements over couple years opposing U.S. intervention in Syria; Gerry invited onto peace delegation to Syria; met with government, opposition parties, religious, humanitarian NGOs, peace community, and others; heard from most we met with that they don't see this as a civil war; they have a peace and reconciliation process in place; many see this as the future of Syrian state; concerns about who would come to power if Assad falls; some possible new leaders would likely oppress religious minorities; Gerry invited by UNAC to have input on coalition statement; addresses confusion within the peace movement; demonizing Assad, disoriented and disarmed the peace movement; there are groups in the U.S. left believing that there is a revolution happening in Syria; have joined the anti-Assad sentiment, wanting the U.S. intervention to continue; small minority, very active; some are very concerned about Russian intervention in Syria; we are accused of being pro-Assad because we don't explicitly condemn him, but point 7 of the Points of Unity is clear; Point 5 is sometimes interpreted as supporting Russian intervention, but sovereign governments have the right to request military assistance; does not mean we have to approve of Russia bombing Aleppo; after VFP Excom discussion, Gerry requested changes to the statement from the coalition, and they approved; resulted in 4 Demands in the statement; sanctions have hurt the people more

than the government, particularly in the healthcare sector; the coalition statement published a week ago, now has 150 organizations signed on; intention is to come to a common understanding of the nature of the Syrian war, and mount actions against U.S. and NATO intervention; big response is coming from the vacuum and hunger, lacking leadership; many orgs had suggestions on improving the statement, many put those suggestions aside and accept less-than-perfect statement in the spirit of unity; really important that VPF be a part of the response, we are in position to sign-on and provide leadership; exciting development in the peace movement

- **Tarak proposes to forego the process of Board discussions and instead allow Rory Fanning to follow up with his perspective; Board agrees**
- Rory Fanning: coming at this from an angle of speaking against U.S. intervention worldwide; addressing Point 7 of coalition points of unity; I think as a peace org that is not the case, we must show solidarity with the people of Syria; councils in Syria organized to bring peace to Syria; they want to get rid of the tyrant Assad, have visited Syria and talked to them; we have to oppose war across the board; we prioritize focus on U.S. exit, but we stand in solidarity with the people against Russia; U.S. Peace Council doesn't even want to acknowledge genocide and use of Russian barrel bombs; the idea that radical Islamist fundamentalists are the only ones who want to overthrow Assad is a great disservice to the people of Syria who also want him overthrown; it's no different than having a peace council visit North Korea and orchestrated by Kim Jung Un; heard from actual Syrians that it is a totalitarian police state; book Burning Country written by actual Syrians, starting with Arab Spring in 2011; we should oppose any imperialist intervention of any kind
- Barry opens for comments
 - o Joey: the post WWI countries thrown together after the dissolving of the Ottoman Empire have a bad track record; Syria should be two countries at least, with Kurdistan being the other; all sides have committed war crimes in the Syrian war; if we tend to support one side over another, we're still supporting war crimes; Syria is a strange conflict, it's a proxy war with U.S., Iran, Saudi Arabia; also a religious war, a separatist war, and a civil war; I don't agree that it's not a civil war, that still part of it; it's not a democracy; Russia is an occupying force, still occupying at least two countries; Russia is a smaller empire, has facilities in ten countries; we run the risk of saying U.S. violence is bad, but Russian violence is okay; the model may be an independent Kurdistan, and a Lebanese model where each sectarian group gets a certain number of members in the parliament; opposed the coalition statement for these reasons
 - o Brian: Gerry mentioned that he was told on the delegation about certain factors and issues on the ground with the ongoing war; who are those individuals, how are they independent; a concern was raised by Rory that you were given the government's direction on who you spoke with; question for Rory to give us info on some of his sources, and how they are independent; how are they getting their information, from their own experience; lack of mention regarding climate change and drought in both positions; the Arab Spring of 2011 occurred during the same time frame of the major historic drought in that region; tens of

- thousands of farmers no longer able to sustain themselves; contributed to the uprising; would like to hear from both Gerry and Rory about their ideas of climate change in both statements
- Gerry: climate change was not considered in the statement; certainly a reality to that, climate change played a role and we heard that in several places while in Syria; there was a big historic famine and many farmers could no longer support themselves, and they moved to the cities; resources and jobs were scarce; ethnic tensions were increased; major factor in the nonviolent protests against the government in 2010-2011; quickly infiltrated by violent protestors; oftentimes many people never bring it up; we negotiated with the Syrian embassy in Washington for several months; we talked with top Muslim leader in Syria; bishop of Greek Orthodox Church; extensive access to government people; in Syria for six days; in Damascus, the capital, for five of those six days; I don't pretend we got the whole perspective of ideas in Syria; we did speak to a lot of people; we spoke to the hundred-year-old parliament
 - Rory Fanning: climate change affects everything; I didn't bring that up because I was dealing specifically with why we need to denounce a dictator in Syria; Opposition Freedom Syria Now is an organizing group; important to listen to worker's councils, factory workers, young people, reporters; the people Gerry's delegation spoke with are upper-class privileged people; important to get the perspective from ordinary people
- Barry: what year was the book written
 - Rory: Burning Country, came out last year, was in the works since 2011
 - Tarak: stress the points of agreement between the two positions that we all share; thinking about how this all got started; resistance in Syria started nonviolently against Assad's policies; how does the U.S. react to this, with their longstanding goal of regime change; U.S. instigating tumult and violence; doesn't matter where the violence comes from; once the government reacts, that gets the ball rolling; people in the nonviolent resistance will want to respond violently with revolution; testimony from people in the nonviolent movement stated that it screwed up the movement; outside elements like ISIS and others coming in and exacerbating it, along with U.S.; not sure how strong the people's influence is right now; the coalition is phrased with dogmatic language; personally would not have included Point 5 if I was going for broad support; it's basically a support for Assad; if we want to modify and influence it in anyway, then we can't if we are outside of it; problem with Point 7, it can be discussed quite a bit
 - Dan: how do we address the issue of Russian intervention; we should be condemning all violence; our main concern is that we are U.S. veterans and we should be against U.S. intervention anywhere in the world; we should be calling for a direction towards peace
 - Michael: there is some agreement; everyone agrees that the U.S. has taken advantage of the Syria situation; point of contention is the role of Russia, and how to characterize Assad; some point of contention on how

the nonviolent resistance became violent; for me, I believe the Syrian government became violent against the people before the people became violent; if that's the case, it's similar with what happens here with police or U.S. government calling in National Guard and we always stand against that; nonviolent resisters like us have to be in solidarity with those same people in other countries; don't see contradiction on putting our focus on U.S. foreign-policy and also holding Russia responsible as well; Russia has had a base in Syria for a long time; bases in countries are strategic to control what happens in that region; didn't see Russia that much different than the U.S.; Russia has a history of expansion; don't see Russia, U.S., ISIL as being that much different than each other; I don't think we can join the coalition because there is no urgency to join right now; I don't know why should can't work with them without being in the coalition; want a real plan on what we can do to make a difference in Syrian people's lives; what do our members think; don't want to see us lose even one member because of this coalition; don't want a big argument about it; we are not clear on our position, so how can we join right now; what is VFP program priority when it comes to Syria; we have internal work to do; we can still do work with coalition members; don't care if many orgs have joined, we are VFP and our name means something more than most other orgs and we have to get our stuff together before we move forward with the coalition

- Barry: agree with Michael; number of orgs signed on doesn't influence my opinion; putting history aside, just looking at the document; internal inconsistency because of too much compromise; Point 1, how can you say that the war is going on without mentioning Russian intervention; agree with Tarak on Point 5 issue of Syrian government requesting foreign assistance; no right of intervening country to commit war crimes, that's what happened, we should point that out; Point 6, well Russia is there, that's foreign intervention, so the point is inaccurate; Point 8, sidesteps the effect of Russian intervention; why can't we go to the UN Security Council with U.S. and Russia and start the peace process there; my concern is that we need to craft a statement that we can live with as an organization; we should include all the players, including Russia, U.S., and the other foreign interveners; not worried about standing on the outside; let others come to us and ask us our position and we can explain

- Barry opens for guest comments
 - Frank: complicated issue; levels of disagreement and confusion; one level is old left arguments, try to cut through it because it's no longer useful; there are real differences between the factual issues; unrealistic to ask the groups to come together because of lack of concrete facts; focus on Russia, then is the Russian role comparable to the U.S. role; there are real differences with what the Russians are doing versus the U.S. actions; a big part of what is going on is a long-term subversion of Syrian society, as outlined with General Wesley Clark

statement; overlay of ideologies; a factual question is what is going on in Aleppo; are Russians bombing civilians or are they bombing terrorist orgs in Aleppo; is it the foreign interventionists whom the U.S. is arming; if they are bombing terrorists, then the question is does VFP have a position on how to peacefully deal with ISIL without violence

- Bob: agreement about the commonalities on both sides; hope that a simpler statement can be agreed upon and put out by VFP
- Tarak: in terms of factual issues, agree with Barry and Michael on some and disagree on others; as far as Russia, Gerry is right; the war was going on prior to Russian intervention; if Russia didn't come in at that point, then the Assad regime would have toppled and ushered in Islamist rulers of the worst order; prior to uprising, Syria was not a bad place for everyone; in general, people lived decent lives, there was education and medical care; Assad probably a bad guy in general, but the country was not in such bad shape that it needed to be toppled; sure that Russia has committed war crimes, but if they had not come in, we would have had a real mess over there; just a fact to recognize
- Barry: to come up with a statement, you don't have to confirm every fact; in our view, we'd be better off if foreign intervention would withdraw from Syria; better chance to move forward with peace
- Tarak: I think we can come to agreement; we have major points of agreement; look for those and expand on that
- Rory Fanning: we are at lowest point of antiwar struggle in recent memory; be leaders in rebirth of strong antiwar movement that challenges endless wars, economic inequality; as veterans we are in a good position to make strong arguments and usher in next phase of movement; a lot of people will ask our opinion; if we are in groups that ignore war crimes or don't mention them, it handcuffs us; we need to talk about peace in a way that is necessary to rebuild the movement; identify each point, and say we are against war no matter where it's at; appreciate the discussion; important to generate a statement, a lot of people have this point of view; a lot of people could use our input and leadership on this issue
- Gerry: this whole discussion is colored by the backdrop of propaganda campaign by U.S. media; lots of misinformation being stated; just the way the media covered Aleppo bombing, everyone claiming genocide; that's because the last urban bastion of U.S. supported al-Qaeda rebels in Syria is being destroyed; in Mosul ISIL using human shields, but we never hear about Al Qaeda using human shields; not saying there haven't been war crimes, don't know for sure; there is a reason why Point 5 states that Syria has right to military assistance; international says this; there is a fundamental difference between the U.S. role orchestrating a regime change, and Russian role there to defend against that; huge difference; who is the aggressor, and who is defending the Syrian people; there are people in Syria who are glad that Russia is there; Russia can't leave until the U.S. and Al Qaeda and foreign terrorists leave

- Dan: remember how these revolutions begin; can't help but to think of U.S. Intervention in Iran; that started off as a revolution against the democratically elected Mohammad Mosaddegh; we could also say that the U.S. is an oppressive regime when it comes to Black Lives Matter; how do we adjust the conversation and argument; I was supportive of Nicaraguan government and efforts against the rebels; but we were calling for the U.S. to get out of there; we need more discussion on this
- Joey: important to remember that the Assad regime is the Alawite minority; they are not a majority sect
- Rory: very important to have a healthy skepticism of anything that comes across mainstream media; U.S. only focuses on what Russia is doing in Aleppo, but ignores U.S. violence in Yemen; to say that anyone who points out Assad war crimes is brainwashed is a way to shut down argument; there are reports from Syrian residents that Assad is a dictator; we have to be consistent; not label anyone who questions that as brainwashed or a victim of propaganda
- Frank: U.S. and Russia out of Syria is important but oversimplified; they aren't the only foreign interventions; VFP statement could include a listing of various countries and orgs that need to clear the way and let the Syrian people resolve their issues
- Michael: not trying to hold Russia and U.S. as equal; we can prioritize speaking against the U.S. intervention; they are more responsible around the world than Russia; my understanding of global history, nation's tendencies don't change; when the U.S. took over a whole hemisphere, Russia also had it's on imperialist tendencies at the same time; also not true that they don't have geopolitical interest; don't know of a large nation that don't do things for reasons that we are opposed; that's what nations do; we should stand up against U.S. stronger, but we can also call out other countries for what they are doing, including all of the other interests; the context for their ability to do those things is because of the U.S.; one of our problems is that we can't agree on some factual things; there's also some ideological differences; I don't trust any government; some governments are worse than others, that's where the U.S. is
- Gerry: has been a good and helpful discussion, zeroed in on disagreements; clear we don't have unity on this statement; don't want to achieve agreement by close vote, won't make a motion; do think we need to see the coming escalation of Syrian war; Clinton pushing for no-fly zone; be prepared; the coalition is preparing for Clinton; next step is to call for nationally coordinated local actions after the election; VFP cannot be disarmed; did a radio interview with Ray McGovern is escalation of tensions with Russia that could lead to war with Russia because of Syria or Ukraine; prepare to engage in public discourse
- **Barry: proposes to have Gerry, Rory, Brian, and Michael draft a statement and submit to Board for approval; call for opposition**
 - Michael: will participate; but have been saying for some time that we won't get much attention if we organize street actions; come up with something that makes more difference than just being out in street; gotta

do something else; statement is fine but not enough, streets are not enough; where is our organization on this; with the Islamophobia campaign call, our members are interested in doing something about it

- Barry: confirms that Gerry, Rory, Brian and Michael will draft a statement and work out differences on paper; once we get something that we can agree on we can organize a membership-wide conference call, be available to our members so they can weigh in; conduct two calls in different time zones; then discuss further actions; do we go to Congress, do we knock on doors; by the time this is done, we'll have a new U.S. president; because U.S. and Russia are in Syria, that's why we are talking about nuclear issues; important to talk about both of them getting out; ask for support or opposition
 - **Barry confirms by show of hands support for ad-hoc committee to draft VFP statement on Syria**
 - Tarak: we have a major point of agreement, and that's real possibility of escalation of war and possibility of nuclear conflict; we can affect what the U.S. does
 - Barry: we are international organization; we have chapters around the world; we represent a broader constituency than the start; bring people along from our global chapters
 - Dan: at the convention, we had a Syria resolution; would like to propose that we revisit the resolution Sunday during our meeting; we can't wait around to get it all worked out; do something immediately; state strongly that we do not support the no-fly zone, put that out
 - Gerry: questioning whether we need to draft a new statement and then take it to membership; we have a series of statements and a resolution
 - Rory: in support of writing this document; no-fly zone is saber-rattling; not much of a chance of nuclear war; the process of drafting statement and educating members will be healthy
 - Barry: not a good idea for orgs to sign a coalition statement if they have disagreements; important for us to take a position that we can agree on
 - Michael: we have made decisions as a Board that have blew up; real possibility that if we don't engage our membership then we will see similar disagreement in the membership

Barry reviews the agenda for Saturday meeting.

Barry breaks the meeting for lunch at 12:15 PM CDT.

Barry reconvenes the meeting at 1:34 PM CDT.

Treasurer's Report

- Mark: briefs the meeting on specific numbers as provided in report; veterans renewal dues were less than budgeted; donations are more than budgeted
 - o Michael: specifies categories as provided in report; specific line-items in categories; store brought in significant revenue, Casey redesigned the store website; increased number of patrons and sales; make store more attractive to non-members
- Mark: expenses were less than budgeted
- Joey: Nonviolence Training implemented by Elliot Adams was a line-item of \$1000 in budget but is not currently reflected in report; Michael to look into discrepancy with Elliot Adams; also, inquiry about status of plans for oversight of chapter finances
 - Michael: in the past, Virginia, and now Shelly, remind chapters to file their 990s; no resolution for that; resolutions have to be voted by members, so they could choose not to pass it; we can address oversight during the Convention Business Meeting
 - Mark: has begun rough draft of oversight plans, will send to rest of committee, have to establish chapter finance levels for oversight
 - Dan: how does chapter filing affect chapters at the state level; Michael to look into it
- o Barry: question about line-item Golden Rule
 - Michael: amount listed kept to pay for Helen Jaccard staff position for GR; Michael clarifies how fundraising and expenses are reported
- Mark: revenues from member dues is less than last year; donations are more than last year; total expenses are less than last year; overall we're doing better than last year

Executive Director's Report

- Michael: presents report as provided to the Board; changes in three staff positions – Shelly Rockett is Office Manager; Colleen Kelly for Outreach & Communications; will hire Administrative Assistant once Shelly feels comfortable enough in her new tasks to hire and train someone; will fill orders from store, input donations into eTapestry database; relooking that process right now; end processing of checks; data input processing; September financial status was great, more revenue than spending; however, national convention reversed this trend; UC Berkeley convention was higher than a hotel convention; the university bills VFP directly; convention revenue was \$137k; convention expenses was more than \$37k more than revenue; expenses coming from banquet; facility for Friday night event around \$9k; post-911 vets attendance contributed to expenses, but only from housing; Board housing and travel also in expenses for convention; the issue now is as always raising more money; \$250k bequests received from Sally Alice-Thompson at the request of her husband Don; she has pledged an additional bequest; Don's ashes will be the first to be spread from the Golden Rule; also anticipate \$42k bequest from a deceased member from the Sonoma, CA chapter, we have received notice from his insurance company; we will meet our expenses for the

year; therefore key now is to maximize the end-of-year appeal; goal is to raise \$90k by end of year; make full use of contact list for end-of-year appeal; Peace Is Possible message and sense of urgency; send out separate messages for member categories; send out appeal for our store customer base; appeal to be in mailboxes by end of first week of December

- Mark: Milwaukee chapter member committed to almost \$150k bequest
- Barry: some members can give bequests; interest them in making VFP something on their list; Sally Alice filled out bequest form at Asheville convention; Barry made presentation at Asheville convention banquet; another member committed \$80k at that banquet; talk about bequests at chapter meetings, hand out the forms
- Michael: move forward with some projects in 2017; major donor programs, for example the Howard Zinn Community for Peace & Justice; Peace Is Possible Legacy Gift for Bequests; approach WWII and Korean War veterans with these two giving opportunities; do a letter from Ralph Nader to those veterans; Nader will make phone calls to major givers; make it a goal to get these done
 - Tarak: getting buy-in is not a hard sell because of our mission and how we manifest our mission
 - Dan: donations are reinvestment into VFP after a convention loss
- Michael: asking Board to continue top donor thank-you calls; help us find and cultivate major donors; engage members in national conference calls; writing special thank-you letter to associate members, maybe from VFP Prez; end of year priorities include website revamping, hiring Admin Assistant, completing VFP election ballots; ballots to be sent to mail house next week; ballots and Board candidates to be posted on website soon; will have one month to vote once sent out; continue with VCI campaign; looking at working groups and maximizing them with Our Work; also hire interns for the office
- Discussion on specifics of fees from national projects if the work of the project goes through the national office, or if the fundraising goes through the national office

Barry breaks the meeting at 2:56 PM CDT

Gerry reconvenes the meeting at 3:12 PM CDT

Executive Director Report continues

- Michael: specific program dates for 2017; identify missing dates and notify Michael; don't want a long list
 - Brian: Feb 20th is UN International Day of Social Justice; have a theme each year
 - Gerry: a day in September as Nuclear Disarmament Day
 - Dan: August 10th is Agent Orange Day
 - Monique: June includes a National PTSD Day
 - Gerry: inquiry about what programming around dates involves; Michael clarifies
 - Dan: Christmas Truce in December; create a physical calendar to sell in store and distribute at events and convention
 - Michael: have created a calendar before; there is software but takes a lot of effort; have to get twelve good pics many months in advance; we do

have pics from Ellen Davidson and Mike Hastie; Brian and Joey volunteers to put together the days for a calendar project

- Michael: briefing on Our Work document; flesh out each area of work; what is each category; we have members who go out and talk all the time, how can we get resources to them; do we need to develop a national speaker's bureau; with Before You Join, we should have a webpage with resources on it for parents to access; how to make these categories become real work, coordinated; with a Board retreat, can use it to identify people in our organization who can head a committee to flesh out the work; notice that Creech was not included on the list; asking why staff and members put so much time in it, how much do we get out of it; does not seem to be a national coordinated effort around drones; maybe VFP can work to pull together everyone; maybe some items on list we should put more effort into than others; decide which ones those are; what's missing from the list; should we have a military sexual trauma section; other than SWAN, there is no other national effort; would provide opportunity for us to gain more female members
 - o Dan: Portland member does radio program and frequently addresses MST
 - o Tarak: two of our most dynamic female members are engaged in this issue, Diane Wilson and Ann Wright; they could lead a campaign, we just have to support them
 - o Joey: SOAW not included; Michael clarifies SOAW is included in Case For Support
 - o Michael: have to talk about what SOAW is for us; it's mostly an event for us
- Michael: how can we provide support materials, and make these projects more of a national thing

Proposal for 2018 United Nations Veterans Conference

- Barry: briefing on conversation between Tarak and UN representative Matt Hogan; we can have a really powerful voice; great platform to use UN facilities
 - o UN interest specifics for VFP to consider include: militarization effects on climate change; nuclear weapons; abolishing war
- Tarak: came up on the trip to Okinawa; great discussions; Mike Hastie brought up the idea of an international conference of veterans; the UN already has facilities and translators; would try for 2018 since it's the 100th anniversary of end of WWI; created outline for conference days; make a proposal to present at UN; forming worldwide veteran unity; avoid the appearance of doing this just to promote VFP
 - o Barry: get these issues promulgated worldwide from a veteran point of view
 - o Dan volunteers for planning committee
 - o Barry: get into the UN and try to make presentations to Department of Public Affairs; gives us access by virtue of our membership
 - o Tarak has contacted Ellen Barfield, VFP UN representative; get our vision and statement down and all else will follow; meet with Matt in December; once it's set up and presented to Matt, the next steps will become clearer; statement can be refined as we go along

- Barry: attractive to major donors and foundations; worldwide veteran movement for peace; hopefully UN can budget money for it also
- Tarak: don't want to see us lose control of the project; VFP is appropriate organization to manage this
- Gerry: great idea with lots of potential; strikes me as potentially over-ambitious and maybe beyond our capacity in some respects; huge effort with a lot of staffing; number of considerations; Matt himself in his letter that it's step-by-step; those steps are towards reaching the goal, but also a reality check on what the potential actually is; unforeseen bureaucratic and political navigations; attended UN conference on sustainable future, but no mention of war and militarism, so we had to work with friends at UN to get that wording in the document, why wasn't it in the document in the first place; many NGOs are self-censoring; may run into political obstacles with U.S. not wanting VFP to have a big presence at the UN; what is actually possible; maybe a really nice forum with some media present; we have to understand there are cultural differences; some countries don't have a word for veteran, and are not organized as veterans; don't have the same identity; don't expect that everyone will respond as veterans; a number of countries will respond and some won't get it; a worldwide peace council called by U.S. veterans is ironic; maybe appropriate also, but still ironic
- Barry: has to be step-by-step; best we could do is 2018; the rest of the world is interested in nuclear disarmament, found out at Kazakhstan conference; still a deference paid to U.S. position on everything; people are worried about offending the U.S.; the impact and presence of the U.S. is ominous
- Gerry: steps from Matt's letter is really about starting with smaller events
- Michael: UN is a vehicle to do what we are talking about; could not work out with UN, but we can still put forward this vision; the Kellogg-Briand Pact would have its 90th anniversary in 2018
 - Tarak: would like to bring David Swanson into this
 - Gerry: WBW has already done the international contact work
- Michael: if no U.S. today, humanity is still deep in patriarchy and men's violence; greatest responsibility for veterans to bring us together globally and end it
- Dan: Rick, member in Oregon, Soldiers for Peace International; a winter soldier project could bring veterans and victims together to talk about their experiences; many different ways to do it
- Gerry: Phyllis Bennis has years of experience working in and around the UN
- Barry: we could go to DC and get Nader interested, and David Swanson
- Tarak: if we want to do this, and we see value in it, then we can do it; U.S. veterans have a very powerful voice; won't be intimidated by potential obstacles
- Barry calls for opposition; none shown

Executive Director Report Follow-Up Questions

- Joey: update on using eTapestry software

- Michael: briefing on how eTapestry and Salsa are used; wanting to find another platform
- Joey: Colleen working on updating website and mobile friendly; Michael confirms; Joey asks for update on confirming DD214 and current dues for current and future Board members; Michael confirms working with staff to fix it
- Monique: inquiry about Our Work document completing by January; what can we do until January
 - Michael: make sure we know what we want to get out of January; help develop the process for what that's going to be; think about what needs to be changed or added; will finish the other portion of the Case For Support between now and then
 - Monique: how to help with working groups
 - Michael: want to take the list of working groups and see how they match with Our Work; then start talking to those chairs to see if they want to do the work, or find others; Monique working with Casey and Michael
- Brian: this Our Work document is for our purposes, not distributed?
 - Michael: yes, but showed it at Business Meeting; can share it with members

Barry calls for Closed Session

The meeting enters Closed Session.

Meeting exits Closed Session.

January 2017 Board Meeting Planning Discussion

- Barry: idea of a retreat including new Board members and talking about direction of VFP; would add a couple of days to the Board meeting, hold it in Albuquerque; need to decide on a date
 - Board discusses possible dates for January Board retreat and meeting
 - Monique: looking at the Norbertine Center, a residence and meeting space; available third weekend of January, but they said it's still early so still need to get it squared away with them
 - Barry: two-day retreat on Wednesday and Thursday, then meeting weekend
 - Gerry: five days is too much; possibly narrow it down to four; new board members not here to weigh in, consider their jobs and school
 - Mark: empathize with new Board members coming in for long meeting and travel time; what we want to get out of retreat time period is some ideas about how we prioritize going forward; doesn't take the whole Board to get the ball rolling; have the new members come for the normal three days; the rest of us meet ahead of time for two days; we keep finding ways to not deal with this
 - Gerry: trying to complete what we haven't been able to do
 - Monique: however we decide to do this, there's never going to be a perfect time; important to make as much effort as possible; as the leadership of the organization, we need a more solidified and cohesive outlook on what is

- important for us; with recruiting younger and diversified Board, well a disorganized thing turns off younger veterans; retreat helps us hit the ground running in a much more focused way on a number of issues; utilize our time better; forces us to re-evaluate how to use our time and how to focus on issues;
- Dan: an orientation for people coming into the Board; can we cut it down one day, and extend Sunday to finish Board work; we really need to do this
 - Brian: necessary aspects of the retreat; how was two days decided, as opposed to three or one; discuss what we hope to get out of the format and agenda, including orientation for new Board members; possible to postpone the retreat until the 2nd quarter meeting, usually in April; new members would be able to plan and prioritize that meeting
 - Michael: torn on April versus January; if we're going to do it, we should make sure we have as many Board members together as possible for the retreat as opposed to the meeting; the retreat is more important than the Board part; can't build the team if the people aren't there; may not be able to figure out the specifics until December when we have a new Board; can tell them now so if they win they can plan
 - Mark: agree how important it is, especially with more resources than ever before; a third option is to keep our Board meetings, and find a separate date slot for retreat; combining them is a lot of days
 - Michael: would like the staff to attend the retreat, so we could have it in St. Louis
 - Gerry: big advantage in team building with the staff in St. Louis; they are major players; could do that in April along with the Board meeting, or do it separate; but that's an additional significant expense
 - Barry: Board may want to meet by itself, in case the staff isn't interested in our entire agenda
 - Gerry: could still do Board orientation built into January meeting, but move retreat to April; Board may be more ready for retreat if they have already been to a meeting and had orientation; it might be overwhelming for a first meeting of new Board members
 - Michael: we should figure out who will be the facilitator; develop what we want to get out of it; get input from that person on how long it would take; determine number of days
 - Barry: Rhonda Ladendorf has done facilitations and recommends an outside facilitator
 - Tarak: at Standing Rock, saw the best facilitator; sense of humor, deep wisdom, native, well-spoken; moderating a discussion; would like to invite him to the convention
 - Michael: there are facilitators for different things; agree with Gerry on someone who has facilitated social justice issues at a minimum; someone who has facilitated a Board trying to figure out its work; I have facilitated different types of things; have to make sure we have a person who has specific expertise

- Dan: still think a two and two day setup is a good idea; would like to get to this as soon as we can; we all need a retreat to start the year
- Mark: we get together four times per year, and monthly calls, and committee calls; that's a lot; keeps things connected; why can't we forego one regular Board meeting and instead have the three-day retreat in April in St. Louis, and include the staff
- Barry: if we don't have a Board meeting in April, then we should have a Board call; still have the retreat; but concerned with convention issues, and our other work; we can't just forego the business in April; if we want to meet for the retreat, then we need to have a Board call before or after that; Barry proposes we think more about the retreat and meetings and talk it about on Sunday meeting; January meeting includes a Saturday event for Sally Alice and that take substantial time and planning; a retreat might be too much for January; would you be okay with two days of retreat and half-day Board meeting, or a two-day retreat and a Board call
- Gerry: if we're already there, take the time for a Board meeting; if we need more time, have a call

Veterans Challenge Islamophobia Campaign Update

- Michael: had a call on Thursday night for follow-up with chapters who expressed interest in VCI; John Amidon talked about his voter registration work; point was to build relationships with the mosque in New York so they can do ongoing work; same with other members, talked about doing something similar in LA region; Dave Patterson worked with CAIR to increase capacity of voter registration; we ended up being good resource; changed the dynamic of the voter drive; brought in Muslims and other veterans; call included ten people and many chapters; Pat Scanlon talked about the work the Smedleys were doing; had at least four or five chapters who were committed and had done work; one good idea is to do a tour; Colorado members asked about Nate and Ramon doing a tour to travel to chapters and put on a program; provides opportunity to talk about Islamophobia and U.S. foreign policy; one mistake that we made in the design was not involving IVAW from the beginning; should have hired one coordinator to do work with chapters; and then hire people out of the chapters, instead of hiring outside people; we could have been more effective and leveraged the money in a better way; design a joint proposal with IVAW; organizing the chapters from the beginning; next steps is to hopefully develop the tour, get more veterans to sign onto the statement and engage with those veterans; close to 600 signers of the statement; develop more literature to support the efforts of chapters; we have about \$60k out of initial grants and donations; we will go back to OSF for more funding; will go back to another foundation who initially provided \$10k for VCI retreat
 - Mark: back in the spring, had the idea that VCI would end in late fall
 - Michael: if we can, we should continue building it until we can't anymore, or if there is no longer a need; but if Trump is elected we will, and if Clinton is elected our foreign policy could create a lot of work, especially with Syria; we could likely have another attack

- Monique: my partner is working on an interactive map for VCI; so when people visit the website, they can click on part of the map, and it will display our organizers and members and chapters information and what work they are doing for VCI; real-time aspect across the country, a level of outreach goes beyond our traditional efforts
- Gerry: think we should have a political discussion on whether or not to have ongoing funding relationship with George Soros and OSF; what are the impacts on VFP of that relationship; could be reckless of us to not have that discussion; we need to be able to defend our decision either way
- Joey: there is a relevant bylaw change proposal that includes this discussion; would have to discuss whether VFP is compatible with certain funders and other orgs
- Gerry: we couldn't do it at a Board meeting until January, would be a tough discussion for new Board members
- Michael: would have to discuss all funding options for this program; it's a good program, relevant; it matters to what's going on in Muslim lives in U.S.
- Gerry: should have the discussion; people will see our decisions as part of our funding from George Soros
- Tarak: bylaws change will likely pass, we will have this discussion

Barry briefs the meeting on phone call with Boston Globe reporter doing story on VFP

Barry adjourns the meeting at 6:03 PM CDT

Veterans For Peace
National Board of Directors
Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, IL
Sunday, October 23, 2016

Board members present at the meeting:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Gerry Condon, Vice President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Andar, Secretary
Jason Cardenas
Dan Shea
Tarak Kauff
Brian Trautman
Monique Salhab
Joey King

Board members absent from the meeting:

Willie Hager
Tom Palumbo

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry chairs the meeting.
Kourtney records the minutes.
Barry convenes the meeting at 9:22 AM CDT

Agenda Review

Joey reads aloud the Statement of Purpose

Barry calls for Closed Session at 9:28 PM CDT
Meeting enters Closed Session

Barry exits Closed Session
Barry breaks the meeting at 10:34 AM CDT
Barry reconvenes the meeting at 10:49 AM CDT

Membership & Chapter Development Committee Report

- Barry and Kourtney brief the meeting on proposed year-long recruitment campaign
- Board discusses encouraging Board members to visit chapters in region
 - Gerry: should have a real regular program of doing that
 - Tarak: could allocate Board travel funds for chapter visits
 - Michael: you can apply the funds to any Board work; have to talk to Excom or at least Barry ahead of time; for next budget, can make sure I include it specifically; think about where you want to go and what the costs are
 - Tarak: make sure you take the brochure with you, surprised how many don't know; also take Peace In Our Times paper copies; many people haven't seen the paper
 - Michael: take Our Work document, or create smaller version; big challenge is our members not knowing what we're doing as an org; if they can see the depth of the work, they will want to get involved, and will be more excited when talking to people about VFP; may be able to make something smaller that's a double-fold
 - Dan: materials for chapters, right now we order stuff for tabling for events; some chapters need more cost-effective materials; we need free materials for chapters to have; send them packages
 - Michael confirms materials are available for free to chapters
 - Monique: how much material printable from website; regards to chapter budgets; if they don't have time and an event on short notice, they should be able to download from website; valuable way to utilize website to make it more user-friendly
 - Michael: a lot is currently available on website; we encourage members to request materials from us; one reason we do that over printing is because self-printing makes our materials look not as good; want more professional presentation
 - Barry: when we ask for stuff to be sent, we get it right away
 - Dan: keep materials updated with current bylaws and mission statement
 - Michael: will be updating the membership brochure, Casey will update; need to go through the membership committee, have it done by January or February 2017
- Kourtney: calling lapsed-dues members
 - Barry: chapter members will likely know the lapsed member; talking with them about the campaign and ask them to rejoin
- Kourtney: discuss idea of encouraging each VFP member to recruit one veteran to VFP
 - Barry: bring in new member, or get a lapsed member to renew
 - Gerry: more effective if there is an incentive; encourages each other to participate
 - Barry: national campaign, and chapter that brings in most new members gets recognition at national convention; list a goal chart on the website to encourage participation

- Brian: for last few months or so, I have offered to sponsor a few prospective members for their dues; if you can afford it, it's a good way to get and keep new members
 - Barry: make sure it happens by having brochures handy and fill it out on the spot and send the check in for them
 - Brian: put them in direct contact with Doug
 - Dan: our chapter has a fund to help members who can't pay dues; that's how I became a member, because someone paid it for me and sent it in; and then I paid for someone else; pay it forward
- Barry: Post-911 vets gets reduced membership fees for first three years; have we kept track of it over the years; given the cost of things, do we want to make any changes to that at this point; do we still want this program
 - Kourtney: supports keeping the program; allowed me to join VFP and attend Asheville convention, my first convention; sold me on VFP, encouraged me to run for Board; had an amazing time
 - Monique: that was my first convention as well; made a huge impact; think it's beneficial
 - Gerry: if we want to cut back on expenses in some places, this might not be the place to do it
 - Michael to see who is tracking this in database and who registered; we do have a good number of vets who came to Asheville and San Diego and Berkeley, so this is their fourth year, so they should be paying full fees now; do we want to extend it or not; another question is, for those people, do we want them to pay more for the convention; as far as housing, if they can't, then we have a policy to help people when we can; I would suggest that if we want to change it, then don't do it immediately, let them know first; extend it one more year, but not indefinitely; glide into the extension; keep doing this for new members
 - Gerry: at some point they're going to have to take the same responsibility as other members; that's a tough place to bring it up; one approach would be to send them a letter reminding them of three-year reduced fees, and ask them to jump up to regular membership and offer assistance; ask if they are able to do it
 - Michael: we have a VFP Assisted rate of \$25; criteria is just to say they can't pay it; it's a reduced rate
 - Mark: didn't we have policy where we were paying convention fees for Post-911 vets
 - Michael: we waived the fees; the question is do we want to send Post-911 vets a letter who have come to three conventions
 - Barry: standardized letter so they can specify their intention or ability for full membership fees
- Michael: we have to decide whether or not to raise the convention fees; past ten years it's been \$200, reduced rate of \$100; hoping we can raise it around \$25; doesn't bring a whole lot more in, but it brings something in, and it helps
 - Tarak: \$135 isn't much different than \$125 to the consumer, but it helps national
 - Dan: we are still asking members for donations at the convention

- Michael: we ask for lifetime memberships at the banquet, but not asking for donations throughout the convention; I discourage members asking for money for their projects at the banquet or events
 - Dan: travel fees do rise, depending on where members are coming from; we could have fundraising for convention ahead of time; if every member donated around \$50, convention would be paid for; put out an appeal for just convention donations
 - Michael: generally, people don't donate online; they do so through our appeals; don't want to make the paper appeal a donation to convention; our convention fees haven't risen in twelve years, don't see that anywhere else
 - Joey: **motion to raise convention fees \$225 and \$125**
 - **Mark: seconds the motion**
 - Joey rejects Gerry's friendly amendment for \$250 and \$125
 - Barry agrees with Gerry's proposal; Michael disagrees
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **Barry confirms unanimous approval, 10-0-0 for Joey's proposal to raise convention fees to regular rate of \$225 and reduced rate of \$125**
- Kourtney: brief ideas on major media campaign for recruitment
 - Tarak: membership committee can design ads that can be posted in local papers; make it available to chapters
 - Barry: online ads successful in San Diego; progressive magazine websites, etc; got hundreds of hits; Common Dreams publishing online
 - Gerry: AlterNet, Truthout, Counter Punch, etc
 - Dan: Link TV
 - Barry: Free Speech TV
 - Monique: check into Twitter; they do advertising; ABQ chapter put an ad in the Kirkland Air Force base newspaper for \$15; pretty large circulation; the base has 50k government contractors, and then plus active duty personnel; circulated at veterans memorial and the VA; also have ad in local co-op newsletter
 - Dan: have seen progressive editorials in the active duty newspapers; Stars & Stripes has also had progressive content on their email list, raising critical issues
 - Gerry: target active duty recruitment
- Gerry: excited about recruitment campaign; worried about over-tasking the membership committee; free to ask non-committee members to help out with tasks; glad to hear the committee is big; Kourtney will add Gerry to membership committee list serve

Proposal for Ghandian Nonviolence Award

- Joey: we have three different awards given out each year; came up with list of a dozen awards that have been awarded in past; that list has been lost; this year we had a lot of qualified people who were nominated, but couldn't fit everyone in; we only had three awards to give; this is a proposal for a fourth award; envisioning nominees like Kathy Kelly, Elliot Adams, Will Culvert
 - o **Barry: suggests Board members take time to read proposal, and then discuss on the next Board conference call; Board agrees**

Standing Rock VFP Participation Report

- Tarak: profound experience; glad so many VFP members attended; has ramifications far beyond this pipeline resistance; it's already a victory; all of these First Nation tribes who weren't even speaking to each for years, have organized together; this is the best organizing effort I've seen; making order out of chaos; dealing with differences between each other in a profound way; and they are using nonviolent resistance in the best possible ways; soulful, prayerful, very dynamic, resolute, determined; warriorship; can't even put it into words what we experienced; Matt Hoh and Will Griffin corroborate; we learned a lot; saw participants who were far more advanced than myself; the best thing, most inspiring thing I experienced there was the total commitment to the land, water and future generations; sustained commitment to community; it's a community that is not on the pattern of normal American way of life; tremendous respect for women, elders, and children; saw respect flowing very deeply in every direction; very impressive; leading resistance movements against war and oppression; imperative for us to support and continue to support as much as possible
- Brian: echo everything Tarak said; also probably the most rewarding memorable experienced I had in any type of nonviolence resistance effort in my life; ancient wisdom, ancestral knowledge I saw in practice; deep-seeded historical respect cultivated over thousands of years; still very much present, can see it among elders and young adults and kids; that brought me literally to tears; see the kids practicing what they learned in terms of compassion, empathy, commitment to survival; this movement is survival; fighting for treaty rights, water rights, basic survival; anyone committed to nonviolence social justice needs to go out and bear witness; interplay between what they are doing on the ground and other movements; teaching sessions, teach-ins, meetings, prayer ceremonies; tying in various forms of oppression and injustice existing in the world; they had drum circles; all came back to fighting for the next seven generations
 - o Brian: eleven VFP members there when I was attending, what I heard from them was that they were overwhelmed with the sense of the respect they received from the community; they hadn't seen such respect in mainstream life; they were always welcomed into environments for meals and meetings and teach-in sessions; seen as elders and respected in an ancient way; voiced that to me
 - o Tarak: this is real deep wisdom; actually experienced something radically different than the American way of life; vibrantly alive; we all learned something;

- intelligence was incredible; at the community meetings in big tent with a lot of people, this facilitator was by far the best I've ever seen; blew me away, I was just happy to be there and witness how he ran a meeting; and what the meeting itself was like; we will continue to give it priority in PIOT; they loved the paper
- Gerry: really wonderful that you all were there; I hope to sometime plug in; saw yesterday on Facebook there were fifty more arrests; police have been very aggressive; police chief was eager to describe resisters as violent; they are getting more aggressive; concerned about rumors they are going to take more substantial actions to seriously oppress or infiltrate and undermine and make it seen in public eye as violent confrontation; how do we double down on our commitment of solidarity; will there be ongoing VFP presence or sporadic; another statement or show of solidarity; confront police repression; how to stay engage, bring vets voice to support even more
 - Barry: Obama administration has asked the oil companies to stop the drilling; is there a way to put political pressure on in D.C. and having voice there and that's where the decision will be made; if administration can bring to bear on this situation
 - Tarak: those are profound questions; will demand a lot of thought on our part; no quick answers; leadership out there is broad and deep, and they are seriously aware of this; they are taking their moves to make sure it's sustainable; mainstream propaganda we have to do our best to counter; the mainstream will keep making mistakes, they have all the power; we have to sit down and discuss this; the resisters have winter to deal with, will be moving to secure private location
 - Barry: we can't come out and try to be the leaders, we are not the leaders, we are there in solidarity; what can we do realistically
 - Michael: we can educate our members more, explain to them how this is more connected to everything we are trying to do; chapters often have no idea what we are doing in general; most of our members don't know exactly what's going on with this; why we're there or how it's connected; there is still pushback against PAHPA, so they won't get some of these other things; build a foundation based on whatever we want to do next; how will we go to D.C. if they don't understand what's happening
 - Barry: locally, go visit your congressional reps
 - Michael: if somehow our members are out there, doing video and creating content, talking and explaining as vets why we're there; get that content out to our membership and our communications channels; if the system wants to crush them, they can, but we can make it more visible to our members and make it harder for the system
 - Tarak: will be covering it more in PIOT; would like to think about how to increase the distribution of the paper; First Nation people have survived 500 years of intense oppression and genocide; don't think even this system now is going to be able to do that; we saw that culture and spirit and being-ness is still very much

alive and strong; we have to do everything we can to support and resist, but don't think the system is going to crush it

- Mark: make it easier for members to donate, put something on website
 - Michael: we can do that; don't want to exclude other movements from support and donations; part of education is providing links and donations to their sites
- Barry: concerning going to D.C., maybe the resisters are concerned about how their position will be represented there; be in consultation with what they are doing
- Tarak: good point, they were not in favor of all of these GoFundMe pages that have popped up

East Bay Chapter #162 Request for VFP to Support Mumia Abu-Jamal Actions

- Gerry: request from chapter in support of their actions; pretty easy for us to write a letter of solidarity and support the actions for Mumia; combining a call for Mumia and Leonard Peltier
 - Dan, Tarak and Gerry will work with communications committee to draft a support letter

Bequests Report

- Gerry: Golden Rule visited at our port stop by a woman who owns an inn, upscale boutique with five-star restaurant; owns property in remote west coast of Washington State, it's a B&B, 8 rooms, one acre plot for organic farming, and an oyster farm; on hold for a few years because of pesticide issues; her husband passed a few years ago; they want to pass it on and carry on vision; they like the idea of veterans managing it and she is in communication with Helen Jaccard; we'd have to agree to take the property and actually maintain it as an ongoing intentional community, B&B; veterans retreats, healing sessions; some people can live there and maintain the farm; they have a website; it's called Moby Dick B&B; they do bring in dollars with regular clientele; it's an opportunity, but is a big commitment; might have to put money into it; it's in a remote area, not accessible by nearby chapters
 - Michael: should try to see if it's possible; surely veterans will want to go there and make it happen; especially younger veterans; if it makes sense financially
 - Gerry: they want to pass it on to us; she's in D.C. a lot of the time; she's close to Madea Benjamin; Gerry and Helen and Mike Hanes will visit the land; very nice B&B rooms; she would like to continue that part; that's where the main income is; not the most important part to her; she has had an idea of what it could be, have peace be a part of it; positive, progressive community
 - Michael: retreat area for VCI retreat was great; this is something similar, very veteran oriented; have other peace and justice groups come in for sessions
 - Barry: maintenance, taxes, etc
 - Tarak: one of us could go out and look at it, and assess it, and cost of maintenance; worth looking at
 - Kourtney: would be a National Project

- Mark: they want to pass it on, does that mean no expense involved
- Gerry: will be expenses involved, have to find out; they want to give the property to us; as long as we have a commitment to it; she's anxious about getting it done

Proposal to Renew 2017 Budget Line Item for Outreach Travel Fund

- Tarak: extremely successful; we've spent \$12k of fund; reads aloud the proposal as provided in writing to the Board, including support statements from VFP members Ken Mayers and Doug Rawlings; **motion to pass the proposal**
 - **Seconded**
 - Tarak: myself and Kourtney administer the fund; when there are uncertain issues, we go to Barry for oversight
 - Michael: in the proposal, to supplement what's leftover; would make it \$18k; but the budget starts out at zero; it's not a rollover; would like to keep it at \$15k; as we look at and further develop our program, things need to be more connected to a program effort; full program efforts do include agitation; what are the pressure points we here in the U.S. can put on decision-makers in D.C.; what is our program here in the U.S. to make the military leave Okinawa and Jeju; the fact that not everyone knows is a problem; those efforts need to be connected to wider efforts to amplify
 - Tarak: agree with that; we have put out stuff; we have connected it both online and the paper for further action; that's ongoing
 - Michael: example is Lobby Days; we don't have material to take to D.C. to know who we should talk to, or who to talk to in Pentagon
 - Dan: Okinawa chapter does know, they have contacts and materials
 - Michael: we should leverage these things
 - Tarak: agree that we need to do it more; but it was put out at a workshop at the convention and at the Business Meeting and in resolution; a big part of that is actually what VFP has done in Okinawa; adds to ongoing efforts to get U.S. bases out of Okinawa; efforts there and here; it's not that we have to do it, we're just supporting, not leading; our presence there in Okinawa was huge
 - Michael: a Japanese woman from WILPF stated that not to ask her what we should do, but tell her what we are doing right now to close our bases
 - Barry: have some idea of what this plan is; what we are doing and implementing on specific days and what we want chapters to do; have something to follow up; putting info out is follow up to make sure it's done
 - Gerry: we can always do better at follow-through, doesn't take from what's been done; we should leave aside the question that there's leftover money, will be spent; friendly amendment to support \$15k for next year
 - **Barry takes vote; unanimous 10-0-0 to support the fund at \$15k for 2017**
 - Tarak: I can't do all of the follow-up; I'm great at organizing delegations and making sure it's solid

- Michael: speaking to the whole board about designing complete campaigns; that's me and everyone else; we don't always have all the pieces of the campaign, we can always do better
- Barry: get the people who can do the work, make the contacts; within the organizational structure, identify who is responsible for follow-up; where are the pressure points like Michael said; who are the congressional people to contact
- Dan: the Okinawa chapter will request those tasks; there are reporters, in NY for instance, who contacted me; I did a presentation in Eugene and Portland to follow-up and make people aware; educate our local communities about these issues; that is the campaign
- Barry: what would be helpful is to write a memo to the board if you organize a follow-up event or educational event; so the Board and staff are aware so we can track what's going on
- Monique: a good suggestion is for the delegation when they are coming together to talk about the media aspect, getting that info out to National ahead of time and make sure the delegation gets as much exposure as possible; Collen in the staff is fantastic at helping us do that; takes the pressure off and holds the delegation responsible for looking at the whole aspect
- Dan: chapters did write resolutions in support of closing the U.S. bases in Okinawa and Jeju; talk to local city councils to do the same thing; this is really about the Asian Pivot; Okinawa has sent delegations
- Barry: Mayors For Peace in their cities can be good connections; Barry met leaders in their organization

SOAW Nogales Border Convergence Report

- Michael: we were most visible presence and largest contingent; we had around fifty veterans attending; SOAW used to do this in Columbus, GA; now they did it in Nogales, at the border; we had a meeting and the VFP people were happy to be there and want to participate next year; this event was more educational for me; saw the wall for the first time, reminded of Palestine and Berlin; going to workshops and thinking about how the same forces in our communities who create violence are creating the same violence elsewhere around the world; PAHPA very visible; need to talk to SOAW and tell them that VFP would like them to go to the wall again next year; we should also think about how in the past SOAW seems like more of an event, than VFP being active in it; we can talk about it and try to help people see the connections; Movement for Black Lives, and the connections with Palestine; global connections will help with our efforts towards worldwide veterans efforts; there were two stages, one on each side of border; Michael spoke, and Hector Barajas spoke on other side
 - Barry: deported veterans effort in Tijuana
 - Joey: Hector Barajas has applied and his hearing was denied until November; he could be on this side of the border; VFP participation has stayed the same, but general numbers at SOAW of participants around one thousand is way down from 20k; we do have a representative on the SOAW Council, that's Mike Tork

- Gerry: Should talk to Mike Tork about his representation with SOAW; opportunities to get involved in that work, will be easy way to amplify our Latin American work; could be more of a veteran's element to that; they can provide leadership and support for us
- Dan: key issue is militarization of the border
- Michael: a person on my Facebook page questioning why we are doing SOAW work; another member stated that he helped build the fence at the border with the military; we have a definitive connection with the fence and the border
- Dan: events happening in the Philippines; try to put on delegation to attend events there
- Dan: Becky Leunig was there and will give public report and talk

November Board Conference Call

- Board agrees on tentative date, Sunday, December 4th, 3 PM PDT, 6 PM EDT
- Monique: important to discuss violence against women in military, race, and indigenous issues; would like to discuss gender issues in our membership; should put it on agenda for December call; there is lack of clarity, lots of confusion; membership is asking us, and we don't have an idea or clarity about it
 - Barry: start discussion in December and carry on into January Board meeting

Barry motions to adjourn the meeting; seconded

Barry adjourns the meeting at 1:14 PM CDT

Veterans For Peace
National Board of Directors
Conference Call
Sunday, December 11, 2016

Board members present on the call:

Barry Ladendorf, President
Michael McPhearson, Executive Director
Mark Foreman, Treasurer
Kourtney Andar, Secretary
Tarak Kauff
Brian Trautman
Joey King
Monique Salhab
Jason Cardenas
Dan Shea

2017 Board-elect members present on the call:

Patrick McCann
Monisha Rios

Board members absent from the call:

Gerry Condon, Vice President
Tom Palumbo
Willie Hager
Adrienne Kinney, 2017 Board-elect

Motions and votes in bold.

Barry chairs the meeting.
Kourtney records the minutes.
Barry convenes the meeting at 6:11 PM EST

Barry welcomes new Board-elect members to the meeting

Barry calls for motion to approve October minutes

- **Joey motions; seconded**
 - o **Barry calls for opposition; none heard; October Board meeting minutes approved by unanimous vote**

Agenda Review

- Barry briefs the meeting on the agenda as provided via email.
- Additions

- Barry adds discussion on U.S. Representative Tulsi Gabbard from Hawaii legislative bill proposal and request for comment from VFP; bill to cut off U.S. support for rebels and arms sales; Barry sent bill to many VFP Advisory Board members for feedback
- Barry adds discussion on Miramar Air Show documentary film production from Chris Smiley regarding legal issues of showing children's faces in the documentary

United Nations/VFP Veterans Conference Proposal

- Barry: October Board meeting discussion on proposal for a global conference hosted or facilitated by UN for worldwide veterans; Ann Wright contributed to language; Wright, Matt Hogan who is a long-term friend of Tarak and is a veteran and thirty year worker at UN; Hogan reviewed the proposal and supported; on Tuesday we met with Bruce Knox, the NGO Representative for the Unity church, chair of Excom of Department of Public Information; VFP has been recognized as NGO for thirty years; activities governed through DPI; presented document proposal to the UN for November 2018; identify three of the major issues the UN concerned about, falls in with interests of VFP; shared interest of abolishing war; abolishing nuclear weapons; addressing climate change, related to VFP exposing costs of war; Bruce Knox says proposal is spot on with UN agenda; in the long-term we will need funding, UN can't fund the whole effort; will have to get nations to sponsor VFP for the conference; first nation Knox thought of was Japan; Wright and others disagree with starting with U.S.; Knox thinks we won't have problem getting a hundred nations to sponsor; sponsoring nations in order to use the facilities of the UN – conference rooms, assembly rooms, audio/visual equipment, etc.; Knox will help identify nations and get us started; Knox says to consider attending UN April 2017 conference on drones, small arms sales and nuclear weapons; send speakers and materials to that conference and interact with other nations and get VFP recognized there with more visibility; his second suggestion was major conference in August 2017, human rights, nuclear weapons and war, intergenerational issues; says August is opportunity to advertise VFP conference the following year, maybe with presenting a video in August at that conference; would be good to send younger veterans to participate; we pushed for November 2018 to coincide with hundredth anniversary of end of WWI and Armistice Day; some strain on us with August VFP National Convention; need people on the Board who really want to get involved with this; especially Board members on East Coast to attend UN events; Ellen Barfield, Ann Wright, Matt Hogan and Barry and Tarak will work on conference committee, but need more members to help
- Barry opens for discussion
 - Joey: consider Costa Rica; doesn't have an army; proud of abolishing military in 1948
 - Barry: met foreign minister of Costa Rica and will be in touch with a citizen there who once ran for president
 - Brian: also have the University for Peace in Costa Rica; Brian volunteers for the conference committee; extremely interested in this; one of the elements from

my background I would like to contribute to is the climate change aspect; get going with next steps; agree with November 2018 time-frame; get committee started as soon as possible

- Dan: maybe ask every member to suggest a country; Okinawa, Japan; Jeju Island, South Korea; Venezuela contacts with government
 - Barry: Knox will help us with getting nations interested; 134 countries voted to outlaw nuclear weapons and begin negotiations; suggestions are good; we have chapters in Korea, Vietnam, Ireland, etc.
 - Dan: want to be on the committee to help with developing language
- Monisha: hear you about not overloading the committee, but I would love to learn from the process; want to end up working with UN on sexual violence in conflict
 - Barry: agree for Monisha to be a part of the committee

2017 VFP National Convention in Chicago, IL

- Michael: we have a contract, will have a meeting next week to sign and move forward; dates are Wednesday, August 9th through Sunday the 13th; our contract starts August 6 because staff arrives earlier than everyone, then the Board comes in; the rooms are \$159 per night; we have 472 total sleeping room nights reserved; during August 2016 convention in Berkeley we had trouble with wording how we saw how many room nights we had versus how Berkeley campus interpreted; we will make sure that we are interpreting the room night requirement the same as Palmer House Hilton in Chicago; anything short of 80% capacity we will owe money for those rooms; usually our banquet charges around \$60 per plate, but this year will cost around \$62 with taxes and gratuity; we usually have four choices, but this time we will have either chicken, salmon or vegan options; 472 rooms nights is \$475k; food and beverage revenue is \$25k; they expect \$100,000 revenue; audio/visual equipment rental is pretty expensive; ballroom data projection package is a high daily rate; we may have to pay it unless they give a discount because we can't bring in our own projector; large meeting room audio/visual package is also large amount daily and can't bring in projectors for that either; but in break out rooms we can probably bring our own equipment; quick Board decisions include 1) approve theme; 2) who are potential keynote speakers to approach as soon as possible; 3) decisions for music festival during convention; Berkeley 2016 convention concert was put together by Miles, and it was good; but we didn't do enough promotion to get big turnout; the sooner we make decisions, the better
- Barry opens for discussion
 - Joey: consider Kathy Kelly, she lives in Chicago
 - Monique: is WIFI included in room packages
 - Michael: unsure; contract includes complimentary guest room internet, but need to clarify with sales rep at hotel
 - Dan: on the theme, didn't the Chicago chapter want something with education and counter-recruitment

- Michael: chapter doesn't decide the theme, they just suggest; the Board has to decide what the theme is, or do we want to change or add
 - Barry: their suggestion that made sense and in context of the logo was: Education Not Militarization; logo was a broken rifle; focused on public school system, Chicago public schools has nation's largest JROTC
 - Dan: one of the speaker suggestions is the head of teacher's union in Chicago; would support the current suggestions
 - Brian: looking at the music festival proposal; wondering where certain numbers and figures came from
 - Michael: we didn't come up with figures, it's Miles' proposal; his plan is for a daylong music festival
 - Patrick: don't agree with it; think we should have slogan dealing with Trump's victory and coming struggles
 - Barry: picked Chicago because of school militarization; it's one of the main focuses of the convention; not in favor of changing the focus
 - Michael: we could ask the local chapter if they have any new thoughts since the U.S. presidential election; to make sure they don't have a similar feeling; November 9th was a different day than November 8th; it changed political reality; not saying we should change the theme; during convention we'll be eight months into the new presidency; support current theme
 - Barry: agreed; Frank of Chicago chapter reminded that they want to focus on education; no notion of wanting to alter the approach
- **Barry motions for roll-call vote to approve the current 2017 VFP convention theme suggestion: Education Not Militarization**
 - **Mark: yes**
 - **Tarak: yes**
 - **Kourtney: yes**
 - **Brian: yes**
 - **Joey: yes**
 - **Jason: yes**
 - **Monique: yes**
 - **Dan: yes**
 - **Barry: yes**
 - **Barry confirms 9-0-0 unanimous approval for the theme: Education Not Militarization**
- Michael: last convention in Berkeley, we did not break even financially, and we actually lost over \$31k; predominately, the losses came from the rooms we ended up paying for folks who couldn't afford it, mostly post 911 vets; the public event in Berkeley we had to pay extra money for the big space; that was around \$20k; that contributed to us not being able to break even
- Barry: there is a hostel close to the hotel that we can use for lodging; encouraging all Board members to stay at the hotel to contribute to minimum room occupancy requirements

- Michael: with hotel rooms at such a good rate, we may not need many hostel rooms; but the hostel rooms are only a little less expensive
- Barry: most sessions are on one floor of hotel, very convenient; easy convenient public transit from airport
- Dan: is there anything being planned for touring Chicago area
 - Michael: can talk to hotel about extra days for stays to make tours available; not sure when that will be
 - Mark: we don't want to encourage members attending to go sight-seeing during the convention; if people want extra activities, then that's on them, not us
- Tarak: on speakers, there is a lot going on with local struggles, would like to see us access those community leaders as speakers at the convention; have heard from Jackson Brown and they are more than interested; in touch with their managers; Brown is one of our advisory board members, they like us; they need details
 - Michael: on accessing local speakers, that's something the Excom talked about; most of our chapters aren't that connected to different local struggles; in order for us to do that, we have to do some groundwork, need help from Board; a successful music festival will come from reaching out to those struggles and speakers; have speakers talk about their work and then introduce the next act during festival; we have to reach out now; nothing has been firmed up, just Miles presenting the proposal; he is waiting on us to decide

Music Festival Proposal for VFP 2017 Chicago Convention

- Michael: Miles can put on a great concert because he did so in Berkeley; concern is the size; Miles is looking at ten thousand people, bigger than he's done before; Michael briefs the meeting on specific proposal figures; we've never done anything of this size, and it's going from small to huge really fast; exposing ourselves to a \$135k+ expense and not sure if we'd get that back; how to explain to members if we don't make the money back; when would be the best day during the convention to have a daylong music festival; the purpose of the convention is the business meeting and our other tasks, not a music festival; Miles has to rent the venue and put money down to hold it; the size of the festival depends on what size venue we want; other groups are looking to have concerts also and they will reserve venues, so we could lose the venue we want; we could do a festival like this any time; if we do a small concert during the convention, then a big concert can be done any other time and avoid putting strain on the local chapter because they won't be able to help with the concert; how to promote on the ground, not just internet; who can do that, Miles won't be able to do all of that by himself, so how do we support the promotion
- Barry opens for discussion
 - Mark: join Michael's real concerns about putting on a big festival; don't think we have the experience to take this gamble; what Tarak said about Jackson Brown sounds great; you have to book these people well in advance, but it sounds like

- he's willing to do this, so we have to jump on this and figure out a venue where he would play; too big of a risk to put on a big festival; we have Brown, let's go with it
- Jason: concerned about the cost overall; do we even have that given the fact that we're throwing the convention as well; smaller venues seem to be working and hopefully we make money this time around; with other events coming up such as the UN conference proposal, those should be in the forefront instead of a music festival with little experience; not the best idea for this year
 - Joey: agree with Jason and Mark; plus the festival needs to be at least three days or else not call it a festival; biting off more than we can chew
 - Monique: would be good to invite other performers and local artists, on-stage after or before Brown; build off momentum from Berkeley music concert; Miles MegaCiph does a fantastic job
 - Tarak: a lot of questions needed to be resolved; it needs a full discussion of the people involved including Miles and the convention committee; Michael brought up a host of questions; originally volunteered to be on the convention committee and work on speakers and music but haven't heard from the committee since August
 - Michael: we want to have a convention committee call next week; will make sure to send Tarak call info; there has been no commitments to anything regarding the festival; a big decision we could make on this call is do we want to use \$132k of our money to put on a concert; that's an independent decision in a way; the factors being we haven't done this before, neither has Miles; if we get Brown, that makes me feel a lot better because it's a big name everyone knows, and another additional big name could make the money for us; we have to be willing to put forth the money first; if not, then we have to say do something smaller with a smaller budget
 - Tarak: getting the feeling that the Board does not want to go ahead with a big expensive all-day festival; should be able to resolve that; so then what are we going to do; want to be able to tell Brown's managers our decision and they have other questions
 - Brian: how would the Sunday festival work with the plenaries, unless we only plan plenaries for Friday and Saturday; more inclined to host something similar to what we did in Berkeley
 - Barry: Berkeley convention was different because we had to adjust convention days, and we went into Sunday taken up with workshops and plenaries, and then the evening music concert; but this year the banquet will be Saturday night, and a Sunday morning action; the festival would come later in the day; it would not be interrupting workshops or plenaries; Board meeting on that Wednesday, Thursday is the opening plenary

- Michael: Sunday morning closing plenary or activity, then a morning action; Miles pointed out that a big festival event would invite the entire public to it; to draw the public to the issues and exposure to VFP
 - Barry: Kids For Peace coming to Chicago for their peace march; could end up at the concert venue; speakers at the festival on topical issues; draw them in with great entertainment
- Mark: an all-day big concert with known entertainers, they need to have a lot of lead time in order to get their buy-in; we're already shy of the lead time; you have to hire a professional to organize the whole thing; don't know if we have that professional; no idea how much a pro would cost to organize an all-day festival; **motion to vote on the size of the festival**
- Dan: love the outline on the Kids For Peace march; doesn't have to be an all-day thing; Tarak needs to know the venue and how large; would go with the smaller one, with an action that morning; don't forget the Trump tower in the city in regards to action
 - Barry: in favor of shorter concert event; opposed to a big all-day concert; **Barry calls for support for big all-day concert, none heard; calls for agreement that it should be a shorter concert and smaller venue – unanimous agreement**
- Tarak: received email back from Jackson Brown manager; she needs to speak to someone regarding logistics and local promotion info; discuss actual production of event; step one to sorting out if we can make something happen in August; she's happy to speak with Barry or wait for better time in the new year; we should push forward a bit in figuring out venue and details, local promotion, event production, etc.; skeleton ideas behind the event and have that ready for the first of January, or we'll lose Jackson Brown because he's booked a year in advance; he loves us, we have great relations with his managers; get this sorted out in next couple of weeks
 - Barry: Tarak is the perfect person to work directly with Brown's people
 - Michael: we need to have a call next week; let Miles know that we are reluctant for this outlay of \$135k, will have to be smaller; we have big chance to have Brown and work out details to let his people know; Miles can have communication with Brown's people because he's the lead concert organizer; does the Brown people want us to have a local promoter, that's one of my biggest concerns because Miles is based in Kansas City; Michael will put a Doodle poll out to those who want to be on the call

2016 Year-End Budget Update

- Michael: good shape, with Sally Alice Thompson donation; Michael briefs the meeting on specific October numbers from budget; currently in the black; will have new Administrative Assistant in St. Louis office tomorrow, Monday the 12th; ED and Prez travel is below budget; salary, wages and payroll taxes are below budget; concern for next year is that we will be in the hole if we don't receive the Thompson donation by

January; member renewal numbers are lower than expected, partially because some members have passed; the Trump administration may encourage others to join; we need very intentional membership drive; Development Committee is being reconstituted and Michael will present fundraising plan during January 2017 Board meeting; the 2017 budget will follow closely to 2016 with increases in a few places to help shore up costs for convention; by April we will make decisions on specific spending; October numbers don't have recent bequest gifts nor does it have the Magic Pebble Foundation grant; VFP fundraising end-of-year appeals will be delivered by next week; will send several emails to remind to donate by end of year

- Barry opens for discussion
 - o Mark: we are going into the new year with a lot more money than this time last year; the Board will have to think long and hard on how to spend it; where we think we need priorities for spending; have it on the agenda for January 2017 Board meeting; how to prioritize spending and saving; by April meeting we should have it nailed down pretty well; Michael needs direction from the Board on how to spend money

Gandhian Nonviolence Award Proposal

- Joey: award committee had a lot of people eligible to receive awards, a good problem to have; after John Heuer passing, I realized we don't have any award to give to someone who recently passed away; further clarification on intention and specifics of award
 - o **Barry: call for opposition; none heard; call for consensus on specifics as Joey stated; consensus confirmed**
 - Michael: no problem with it; confirm that Gandhi was in the military

Current Membership Issues

- Michael: Barry has to call it so the minutes are reflected properly for closed session
 - o Barry: calls for discussion
 - Mark: don't see why it needs to be in closed session; the entire membership will hear what we are proposing eventually; hope we can vote on whether or not to dismiss this member from VFP
 - Barry: we have a process to follow; briefs the meeting on the process for membership dismissal; can't vote tonight, have to follow the rules of the bylaws and policy manual
 - Mark: I think we have followed the process
 - Kourtney: membership committee has to discuss first, make recommendation to the Board
 - Barry: reads aloud specific section of policy regarding member misconduct; make sure the process is right so our bases are covered; how fast we move likely won't affect Mark's safety; we don't have legal power, that's outside of us
 - Barry: Kourtney can prepare the report, send to membership committee and call for objection; send it to the Board

- Mark agrees to prepare the report for approval by Kourtney and Monique; Kourtney to send report to membership committee for recommendation

Golden Rule Update

- Barry: San Diego chapter donated to GR; not sure if boat is back in Eureka, it was held up from returning due to storms; more updates from Gerry to come

2017 Board Meeting Scheduling

- Barry briefs the meeting on the specifics of the scheduled meetings; ABQ chapter member Sally Alice Thomson big donation to VFP; will have a special event on Saturday night in January to honor Sally Alice
 - Patrick volunteers to help with Saturday night honor event for Sally Alice; encourages Board members to purchase tickets as soon as possible
- Barry: April meeting in St. Louis will include a one or two-day Board retreat
 - Monique: January meeting at Hotel Blue in downtown ABQ; will get info to Michael this week; have three people helping with shuttle from airport; additionally an ABQ chapter member has two rooms available at his home, he will provide transportation; Sally Alice wants to stress that it was her passed husband Don who wished for the money to support VFP; keep in mind that since Sally Alice is 93 years-old, her hearing isn't the best; make sure the venue is possible for her to hear clearly; a small local group called the Soul Singers provides singing and they agreed to do a small performance for Sally Alice at the event; she would like to have some community folks who know her to be part of the event; trying to get snacks and lunch food organized through the local veterans farm to provide during meeting; plenty of restaurants in the area
 - Tarak: concerns about not having enough time during Friday meeting if the Board only meets in the afternoon
 - Barry: can extend meetings when we want to do so
 - Michael: traditionally Board meetings have been only Saturday and Sunday, so we've already been extending times to Friday as well; some people do have full-time jobs, so we have to be careful not to make it so hard for people to be on the Board so they can't make the expectations
 - Patrick: also increasing the bill for VFP with an extra seven rooms for another night
 - Monisha: full-time student in Ph.D. program; will have some challenges in making every meeting but will try hardest
 - Monique: explore Board calls and meetings via Skype or FaceTime
 - Monisha: other Boards I've served on do that, they've used Zoom or GoToMeeting; have seen it integrated with live in-person Board meetings; works well
 - Barry: we've done it before, will definitely do so if it will help

Rep. Tulsi Gabbard Requests for VFP Feedback on Bill

- Barry: she is a veteran and has asked for input from VFP on her proposed bill; Barry sent to Advisory Board members for their comments; once we get info from them we can have an email discussion among the Board

Issues with Miramar Air Show Protest Documentary

- Barry: Mike Hanes and Chris Smiley went to the air show venue site, talked to people, conducted interviews, and took a lot of footage of the events; Mike Hanes said it looked like Disneyland for war; kids with camo face paint, playing with military weapons systems and arms; the documentary film has raised some issues on whether or not we should block out the identities of children in the film; Barry has looked into legal aspect and found that there are no legal issues with showing children in the film; no expectation of privacy; military takes video and pictures and uses it for advertising as well; the film shows that the military is brainwashing these children; if you block out the faces of kids, you miss the emotional attachment the kids show to the weapons systems they are playing with; Disneyland sells fun, the military sells war; my recommendation is that we use the film in a way that allows us to get the full expression of what's going on in a public place where war is being marketed; **motion to use the documentary film as it is presented to us from Mike Hanes and Chris Smiley**
 - o Barry opens for discussion
 - o Michael: have a responsibility; parents may end up seeing their children on the film and they may try to make VFP look bad; legal or not does it make it correct; children aren't making decisions about their life, they went because their parents took them; they are not in control of what's happening, legal system does not take children's rights very seriously; what could possibly happen
 - o Barry: parents brought the kids there so they obviously approve of what their children are taken part in; so it would be strange that the parents would then be offended that we are using it; I don't think they have a legal right to challenge it; if they insist, then there are responsible steps we can take; the impact of the film won't be as great if we don't set the stage properly and show what's really going on; kids don't have consent to reject it
 - o Dan: where will the film be shown?
 - o Barry: we can put it on our social media; we will certainly have it available in San Diego to show to groups for discussions
 - o **Mark: seconds the motion**
 - o Monisha: as a social worker, ethically Michael is right on; child's image is not going to be very well protected if shown to the public; videographer could have asked each parent for permission; concerned that might not be the right thing to do
 - o **Barry calls for roll call vote**
 - **Mark: yes**

- **Tarak: abstain**
- **Kourtney: abstain**
- **Brian: abstain**
- **Joey: no**
- **Monique: abstain**
- **Dan: abstain**
- **Barry: yes**
 - **Barry confirms 2-1-5 vote; the Board does not agree to move forward with the documentary film in current version**
- Michael: Chris made it clear that it's not created as a VFP production; he said he would make a version with their faces blocked out; and not all of the faces all the time; just when you get close up on the subjects; I think that blocking out can also add an element of showing there's something wrong here; people we want to send the video to won't necessarily think there's anything wrong with that; people have to ask why the faces are blocked when they see it; it's a different reaction; doesn't necessarily destroy the reaction we're looking

Late additions to agenda

- Michael: Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, visiting Pearl Harbor in Hawaii; we are developing a campaign and reaching out to VFP members to write an op-ed and reaching out to Mike Hanes and Rory Fanning; December 26-27th is the date of the visit; also, what organizing to plan for Trump Inauguration, show support for the Women's March as requested by Ann Wright
 - Dan: **motion to support the Women's March; Joey seconds**
 - **Barry calls for vote**
 - **No opposition heard; unanimous to support Women's March in January 2017**
 - Dan: need a second call to discuss further options for actions during inauguration
 - Tarak: suggest we consider strongly supporting the Women's March and encourage members to attend the march; if they have to choose between inauguration and march, then encourage them to attend the march because it's positive; need a separate call or email for possible actions
 - Barry: we can organize separate emails and have further discussions

Joey motions to adjourn; Dan seconds

Barry adjourns the meeting at 8:55 PM EST