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Veterans For Peace Board of Directors Approved Meeting Minutes

January 2024 - December 2024

For View Only Access at www.veteransforpeace.org

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

PRESENT: V-P Josh Shurley (Chair), Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Stephen Zollman, Ellen Barfield, Ellen Davidson, Gerry Condon, Mike Wong, Kelly Wadsworth,, Nick Mottern, Matt Southworth, Enya Anderson, Staff:Shelly Rockett. Excused Absence: President Susan Schnall (covid).

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alice Slater, Alex, Anthony Donovan, Dave Logsdon, Eric Johansson, Eric McCammond, Gene Storm, GERAL Hassett, Gerry Condon, Helen Jaccard, Jane Huntington, John Amidon, Kathleen Gilberd, Ken Mayers, Linda Novenski, Mike Ferner, Phil Pritchard, Rachel Clark, Regna Sneed, Robert Richard, Sat Bir Kaur Khalsa, ,Susan Lamont, Taylor, Tim Farley, Tina Jayroe, Tomas Leonard, Willi Hagar, Zool Zokowitz.

12:40 pm Meeting Started with video of Statement of Purpose and Indigenous Worldview

Public Comments:

David Logsdon: Hello everyone.

Alice Slater: Webinar for Peace Action. Doomsday Clock has existed since 1947, which is all doom and gloom. So they want to do a Peace Clock that shows time after midnight.

Rachel Clark: Shared that Allen Nelson, who was a Vvet, stayed in Japan after the war until he died. A documentary was made about him. Also, [Akio Kuroi](#) started a group to review and educate the Japanese people about Japan's murderous and imperial role in WWII. He will give a presentation in SF on Sept 18. If interested in helping with that tour, let her know. FMI: vfpspeakingtour@gmail.com

Windsor Wade: Thanked everyone who voted to put him on the board for the next three years and is honored to serve.

John Amadon: On December 9, the Syracuse Chapter dug a grave in the lawn of the Federal Building in memory of the children in Gaza being murdered by Israel. Here is a link to the YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeEXqImjtB4>

Call to Order of VFP Board Meeting by VP Josh Shurley, 1:00PM ET

Check-ins:

November 16, 2024 Minutes: Approved

Agenda: Approved

Executive Director search, Josh: No decision has been made. More soon.

New board member Windsor Wade, Josh: Welcomed Windsor, who was on the entire Peace Walk.

Exiting Board Member Nick Mottern, Josh: Thanked and recognized the contributions to VFP of outgoing member Nick Mottern.

Finance Report, Mike Tork: Has not gotten around to updating the existing budget through November, but we will be ending the year in the black. In the last month we have had some generous donations and he listed some large donors by name. The 2025 Budget is in process and will be ready for the Jan meeting. We have \$130k in checking and other amounts are the same as last month. He thanked the board for its hard work and for working together.

Ken Mayers will turn 88, February 5 and will throw a farewell party from noon/sunset in Santa Fe. He will be sending out invitations soon. He has now donated \$100,000 to VFP—channeling Sally Alice Thompson's example, and putting it into the Sally Alice Legacy Fund. He also made a pitch for planned giving.

Convention Committee, Josh: Paul discussed the proposed location for the hybrid (in-person & Zoom) convention at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Josh, Mike Tork, and Paul visited the site earlier this week and met with the UNLV staff. They are providing a proposed contract before Christmas. On the positive side, Lost Wages is thought to be cheaper to fly to than many places in the country, and a college campus will certainly be much less expensive for attendees than a hotel-based convention center. Dorm rooms will be \$65/night either single or double, and there will be a shared bathroom for every two rooms. Meals at the dining hall can be reserved at \$12.30 per; there is an on-campus food court; many off-campus eateries across the street; and some wonderful—but more expensive—restaurants within driving distance. The dorm building, food court and dining hall are very close together; the number of people showing up will determine which lecture hall we will have to walk to and some are close and others maybe a few hundred feet away from the dorm. The convention will have to be the last weekend in July since the school closes the dorms on August 3 to prepare for the school year. Lastly, we met with a few of our independent VFP members in Vegas, and they are wonderful folks with roots in the progressive community—beleaguered tho' it may be. The primary downsides are 1) midday temperatures will likely be 110 F° or above (which people with fragile health should take seriously when they consider attending); and 2) VFP National will have to carefully watch the organizational expenses so we can break even (e.g. room rentals, honoraria, staff travel, AV costs, grants [scholarships], etc.). The only practical option to this location for this year is to revert to a Zoom-only convention. Motion to Authorize Convention Committee to proceed with a hybrid convention at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. Passed.

Josh reminded the board that everyone is on the Convention Committee, and our first meeting of the new year will be a premature **Friday, December 27, 2 pm PT, 5 pm ET**. We have planned nothing beyond picking a venue and we have much to do.

VFP Special Projects: Mike Ferner: Our year-end fundraising letter included testimonials from three of our friends who are conscientious objectors: Joy Metzler, Larry Hebert, and Juan Bettancourt. He also referenced the Appeal to Redress V2 is slow going but still viable. A number of additional organizations are supporting them, and a few GIs. Service Members for Ceasefire, also by Joy, Larry and Juan are being helped by Chris Smiley to get info out on social media.

Mike's Fort Wayne, Indiana, arrest charges have been dismissed, and he has done some analysis of wars' effect on Ft Wayne compared with Gaza, which can be easily adapted for other locations by anyone who knows some 'rithmetic. Here is the link to his version for Allen County, IN:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tGlm84vK_dO4ziqR-98-6iZN2obEbjhb/edit

Josie Bilboa, Army Captain, interrupted Senate VAC with her concerns over the genocide in Gaza. Mike played the YouTube video which has a large number of views and likes.

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/boQWxKo68E0>

The documentary by recent veterans, **What I Want You To Know**: Matt Ho and Travis Weiner will be mounting a showing sometime in March. MF is working to get Tom Morello involved.

VFP Committee Reports:

Transformative Justice, Kelly Wadsworth: Will be meeting in early January. Have not met since last meeting. If anyone has any concerns that should be addressed by the Transformative Justice Committee, please contact Kelly.

Membership Committee, Josh: In Oct 53 new and 77 renewals, Nov 47 new and about 50 renewals. Our Casey's membership coordinator contract is ending, and she will move on at the end of Feb. We will try to hire a staff member to work with membership. Greg Corning will begin volunteering to welcome and orient new members. Need additional volunteers to help with cleaning up the database in Jan.

Communications Committee, Gerry Condon: [See Appendix 1](#). Ellen Davdson added that Peace and Planet News is now a national project, and that distribution of the paper has resulted in a \$25k donation in support of it. PPN is an excellent organizing tool in general and individuals should support it with donations and distribution throughout their communities. .

Mobilization Committee, Gerry Condon: [See Appendix 2](#). Ellen Barfield mentioned that police, border patrol and military will all likely be called on to implement Trump's police state operations, and we expect that there will be at least some of those officers who are not going to be willing to execute those orders. Kathleen Gilberd urged us to recruit and support active duty folks as much as we can to support GIs, and made an appeal that some of our members become UCMJ counselors to assist active duty and reserve people who are having trouble with the military. .

Development Committee, Matt Southworth: Cash Cadre had a Veterans Day call that was moderately successful. Waiting for a new ED to be hired, and they are ready to hit the ground running.

National Projects:

Golden Rule, Helen Jaccard:, [See Appendix 3](#)

Deported Veterans, Willie Hagar: DVAP had a Christmas party earlier this month in Tijuana, and had 50+ attendees, including a number of other supportive veteran organizations as well as non-veterans organizations working together and pledging to continue into 2025. In the last year, six deported veterans have died in exile. On the bright side (sort of), in the last few weeks the Tijuana office has had six walk-ins. Rocky Hernandez is an underpaid staff member, and Robert Vivar also comes in. In the last year 139 deported veterans have been repatriated, though they have to stand for a yearly hearing to stay on humanitarian parole. Working on pardons from Senator Whitehouse's office. The DVAP needs help from National Staff to get word out. Their mission is evolving somewhat because they have started getting more calls from overseas, not just Mexico. They need help with funds (currently down to \$3,000). They have a grant proposal out to the Woodruff Foundation, but have not heard back.

SOVA, Josh: Briefly mentioned the work of Save Our VA. There will be much to do this coming year as the VA is clearly in the crosshairs of Trump and his mob of privatizers and Project 2025ers. For SOVA's written report see [Appendix 4](#).

Josh again welcomed new Board Member Windsor Wade and thanked again the hard work of Nick Mottern.

Jan 18: Pre-Inauguration Demo in DC: Ellen Barfield suggests we move the Board meeting from that date and that we try to mobilize as many as we can to show up. Stand by.

Next Board Meeting: January 18, 2025, 9:40 am PT, 12:40 ET. (unless date changes)

Adjournment: 2:50 pm ET

Post Meeting Comments:

Robert VFP Spokane is supporting BDS, specifically products at Trader Joes, Kosher wine, Cheese, Sabra Hummus, Ginger Snaps, etc. (6 in all)--all from Trader Joe's.

Sat Bir Kaur Khala: She hopes that indigenous efforts will be a part of the convention consideration.

Regina Sneed: Supports our having some kind of demo while we are in Vegas for the convention, and that we make connections with young people at the convention. Also, the ongoing Travis demos are important.

End of Zoom: 12:02 pm PT, 3:02 pm ET

APPENDIX 1: VFP Communications Committee Report, Gerry Condon

The Communications Committee met this last Wednesday – Shelly Rockett, Chris Smiley, Becky Luening, Ellen Davidson and me, Gerry Condon. We thanked Becky Luening for another excellent eNews. The next VFP eNews will come out in January, as Shelly and the national office will be sending out three e-blasts before the end of December, mostly focusing on end-of-the-year fundraising.

We discussed the distribution of the recent VFP statement calling on the US Senate to vote No on confirming Pete Hegseth as the next US Secretary of Defense. The statement has been published on six online platforms, including *Peace and Planet News*, *Popular Resistance*, *Countercurrents*, *LA Progressive*, *Dissident Voice* and *Portside*. It is also getting a good response on the VFP Facebook page. Chris Smiley has now posted it on the VFP Instagram account, where it is also getting a good response. Shelly has posted it on the homepage of the VFP website.

Mike Ferner sent a request that the Communications Committee try to get a short video from the Climate Crisis and Militarism Project aired as a PSA on public television. None of us had seen such PSA's on the more established PBS stations, but we thought it would be possible to get it aired on local community cable stations. We are going to look for a listing of such cable TV stations, and we will also ask VFP chapters and members to try to get this aired on their local community TV stations.

VFP Radio with Jim Wohlgenuth and Harvey Bennett continues to produce excellent shows, and we want to do more to promote it. Some VFP chapters also have their own radio shows and other media, which we would like to feature in the VFP e-News and elsewhere.

Ellen Davidson reported that another *Peace and Planet News* has been published recently, and efforts continue to reach a larger audience. A recent donation makes it possible to offer bundles of the paper at a lower cost to interested chapters and members.

The Communications Committee finds our meetings to be quite helpful in keeping the various VFP means of communications well-coordinated. We will continue to meet monthly. Our regularly scheduled meetings are on second Wednesdays at 6 pm Eastern.

Appendix 2 VFP Mobilization Committee Report, Gerry Condon

The recently formed VFP Mobilization Committee had its second meeting last week. Board members Josh Shurley, Nick Mottern and Gerry Condon were joined by Dan Shea of Portland, Oregon VFP and Tarak Kauff of New York VFP. Ellen Barfield and Mike Ferner sent their regrets due to other commitments, and expressed their interest in participating in future meetings.

We had a lively discussion and expressed our intention to organize nationally coordinated actions where all VFP chapters and members would be encouraged to participate. These could be VFP-initiated actions

and/or coordinated with other peace and justice organizations. However, no specific such action was proposed at this meeting.

Tarak Kauff spoke about the power of strikes and boycotts, and encouraged us to get together with other organizations and unions who are beginning to discuss such actions, even general strikes. This is seen as a longer term effort. Dan Shea said this could be taken up by the new *VFP Veterans and Labor Working Group*.

Our discussion then turned to prioritizing support for Conscientious Objectors and GI Resistance. I subsequently have been able to join several meetings with *About Face*, the *Military Law Task Force* of the National Lawyers Guild, the *Center for Conscience and War*, and the *GI Rights Hotline*, who are working on recruiting and training more GI lawyers and volunteer counselors. I also attended a meeting of a growing campaign of monthly protests at Travis Air Force Base in northern California, from where weapons are being shipped to Israel in support of the US/Israeli genocide in Gaza. Several VFP members have expressed interest in developing messaging and outreach to the GI's who are stationed at Travis AFB. I will write up a more complete report for the Board about these new initiatives and opportunities.

We agreed to write up a statement opposing the confirmation of Pete Hegseth as US Secretary of Defense. When we saw a growing number of damning revelations against Hegseth, however, we thought he would be gone before we could write and publish such a statement, so we decided not to bother. But after Trump breathed new life into Hegseth's nomination, we went ahead and quickly drafted such a [statement](#). We sought and incorporated input from VFP members, including the VFP Executive Committee, which approved the statement. As reported earlier, VFP's statement has now been widely distributed. Aside from being timely and relevant, such statements help to make the work of Veterans For Peace visible.

Finally, we all agreed that messaging about stopping the genocide in Gaza should remain front and center in our antiwar organizing.

Appendix 3: Golden Rule Report, Helen Jaccard vfgoldenruleproject@gmail.com, www.vfggoldenrule.org, facebook.com/goldenrulepeaceboat, P.O. Box 87, Samoa, CA 95564



2025 - Humboldt Bay calendar:

Golden Rule Ambassadors will offer presentations, boat visits and chances to sail in Humboldt Bay

Engagement with Humboldt Sailing Programs:

ØSea Scouts

ØSaturdays - "Fog Race" and other Humboldt Yacht Club activities

ØSundays - "Eco Tours" of Humboldt Bay

ØUse a licensed captain and charge people to go sailing sometimes.

Leroy says he will help with reservations through the Madaket's process

Other Program Plans

ØJan 24-26: Rotary Peace Conference, Santa Rosa

ØSat March 1: Nuclear Victims Remembrance Day (March 1 1954 Castle Bravo Nuclear Weapons Test contaminated the Marshall Islands and Beyond)

Films & Play: San Onofre Syndrome, Golden Rule: The Journey For Peace, Which Way the Wind

ØMarch 2: Report-back to the community about the Pacific Northwest Voyage at Humboldt Unitarian Universalist presentation

ØPossibly: Which Way the Wind Festival (Art Show, Poetry Slam, Concert, Films, Panels)

ØSat June 14: 10th Anniversary Party at the boat yard, launch at 4 pm

ØFri July 4: 4th of July sail under firework shows

ØSat Aug 9: 80th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings

ØWebinars and calls to action on our own and in coordination with VFP No Nukes WG

ØFurther outreach - schools, churches, service clubs, political action groups

ØTabling - county fair and other public events

2025 Possibility - San Francisco Bay

Ø4-6 weeks

ØPrimarily Stay in one or two marinas OR

Members of Humboldt YC get reciprocal YC docking privileges for 2-3 nights and use of facilities around SF Bay, a chance to meet more sailors and possible crew OR

Stops (more research to be done)

1.Ft Bragg (on the coast)

2.Bodega Bay (on the coast) / Santa Rosa

3.Corinthian YC

4.San Francisco

5.Berkeley

6.Richmond

Project Manager Transition

Recruit more Volunteers -

ØGRC Committee Members for tasks that were done by Helen

ØTrain additional public speakers

ØWork more closely with VFP No Nukes WG and other allies for webinars, calls to action

Project Manager Consulting Fees. VFP payments will go to Michelle starting in January and for any continuing work by Helen, the pay will come from Golden Rule Project

Ødocument, improve procedures

Øtrain Michelle and some of the volunteers

Øadvise and assist Michelle

Øcontinue public speaking, but less in-person

Øauthor, graphic design

Øliaison with other anti-nuclear organizations

2025 Budget Request for VFP support

\$13,000 liability insurance for boat and crew (and other boat-related coverage)

\$ 1,000 registration and property taxes

\$21,840 project management (\$420 x 52) - minimum (note - this is 1/2 time pay for full-time work)

Total = **\$35,840 (minimum)**

Infrastructure / Founding Documents: Changes and discussions are in process

Memorandum of Understanding

Simplify language regarding conditions for the Committee to give boat to VFP, as it happened in 2019.

Clarify VFP restricted fund, VFP and GRC financial responsibilities

Specify duties of a Project Manager

Project Manager agreement is started, supervised and ended by the VFP Board, not the Executive Director. Pay negotiated with the VFP Board.

Specify duties of the Repair, Upgrades and Maintenance team (RUM)

GR Bylaws

Similar changes, to reflect MOU and inconsistencies with actual/ desired practices

Clarifies duties of officers, “bookkeeper” and sub-committees
Clarifies that there are no “openings” on the Committee (not a set # of people)
Changed (Golden Rule) “Board” to (Golden Rule) “Committee”

Appendix 3: Save Our VA Report

- Created 14 *Call To Action* (CTA) letters that were sent to Members of Congress (MOCs) by 1,700 responders (average 124 per CTA) for total of 4,450 letters
- Continued to use *SOVA Updates* to send out CTAs. *Updates* consist of 1+ pages describing the issue being addressed, the CTA link, links to related articles and closing comments. Sent to about 1,160 activists
- 170 new responders sent at least 1 CTA.
- 11 meetings with MOC staff, 5 of them in person and 6 Zoom visits
- Gave a SOVA presentation at VFP 2024 Convention
- Because it was an election year, no additional Washington DC lobbying trip was made after the October 2023 trip. Plans are to go in March or April of 2025 after new Senate and House Veterans Affairs Committees member assignments are made.
- SOVA presentations/meetings:
 - Met with AFGE’s National Lobbyist and twice with Minneapolis VAMC AFGE union leadership discussing workplace issues and SOVA’s activities.
 - Gave 5 presentations on SOVA ...to who??
 - Did interviews on 2 national radio shows: *Friendly Fire* out of Maine and *Radio Free Nashville*.
 - Jeff & Arlys were invited by Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar, who organized an August 2nd *PACT Act Round Table* led by Rep. Omar & House Committee on Veterans Affairs (HCVA) Ranking Member Mark Takano. She invited Takano to come, and both Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith also attended for a total of 26 attendees.
 - Met MN State DAV Adjutant Stephen Whitehead to familiarize DAV with SOVA mission/activities. Whitehead promised to invite SOVA to state and regional events to make presentations and tabling. He provided contact information for the North Carolina DAV Adjutant so SOVA Leader Bruce Carruthers can establish contact for future collaboration.

–END–

Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, November 16, 2024
Minutes

PRESENT: V-P Josh Shurley (Chair), Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Stephen Zollman, Ellen Barfield, Ellen Davidson, Gerry Condon, Mike Wong, Kelly Wadsworth, Enya Anderson, Nick Mottern. Staff: Shelly Rockett. Excused Absences: President Susan Schnall, Matt Southworth.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Al Glatkowski, Alan Batten, Alex, Arlys Herem, Bill Simon, Charles Powell, Dan Shea, Dave Logsdon, Dennis M. Hansen, Dirk Lackovich-Van Gorp, Doug Rawlings, Ed Brighton, Eric Johansson, Gene Storm, Gerald Hassett, Greg Corning, Ian Mooney, Jeff Roy, Ken Mayers, Larry Holman, Larry White, M Cervantes, Michelle Marsonette Oregon Mississippi Martin Todd, Nadya Williams, Octavio

Sifuentes, Peter Barus, Phil, Phil Pritchard, Rachel Clark, Ray Nacanaynay, Regina Sneed, Richard Grant, Robert Kieltyka, Russell, Susan Lamont, Thomas Leonard, Tina Jayroe, William Sanders, Woody Powell.

MEMBER COMMENTS: [[I missed them!! Here is one I gleaned from the CHAT]]

- **Dan Shea:** Mentioned film Outgrow the System, trailer on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/863141958>

Started: 1:40 pm ET

Statement of Purpose and Indigenous Worldview videos were played

Agenda: Approved

Minutes for Sep and Oct: Approved

Chair's report: Josh noted the election of Trump will present us with a number of challenges, and asked board members to report on their thoughts on events:

- **Nick Mottern** reported on the UN's [Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories](#)

Board Election, Paul Cox: reported that Josh Shurley, Enya Anderson, Mike Tork and Matt Southworth were re-elected for a second three year term starting in January, 2025. Windsor Wade was also elected to fill the fifth spot being vacated by Nick Mottern. He thanked the candidates who were not elected for stepping up to run for the board: Alex Prochaska, Brian Earley, and Eric Wasileski.

Executive Committee Report, Josh:

- **Finance Report,** Mike Tork: Amalgamated Bk Ckg: \$59,319.78; Amal Bk CDs \$60,000 (+ \$?? Interest when mature); Commerce Bk Operating Chk: \$89,332.00; Edward Jones: \$16,562.22; **TOTAL UNRESTRICTED** \$225,214.00. Restricted: \$19,935.92; Zinn Fund: \$19,454.14; **TOTAL RESTRICTED:** \$39,390.06.
- **Indigenous Worldview Project,** Josh: encourages members to take the survey next month.
- **Golden Rule:** New Memorandum of Understanding will be ready by next month
- **Membership:** Final membership drive of the year will begin around Thanksgiving via snail mail for member drops since 2022. New members are coming in, and retaining members is also a focus. Cleaning up the Chapter Contact list is ongoing. In general we have about 100 active (responsive) chapters. We have two new chapter applications: First, **River Valley Chapter 413** (tentative name), due to the work of Anthony Donovan and Nick Mottern in MA.. Motion Mike Wong, second Gerry Condon, to waive 10-member requirement and approve. Passed. Second, **Mississippi Chapter 184** Due to the Work of Ray Nacanaynay and Sophia Williams. Motion Ellen Barfield, second Gerry Condon, to waive 10-member requirement and approve. Passed.
- **Website:** Needs to be improved, and will be updated in the next few months. Encourages board members and members to make suggestions. Please send Josh an email with details of any changes you may have.
- **Convention update:** 2025 will be the **80th Anniversary of Hiroshima/Nagasaki. 50** since the end of **American War on Vietnam**, and **40 since VFP formed.** We have looked at Portland Maine, and Norfolk, VA for convention sites. Most likely we will wind up at UNevada, Lost Wages. Decision will be made by the next meeting. Paul Cox will act as a clearing house communicating with the UNLV and any suggestions you may have. .
- **ED Search Committee:** We have gone through about 200 resumes, culled to 5-ish. Will be interviewing in the next few weeks.

Special Projects, Mike Ferner

- **VFP Letter to State Dept on US complicity in Genocide by arming Israel:** In February we sent our letter to the U.S. State Dept Inspector General and followed it up in March by delivering it to 16 domestic DOS offices. Several chapters also used it during the Sept. Days of Solidarity with

Palestine actions. Students used it at campus protests, Fed4Peace distributed through USG offices, LOTS of circulation.

- **Appeal for Redress v2:** <https://www.veteransforpeace.org/?cID=1351> It's going slowly, but c.o. applicants Joy Metzler, Larry Hebert and Juan Bettancourt started "[Servicemembers for Ceasefire](#)" to promote it with active duty, guard and reserve. Chris Smiley is working with them to push it out. Also Mike Ferner had several conversations with a VFP member about doing a tour of military bases as was done in 2006, with a proposal in the works. Some of our C.O. members media includes [this one about Joy Metzler](#); several podcasts, interviews and essays to places like [Counterpunch](#) and others
- **September Days of Solidarity with Palestine:** [Becky's slideshow report](#)). Special thanks to [DALLAS](#) – Leslie Harris and crew!
- **Drafted our EOY fundraising letter** (Share screen with the page of Joy, Larry, Juan and Elik's testimonials). Shelly is compiling 2024 accomplishments to go with it.
- **Students:** [Student pledge](#) started by Jack Gilroy and Nick Mottern. Met with Jack and Cornell students last month. They love working with VFP and we're helping them promote the pledge
- **Online showing of What I Want You to Know** proposed for next March anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. Working with Casey on this.
- **VFP statement issued:** [AIPAC's War on Democracy](#)
- **Ft. Wayne trial 12/18:** nothing new to VFP members who've gone through this, but the purpose is to put the U.S.-Israeli genocide on trial; we'll mobilize local peace groups and a peace studies class at local college; plan to get publicity on it well beyond Ft. Wayne; and write up a procedure to assist others.
- **Armistice Day:** Produced a leaflet with Wilfred Owens' Dulce et Decorum Est which was extremely well received by hundreds of people at a veterans' breakfast in Toledo and will work everywhere.

National Project Reports:

- **SOVA,** Jeff Roy and Arles Herem: Save Our VA's focus is on advocating with Congress on VA issues. With Trump taking the White House, there will be an assault on the VA. He asked for interested parties to start working with SOVA committee. Arlys reported that with Project 2025, to justify the cost of the privatization, she expects that the VA will be reduced to only paying for war-related, or service-connected injuries. Also appealed for more help from members. FMI: see [Appendix 1](#). Nick Mottern suggests that SOVA interview (privately when necessary) various VA employees to learn more about what is occurring internally with the VHA and VBA. For example during the previous Trumpism, VA employees were forbidden to work on union items during work hours. Biden dropped that restriction, but Trump will most certainly reinstate it.
- Chapter 160 Vietnam Tour, Paul Cox: Reported that the 10th VFP Hoa Binh Chapter 160's educational tour ended last month with the donation of \$33,000 to various organizations in Vietnam that help victims of the two remaining and ongoing legacies of the American War—Agent Orange/dioxin and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO's). There were 18 people on the tour and each donated \$1,000. The chapter donated an additional \$6,000 from non-tour donations. FMI: www.vfp160.org or paulcox@sonic.net

VFP Communications Committee Report, Gerry Condon: The Communications Committee met this last Wednesday to review our recent efforts. Becky Luening, Chris Smiley, Ellen Davidson and myself. We gave ourselves a pat on the back for our recent collaboration to pull together and share Armistice Day resources that emphasized VFP's call for an end to the genocide in Gaza and stop providing US bombs to Israel. Our resource package included a banner design and a social media graphic (thanks to Ellen Davidson), a flyer, and a sample Letter to the Editor. These were shared with VFP members via an e-blast and we believe they had a positive impact on VFP chapters and activities, as we saw that several chapters were utilizing the images and messaging. The impact was limited, however, by the fact that this package of resources was not sent out until Thursday before the Veterans Day weekend, by which time most chapters had

already made their plans. Next year we will get started on this earlier and aim to get it distributed two weeks before Armistice Day.

Our social media specialist Chris Smiley reported steady growth in our social media presence. We are getting thousands of reactions to our posts on Instagram, and hundreds on Facebook. Our Armistice Day outreach was further enhanced when six online progressive media outlets published my article about VFP's ongoing campaign to Reclaim Armistice Day – and also calling for an end to the Gaza genocide.

The Communications Committee is currently working to pull together reports of chapter activities on Armistice Day / Veterans Day, along with photos, some of which will go in the VFP eNews, and link to a special Armistice Day events page on the VFP website.

The Communications Committee is functioning well, and getting better all the time.

VFP Mobilization Committee Report, Gerry Condon: The newly formed VFP Mobilization Committee, which was unanimously approved at the last Board meeting, had its first meeting just yesterday, with Nick Mottern, Dan Shea, Joshua Shurley and I in attendance (and Ellen Barfield and Mike Ferner sending their regrets, as they were busy with other meetings). We reviewed the purpose of the Mobilization Committee, which is to provide a space for strategizing and proposing nationally coordinated actions, as well as to interface with allied organizations and coalition building. We are a Committee of the VFP Board of Directors and therefore accountable to the Board. We also plan to consult with VFP chapters, one-on-one, and occasionally through larger Zoom meetings, to find out what chapters are up to, what type of activities are working best for them, and what might be replicated by others.

Some ideas for possible future activities were pressing the Biden administration to do the right thing in its waning days, including ending weapons shipments to Gaza, closing the US prison at Guantanamo, Cuba, and freeing Leonard Peltier and Mumia abu Jamal. Another suggestion was for VFP to weigh in against the Senate approving some of the warmongers that Trump wants to appoint to his cabinet. We liked the idea of somehow “mocking” these cartoon villains. We also think it is important to step up our efforts to reach out to GI's and encourage them to resist orders to participate in illegal wars and war crimes. Many more ideas were shared in our brief meeting, along with much enthusiasm for creating a space where this important work can take place. We will be meeting again in the very near future. Also, the Mob committee want to build in recruitment into their work. Paul added that the Equal Rights Amendment has the requisite 38-state approval and only requires Biden to publish it. Ellen Barfield said that some states have tried to rescind their approval, so there are issues.

Appendix 1: SOVA 2024 Accomplishments

- Created 14 Call To Action (CTA) letters that were sent to Members of Congress (MOCs) by 1,700 responders (average 124 per CTA) for total of 4,450 letters
- Continued to use SOVA Updates to send out CTAs. Updates consist of 1+ pages describing the issue being addressed, the CTA link, links to related articles and closing comments. Sent to about 1,160 activists
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 - Did interviews on 2 national radio shows: Friendly Fire out of Maine and Radio Free Nashville.
 - Jeff & Arlys were invited by Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar, who organized an August 2nd PACT Act Round Table led by Rep. Omar & House Committee on Veterans Affairs (HCVA) Ranking Member Mark Takano. She invited Takano to come, and both Senators Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith also attended for a total of 26 attendees.
 - Met MN State DAV Adjutant Stephen Whitehead to familiarize DAV with SOVA mission/activities. Whitehead promised to invite SOVA to state and regional events to make presentations and tabling. He provided contact information for the North Carolina DAV Adjutant so SOVA Leader Bruce Carruthers can establish contact for future collaboration.

Ellen Davidson expressed appreciation to Josh for his work during this time when Susan had to step back.

Next VFP Board Meeting December 21, 2024.

Adjournment 2:41 pm ET

Post Meeting Comments by members:

- **Regina Sneed:** Thanked Josh for his work. ERA Coalition has action item for Biden to do.
- **Dan Shea:** RE SOVA: Suzanne Gordon and Steve Early spoke on Portland, OR, radio (https://kboo.fm/sites/default/files/episode_audio_b/kboo_episode.2.241111.0900.4043.123959.mp3) and we should all try to get them and others into media outlets. FMI: <https://veteranspolicy.org/>
- **Susan Lamont:** Reminded that Congress has already tried to pass a rule that will withdraw non-profit status to any group "associated with terrorism".
- **David Logsdon:** mentioned that there has already been a rightist New-Think tank organization that issued a report that identified his chapter with associated with Hamas—a terrorist org.

Meeting closed at 2:55 pm ET.

**Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, October 20, 2024
Minutes**

PRESENT: V-P Josh Shurley (Chair), Treasurer Mike Tork, Stephen Zollman (notes), Ellen Barfield, Ellen Davidson, Gerry Condon, Kelly Wadsworth, Enya Anderson. **Excused Absence:** President Susan Schnall, Secretary Paul Cox, Mike Wong, Nick Mottern, Matt Southworth.

Started: 1:40 pm ET

Statement of Purpose and Indigenous Worldview videos were played

Public Comments: (not recorded)

Call to Order of VFP Board Meeting 2 pm ET

Check-ins

Minutes, Sep 21, 2024: tabled

Agenda: Approved as amended

Finance & Fundraising Report, Mike Tork: See [Appendix 1](#).

War and Peace Report, Ellen Barfield: Ellen Reviewed a UN and Geneva reports; Black Alliance for Peace is a great source on Haiti in summary 110 conflicts in 55 Nations-Ellen will forward overview notes

Labor & Mobilization Working Group Proposal: Approved

Indict Blinken Campaign Letter by Terry Lodge, Jeffrey Berger:

ExComm Report, Josh Shurley:

VFP Annual Elections Progress

Roughly halfway through election period, which runs from Oct 3-Nov 3.

We're down about 2% from ballots received last year.

There are 331 ballots submitted as on Oct 15 – out of 2517 eligible voters — 13%

Last year 383 ballots were submitted of 2470 eligible voters - 15%

Will send another email reminder

Indigenous Worldview Project

Reminded members about the project, the chart coming out in the newsletter any day, and that in the next two months we'll be completing the worldview survey.

No War on Iran webinar cancellation

Overview of recent plans to host a webinar on the subject, and subsequent cancellation after issues with the speaker. More opportunities for similar events on this topic coming in late November/early December..

2025 Convention Update

Discussed final options for convention including Las Vegas in July, Portland, ME in October, or in Cedar Rapids, IA (date TBD).

ED Search Committee Update

Have narrowed the 200 resumes down to a folder of about 65-70. Search committee will scrutinize and select a short list of candidates to begin interviewing. Hope to have a decision or a final few candidates by next board meeting.

Climate Crisis & Militarism Project, Gary Butterfield & Vince Dijanich:

Golden Rule Project, Helen Jaccard:

Transformative Justice Committee, Kelly Wadsworth:

Communications Committee, Gerry Condon:

Next Board Meeting November 16, 2024

Adjournment

Appendix 1 Treasurer's report, Mike Tork:

Amalgamated Bank: Checking, \$59,131.45; CDs, \$60k.

Commerce Bank: Checking, \$88,427.40; Restricted, \$20,485.92; Credit Card, \$0.

Edward Jones: \$16,556.52 (Will move to Amalgamated CDs soon).

Cap One: Savings, \$1.07 (phasing out).


Cap One: Zinn Fund, \$19,452.49.

Budget review: Good shape but.....mostly because we haven't been paying for an ED. We need to keep up our fundraising.

Fundraising update:

- Calls - Armistice Day - looking for volunteers
- Next cash cadre meeting - 11-4
- End-of-year Appeal. Mike F. has already started a fundraiser letter.
- Ideas?

Zinn Fund: It is getting used, which is a good thing. Four grants have been awarded in 2024
Ed Search is ongoing - 200 resumes so far pared down to ~70


Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, September 21, 2024
Minutes

PRESENT: V-P Josh Shurley (Chair), Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Ellen Barfield, Ellen Davidson, Gerry Condon, Nick Mottern, Kelly Wadsworth, Mike Wong. Office Manager Shelly Rocket.
 Excused Absence: President Susan Schnall, Stephen Zollman. Absent: Matt Southworth, Enya Anderson.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Morse, Alex Prochaska, Gene Storm, Ken Mayers, Rachel Clark, Thomas Leonard, Paul "Pablo" Dordal, M Cervantes, Gerald Hassett, John Jadryeve, Tim Farley, Ed Brighton, Larry Orr, Paul Edward Gringas, Regina Sneed, Bob Keilbach, Marlene, Michael McPhearson, Al Glatkowski, Taylor.

Statement of Purpose and Indigenous Worldview videos were played

Public Comments:

- **Steve Morse** reported that CCMP wants all VFP members and friends and family to please sign this petition to Secretary of the Navy Del Toro and Secretary of the Air Force Kendall and tell them: cancel air shows and protect us from the climate crisis! bit.ly/no-air-shows. Second, Labor for Sensible Priorities is proposing becoming a Labor Working Group. If you and/or others in your chapter are interested, contact labor@veteransforpeace.org.
- Rachel Clark expressed gratitude to everyone who donated to VFP Oki/Japan Peace Speaking Tour
- John reported that the Midwest Regional Conference in Iowa with Mike Ferner and Matt Ho is underway yesterday and today.

Meeting Opened at: 9:55 am PT, 12:55 pm ET

Check-ins:

Minutes of July 20, August 10 and August 17 meetings: Approved as corrected by Ellen Barfield.

Agenda: Approved

ExComm Report, Josh Shurley:

- **Membership:** We have hired Lyn Ellis to help with membership for two months. We are getting a pretty good run of new members and need to welcome them and connect them to the organization. Membership drive will happen by the end of the year.
- **Newsletter:** In addition to PPN we have our semi-annual printed newsletter that will be mailed out in about 3 weeks.
- **Worldview Project:** Included in the newsletter, there is an article about the Indigenous World View Project and Survey. The chart that goes with this project will be inserted into the newsletter.
- **Post-Convention Report:** Slightly fewer attendees than last year (325 vs 357). Total raised \$37,830, including ads, pledges and registrations. Financials are still in the works
- **2025 Convention Planning:** Looking at the feasibility of an in-person convention. 2025 will be an important year: 50th Anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, 80th of the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the 40th of VFP!!

- **Upcoming Election:** Election Buddy will conduct the election from Oct 3 to Nov 3. The link to the Board Candidate Forum recording that was held on Sep 12 can be found here: <https://www.vfpconvention.org/business-meeting>
- **Board Candidate final list:**
 - Josh Shurley, Fresno, CA, Chapter 180
 - Windsor Wade, Rochester, NY Chapter 23
 - Brian Earley, Kevin Lucey Cape Cod, MA Chapter 9??
 - Alex Prochaska, Chicago, Indy
 - Mike Tork, Falmouth, MA, Indy
 - Eric Wasilewski, MA Chapter 95
 - Willie Hager, Jacksonville, FL Jacob George Chapter 174
 - Matt Southworth, Hartford, CT Chapter 42
 - Nyamekye Chinua Anderson, Albuquerque, NM Chapter 65
- **Executive Director Search:** Just getting underway. Currently have about 120 applicants, most of which are not, of course, good candidates for the job. Gerry pointed out that our job description includes familiarity with veterans' groups, but does not mention activism in the peace movement. Nick suggested that we track how many are not white men, been in the military, familiarity with the workings of Congress and the Administration, and community organizing.

Budget & Finance, Mike Tork: See **Appendix 1**. If you have questions, contact him at vfp_treasurer@gmail.com

Suppression of progressive orgs, Mike Wong & Josh Shurley: Uhuru Three were acquitted last week of being unregistered agents of the Russian government, but convicted of Conspiracy to Commit an Offense Against the US. Conviction will be appealed. Sentencing is scheduled for Nov 25. See **Appendix 2** for VFP Statement on The New McCarthyism. Gerry Condon suggested that it is too long for a statement, and should be shortened. However, the longer statement might be turned into an article and shopped around.

Golden Rule, Gerry: He or Helen will make a complete report at the next board meeting, but for now the West Coast Tour of the GR is in the Seattle area and doing well. Sadly, one friend of the GR, Chuck DeWitt, who was very instrumental in the rebuilding of the boat, passed from cancer this week.

Gaza/Lebanon/Ukraine Update, Gerry Condon: See **Appendix 3**

Next Board Meeting: Saturday, October 19, 12:40 pm ET, 9:40 am PT

Adjournment: 11:27 am PT, 2:27 pm ET

Post meeting Comments from Members:

- **Gene Storm:** He suggested that people look at the programs by Judge Napolitano.
- **Al Glastkowski:** Mentioned that the [Association of the US Army](#) will be in DC for an event full of arms dealers, Oct 14-15, and hopes that we put together some kind of oppositional presence.
- **Gerald Hassett:** Mentioned that the board meeting notices should go out one week before, but also note that the meetings are always the third Saturday and always the same link:
- **Rachel Clark:** has been coordinating the Japan Peace trips since 2016 (except for the plague times) but would like to secure some financial support. Also, she would like to assist in bringing a Japanese monolog performer to the US on the theme of "1945", and to travel around to various cities. She is hoping to have her in US here around Sep 25, 2025, and specifically wants her to be seen in SF.

Appendix 1 Finance Report

Commercial bank: Operating Checking: \$90,435.90. Restricted Funds: \$21,035.92. Zinn Fund \$19,450.90.

Credit Card: \$99.99. Savings: \$1.07.

Socially Responsible bank: Checking \$58,949.76. CDs \$60,000.00.

Investment account: \$16,525.29.

Total Restricted Funds \$40,487

Total Unrestricted Funds \$225,911

Budget through August

- Staying in the black by ~\$26,901

Peace and Planet News/VFP MOU for one year term:

- Accepted and signed by both parties on August 26th
 - Approved by the Board (11 Yes, 1 Abstention, 1 Absent)
 - Mission of PPN - Educate the public and VFP membership about, but not limited to the true costs of war, climate crisis, militarization, the threat of nuclear war, and the environment.
 - MOU intends to increase the paper's circulation and VFP's exposure through 4 dedicated eBlasts.
 - Finances will remain in NYC Chapter 34
 - The cost will be ~ 40% of printing which will be roughly \$700 every three months, based on 6,000 copies printed per issue.
 - PPN will print and distribute issues.
 - for online version: <https://peaceandplanetnews.org/>
-

VFP continues to provide legal support for Veterans applying for C.O. status.

Appendix 2. VFP Statement: **The New McCarthyism:** published Oct 13, 2024

In April, the U.S. House passed H.R. 6408: "*An Act To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to terminate the tax-exempt status of terrorist supporting organizations.*" It was introduced in the Senate as [S. 1436](#).

It sounds benign, but it reaches well beyond any narrowly defined or momentarily intended targets. If enacted into law, it can be used against any non-profit which engages in any issue not favored by whatever Administration is in power in the future.

The Act details procedures for the Secretary of the Treasury to designate organizations as having provided material support to groups deemed to be terrorist organizations. Section (C) (ii) provides "Opportunity to Cure" procedures. In addition to this being "guilty until proven innocent," Section (F) states "the United States district courts shall have exclusive jurisdiction to review a final determination with respect to an organization's designation as a terrorist supporting organization." Thus, if the Administration wants to silence some voices it can simply do so unless the courts intervene.

This bill legislates broad Executive authority to suspend normal due process, allowing the Secretary of the Treasury to strip US groups of their non-profit status in a peremptory manner with

virtually no limitations, accountability, or meaningful recourse.

Immediate support for the bill is related to the present crisis in Gaza, but it can be used in any manner in the future. It also has a three year "look-back" feature, which means the government can designate an organization or country as "terrorist," and then look back at any non-profit which has donated or supported that organization or country in the last three years.

The definition of "support" is also vague. If a non-profit calls for a mutual ceasefire and negotiations in Gaza (or any other future conflict), is that support for only one side? Some in Washington and elsewhere currently frame it that way.

Here is a sign-on letter opposing the bill, from numerous organizations:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSciCili7mzBYpeE2cZk4AWcSlo5QNj7CeSzH_Ti66uhjqbpRg/viewform

And there's a larger context here, provided by a recent Veterans For Peace statement:

California Democratic Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's recent claims that Code Pink and other peace protesters calling for a ceasefire in Gaza are either Russian or Chinese funded is absurd and

insulting, and Veterans For Peace calls on her to withdraw such allegations and apologize.

In October of 2023, Pelosi told a group of Code Pink protesters (all of whom were White American women), to "Go back to China where your headquarters is." Then in January of 2024, Pelosi said in an interview, "I think...some of these protesters are spontaneous and organic and sincere... Some, I think, are connected to Russia. And I say that having looked at this for a long time now, as you know."

When asked whether she thought some pro-Palestinian protests were Russian plants, she responded, "I don't think they're plants...I think some financing should be investigated...and I want to ask the FBI to investigate that."

Now that the US has declared Russia and China to be our latest enemies, Pelosi is trying to connect dots that simply aren't there.

On August 5, 2023, the New York Times attacked Jodie Evans, Code Pink and other peace groups in an article entitled, "A Global Web of Chinese Propaganda Leads to a U.S. Tech Mogul." But if one reads the article carefully, the evidence shows the headline was false. The American tech mogul in question made all his money in America and is donating his American money to American and international peace organizations.

Following the NYT article, Republican US senator Marco Rubio asked the United States Department of Justice to open an investigation into Code Pink and other entities for potential violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). Then in November of 2023, ten Republican House members of Congress signed a letter saying that they are 'deeply concerned' with Code Pink's ties to the Communist Party of China and requesting documentation.

The federal government has expanded its use of FARA (Foreign Agents Registration Act) to target Black liberation activists and Chinese Americans working for peace with China. Examples include the African People's Socialist Party and the Uhuru Movement, where three individuals were charged with acting as foreign agents of Russia based only on normal international exchange and collaboration between peace and justice advocates

from different nations, something Veterans For Peace and other organizations often do, as do businesses and trade organizations. It is normal human communication and networking.

In another example, Boston-area trade unionist Li Tang "Henry" Liang, a Chinese American activist and union member and advocate for peace between the US and China, has also been arrested and indicted under FARA.

The US has used FARA to repress peace and justice organizers going all the way back to the 1951 prosecution of W.E.B. DuBois and the prosecution of the Cuban Five. From 2018 to 2022, the FBI arrested and prosecuted Chinese American scientists under the "China Initiative." Most were found innocent, and the "China Initiative" was finally dropped due to apparent racial profiling. But Chinese American scientists can still be arrested under other criteria, and there is currently an effort under way in Congress to reinstall the "China Initiative."

On September 3, 2024, the Washington Post published an article claiming that the crowds of Chinese Americans who turned out to welcome China's president Xi Jinping at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit were "non-state actors to further China's political goals overseas," who had violently attacked Tibetan and Hong Kong anti-China protesters to silence them. But the Post relied almost exclusively on the Tibetan and Hong Kong protesters' reports and videos. There is no evidence that the welcomers attended the event intending to create disturbance, and in fact a majority of them were older retired persons with no history of violence or law breaking of any kind. There is more reason to believe the anti-China demonstrators were the ones intending to create negative publicity for propaganda purposes. The Hong Kong protesters included leaders from the Hong Kong

Democracy Council, a group with a history of violence during the 2019 Hong Kong riots who were funded by the National Endowment for Democracy, a CIA offshoot.

One should also note the establishment looking the other way when violent right wing counter-protesters using weapons physically attack peaceful university protesters against the Gaza

genocide. The police have let the attacks happen, then arrested the peaceful protesters.

Other recent events have highlighted the increasing suppression of activists and independent voices by imperial authorities, underscoring a troubling trend towards authoritarianism.

In the US, the FBI raid on former Marine intelligence officer Scott Ritter's home and the intense questioning of Jacob Berger, following his humanitarian mission to Egypt, reveal a similar clampdown on critical voices. Ritter's home was invaded in a bid to silence his outspoken criticism of US foreign policy, while Berger's scrutiny highlights the dangerous repercussions for those engaged in humanitarian work abroad.

Regardless of whether we agree or disagree with these voices, it is imperative to protect their free speech rights if we want to live in an open society where diverse perspectives can be freely expressed and debated.

These incidents collectively demonstrate an alarming trend of targeting and silencing individuals who challenge power and advocate for the vulnerable and dispossessed. The suppression of these voices not only undermines democratic principles but also threatens the very foundation of free expression and critical engagement. It is crucial to stand in solidarity with those being targeted, defend the freedoms of speech and action, and resist this encroaching wave of authoritarianism we are facing.

Remember Lutheran pastor [Martin Niemöller's famous quote about Nazi Germany](#) which began, "First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out...?"

Today, they come for Black Socialists, then Chinese Americans, then White CODEPINK women, then retired military officers, then peace activists in allied nations, and then for the peace non-profits.

Either we all stand together, or we will all fall separately.

END WASHINGTON'S NEW MCCARTHY PERIOD!

Appendix 3. War and Peace Report, Gerry Condon

The US/Israeli genocide in Gaza continues unabated, with horrible massacres of men, women and especially children on a daily basis. This is ethnic cleansing, genocide and massive war crimes for 11 straight months. I say US/Israeli genocide because that is the truth. The bombs that are falling on innocent Palestinian children are US bombs. Veterans For Peace has been calling for an end to US weapons shipments to Israel for many months, because we understand that is the only way there will be a ceasefire, a release of hostages and prisoners, and the beginning of a path to peace, dignity and independence for the Palestinian people. We have sent Open Letters to the State Department, to President Biden, and to Vice President Harris detailing the many US laws that are being broken by sending weapons to a country that is carrying out crimes against humanity.

Many VFP members and chapters have been active with local protests and vigils, and as many as 25 VFP chapters participated in the recent week of action against weapons manufacturers that are profiting from the ongoing slaughter. But we must

do more. As the genocide continues, and Israel appears to be drawing the US into a regional war, the antiwar movement must continue and escalate our own efforts, and Veterans For Peace has a special role to play. It is helpful to know that over 60% of people in this country agree with us that the US must stop sending weapons to Israel.

In the meantime, the war in Ukraine is being dangerously escalated. Even as Russia has gained the upper hand militarily, the US and NATO are escalating their own involvement, by providing more and more-lethal weapons, as well as advisers, with many CIA boots on the ground, or as they prefer to say, "sneakers on the ground." Each escalation brings us closer to the possibility of the US/NATO proxy war against Russia turning into a full-fledged war between the two nuclear superpowers. As if this were not enough, the Neocons who have captured US foreign policy continue to surround China with hostile military forces, much as they did to Russia, and want to use Taiwan as they have used Ukraine. They are actively planning for a war of aggression against China.


Many experts across the political spectrum agree that the world is closer to a possible nuclear war than at any time in history, even more so than during the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Biden Administration recently leaked that it has adopted a new nuclear posture, in preparation for a possible three-front nuclear war against Russia, China and North Korea. Although the details are classified, the implication is that this would involve first strike nuclear attacks by the United States.

If we are to avoid nuclear war, we must push hard for an end to the war in Gaza and Lebanon, we must push for a negotiated end to the war in Ukraine, and we must push for an end to the US planning for a war against China.

It is high time, we got some peace-loving adults in the room – political leaders who are not

committed to imperialism, Zionism and the military industrial complex. Unfortunately, that appears to be a long way off. In the meantime, we must continue to protest, resist and organize. The veterans' voice is crucial, but we find our strength in coalition with others. Veterans For Peace should actively engage in coalition with many others to build an antiwar movement that attains the power and influence needed to abolish nuclear weapons and war.

*Respectfully submitted by Gerry Condon,
September 21, 2024*



**Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, August 17, 2024
Annual Business Meeting
Minutes**

PRESENT: President Susan Schnall, V-P Josh Shurley, Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Enya Anderson, Ellen Barfield, Ellen Davidson, Gerry Condon, Nick Mottern, Matt Southworth, Kelly Wadsworth, Mike Wong, Stephen Zollman.

STAFF: Office Manager Shelly Rockett, Mike Ferner, Casey Stienmetz, Chris Smiley, Becky Luening,

Members: (too numerous to list. 140 registered, but Zoom is incorrectly limited attendees to 100, so many could not get on)

Meeting Called to Order 12:15 pm ET

Videos of **Statement of Purpose** and **Indigenous Worldview** and **Climate (End War and Protect our Climate)** were played

Introduction by Susan Schnall, VFP National President: This evening's program will begin with a Blessing by Oren Lyons, a leader of the Haudenosaunee-whose culture is seen through expressions of thanks for all we have and hope to have-which is shared among nations. Throughout every ceremony there is a respect for each living thing and thanks given out of respect for all that has been received. An essential value which forms the foundation for much of the Haudenosaunee ways is the duty of preparing for the seventh generation. The Haudenosaunee believe that we borrow the earth from our children and it is our duty to protect it and the culture for future generations.

Introduction of National Board Members

Introduction of National Staff

President's Report: Veterans For Peace members, colleagues, comrades, The other day I received an email from Doug Hostetter, long time peace activist: "Colleagues: I did not hear from Amgad today, and then I got the message from Joanna Hiebert Bergan who works for MCC Canada and is also a friend of Amgad. Here was Joanna's message from a few minutes ago. 'Hey Doug. I'm on with Amgad. They are bombing Al Mawasi. Next to him. I need to tell someone. He asked that we pray...is there more we can do? It is very bad.' He got a flier telling him to leave. But he isn't going to. Where to go? I don't know what to say. Please keep Amgad and his family in your prayers"

It was a reminder once again that the work of Veterans for Peace encompasses the individual suffering and pain of the genocide in Gaza and the urgency of our collective organizing.

Welcome to the Veterans For Peace annual Business Meeting of 2024. It is a pleasure to witness the growth of VFP members in the organization and your extraordinary activism on behalf of peace, justice, and democracy. At the national level we continue our work to assist in the formation of national projects and chapters, assist local work as needed, send out communications via Enews about local, national, and international activism, respond to local concerns, and assist in resolving issues as they come along. This past year the national board has continued to accept additional responsibilities and moved along board committees including Communications with Gerry Condon as chair and Transformative Justice with Kelly Wadsworth, reforming issues and priorities throughout this past year.

Veterans For Peace strives through the collective efforts of members, chapters, national projects, working groups to build a culture of peace from our experiences of war and destruction. We inform the public of the causes and costs of war. Our work includes advocating for a dismantling of the war economy and continuous work to end all wars. We affirm our responsibility to work for world peace and abolish war as an instrument of national policy. Our members actively work to prevent the spread of militarism in our society, change U.S. foreign policy from endless war to diplomacy and to help our national leaders have a long term vision of peace and justice. Our members believe one of the most important components to ending war is to work for peace.

We live in the most unsettling, disturbing, destructive times and, yet despite all obstacles, our organization Veterans For Peace continues to move along dynamically because of the dedication and determination of our members. You show the proud veteran voice for peace in our country, in our world through national projects that depict the deleterious impact on climate from US militarism and the war industrial complex, you show your courage and determination for the values of VFP through work for peace in Gaza, Ukraine; the Golden Rule travels through the Northwest US bringing messages of solidarity and peace; you show it through your hard work to save the VA for veteran's care and prevent privatization through corporate interest; you show it through your activism in the streets for peace.

In 2023 Mike Ferner was selected by the VFP Board to be the Interim Director as we reorganized staff roles and responsibilities to ensure our building a path toward a strong and vibrant veteran voice for peace. Mike worked with us as National Director until May, 2024 and then requested that we hire an Executive Director so that he could continue as Director of Special Projects. Until we hire an Executive Director, those responsibilities have been allocated to national staff and members of the Board. In January, 2024 we hired a Membership Coordinator-Casey Steinmetz whom many of you will remember worked with us a number of years ago. During the spring and early summer we continued to reorganize the national office, defining staff roles and responsibilities, hired a full time Communications Director, and brought in volunteers. Despite our small staff, the office produces VFP enews of chapter and project actions and announcements. We continue to hold open and public monthly board meetings that encourage attendance of members, listens to members' concerns, and maintains transparency of our proceedings. In February, 2022 when the Executive Committee reviewed our national bank account we were just able to meet payroll for the national staff for the following two weeks. We called on you, our members, supporters, and donors to contribute and keep us functioning and developed a financial plan to move us

through 2022. One of our active board members raised money through a substantial grant to help put money back into our savings account [Board minutes April, May 2022). As a result of a review of the budget, and the recommendations of the Finance Committee, the board made major changes to the budget that were accepted and will be discussed by Mike Tork.

Today we consistently track our finances and have over \$180,000 in operating, savings, and restricted accounts. We have transferred our money-checking and savings to Amalgamated Bank-founded by the Amalgamated Clothing workers of America nearly 100 years ago. It is considered the bank for the working people; the SEIU remains the largest shareholder. Requests from other organizations for endorsements go through Josh Shurley and, when necessary through the ExComm and full board. We have issued VFP Statements on: Aaron Bushnell, support student protests, denounce allegations of foreign funding of progressive organizations, an open letter to Kamala Harris to “Ceasefire Now!” in Gaza, peace negotiations and stopping the sale of arms to Israel and Ukraine. Our VFP Statement of Purpose is clear: we are against war. We support war resisters.

This past year VFP Chapter 160 organized and led a delegation to Viet Nam headed by Paul Cox and Chuck Searcy. There were 13 people on the tour this year—our ninth and the first since 2019. Vietnam has recovered quite well from covid, and tourism is in full swing. The tour was inexpensive, except that each person also donated \$1,000 to Vietnamese organizations that are addressing the dual legacies of AO and UXOs. Including the additional \$7,000 from Chapter 160, we donated \$20,000 to: Vietnam Friendship Village, Project Renew, Blind Center Incense Factory, TuDu Hospital Peace Center, Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange, and an AO-affected family. Gerry Condon participated in a Gaza Delegation that attempted to deliver humanitarian supplies to Gaza.

Veterans For Peace has entered into a partnership with Kindred on a World View Literacy Project, a self directed, community learning program, exploring rebalancing life on earth through individual learning and group work. Four Arrows introduced this project at the opening session for this convention: <https://worldviewliteracy.org/>

A reminder to those of you who are interested in the issues and deliberations of the national VFP board: the monthly meetings are open and we welcome your attendance, ideas, and concerns. The meetings are on zoom-regular meeting format so all participants are seen if they wish. They are the third Saturday of the month at 12:40 pm ET. The zoom link is posted on the VFP website and in the Enews. There are five board of director positions open this election cycle. You have until seven days following the close of the annual Business Meeting to submit an application to run for the board.

Thank you all for the work you do to save the planet and all living things.

Peace Walk: 2024: Dedicated to Daniel Ellsberg and all peacemakers. Thanks to Ellen Davidson and Tarak Kauff for organizing a national project to walk from Maine to Washington, DC, with VFP members joining along the way. Its purpose: Walking for the well being of all people, for peace and an end to the threat of nuclear war and all wars, and for an environment that supports all life.


The **Peace Walk** Video was then shown

Harris Letter and Call to Action, Mike Ferner: **Call to Action, Sep 1-7**, Special Projects Manager Mike Ferner: please deliver to congressional offices and administrative offices VFP's . 2) non-violent civil disobedience. **Mike Ferner** 9:44 AM

SEPTEMBER DAYS OF SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE (ATTACH FILE)

<https://www.veteransforpeace.org/pressroom/news/2024/08/02/september-days-solidarity-people-palestine>

APPEAL FOR REDRESS v2 News release

 appeal for redress release #2. v1.docx

Also Appeal to Redress

ANNUAL FINANCE REPORT, Mike Tork: (for report see [Appendix 1](#))

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT, Josh Shurley: Current membership 2,589. (for report see [Appendix 2](#))

Comments from Attendees:

- Moji Agha, Boulder, CO: Last year was on a tour, out of which 8 Chambers of Compassion were formed, and would be happy to go on another tour with VFP to discuss issues along those lines
- Tarak asked about his proposal about the PPN's relationship to the VFP.

BYLAWS, Josh Shurley: (for texts see [Appendix 3](#))

- Bylaw change 2024-1: Climate Change
- Bylaw change 2024-2: College Chapters

RESOLUTIONS, Josh Shurley: Josh thanked the committee, Paul Cox and Steve Zollman for reviewing the proposals (for texts see [Appendix 4](#))

- Resolution 2024-1: Stop all wars
- Resolution 2024-3: Gaza
- Resolution 2024-3: Hawaii

Nominations Committee, Ellen Barfield: there are five seats up for election. Deadline for candidacy applications is one week after close of business meeting (August 24)
Josh Shurley, Chapter 180–Fresno; Windsor Wade, Chapter 23–Rochester, Brian Early, independent; Alex Procheska, independent; Mike Tork, independent; Eric Wasilewski, Chapter 95–Western MA.

Meeting Adjourned 2:52 pm ET

Appendix 1 ANNUAL FINANCE REPORT, Mike Tork:

Thanks to our current President, Vice President, Board, Staff, and Members, VFP is headed in a positive direction. Underscores what we can accomplish when we work together.

BALANCES BEGINNING 2024

Commerce Bank Checking	\$156,475
Commerce Bank Restricted	\$22,205
CapOne Zinn	\$27,436
Edward Jones	\$35,609
	<hr/>
	\$206,116

BALANCES CURRENT

Commerce Bank Checking	\$88,345
Commerce Bank Restricted	\$22,627
CapOne Zinn	\$19,449
Edward Jones	\$16,493

Amalgamated Bank	
Checking	\$58,763
CDs	\$60,200
	<hr/>
	\$171,172

The main difference between the beginning of 2024 and where we are now is the divestment of VFP funds into a socially responsible bank. Amalgamated Bank is such a bank, started and run by Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in 1923. Issues that the bank cares about are Worker's Rights, Climate Justice, Immigrant Rights, LGBTQ+ Rights, and Gun Safety to mention a few.

Currently, we have \$118,963 in Amalgamated Bank (checking and CDs), and once the CDs in Edward Jones mature we will move an additional \$13,000 to Amalgamated. At some point, we would like to move VFP money out of Commerce Bank Checking into Amalgamated Bank Checking but that is a much larger task that will take time and work. Divestment of VFP funds is an ongoing project. Thanks to VFP Member Anthony Donovan for bringing Amalgamated Bank to our attention.

VFP currently has a total of \$223,800 in savings, CDs, and checking accounts. It is good to be on solid ground, but we need to remain vigilant and make fundraising a priority.

VFP SUPPORT

ZINN FUND AWARDS: During 2024 ZINN funds were awarded to three VFP Chapter Projects for a total of \$12,000.

- 1) Podcast equipment for Fresno Chapter 180
- 2) Support for Deported Veterans Advocacy Project
- 3) Support for Peace Walk - 2024

GOLDEN RULE SUPPORT: VFP continues to help support the Golden Rule, which is a VFP National Project with Insurance and licensing.

Additional, but not all, support provided by VFP during 2024 includes:

- Palestinian Children's Fund
- Legal help for active-duty Air Force Airman Larry Herbert's hunger strike for the children of Gaza.
- World Beyond War
- Delegation to Japan

VFP STAFF

Mid-year VFP provided a well-deserved salary increase for all our staff. This is a far cry from when we were concerned if we could even make payroll.

Gail Aquino is now working full-time. Her hours increased from 24 per week to 40. Gail has lots of experience with VFP and this increase will provide member support and much-needed help for Shelly.

Beginning in 2024 Casey Stinemetz became the Membership Coordinator for VFP. Since then Casey has worked hard, focusing on resolving many persistent issues and problems around membership. Casey developed a plan for moving forward and addressing these issues.

BUDGET

Over the last few years, we managed to trim our budget. Shelly Rocket and Paul Cox played an important role in that work.

Normally creating the budget is the responsibility of the Executive Director. However, given several staff changes, I was asked to create the 2024 budget. It was an enormous task, but one I am glad I did. I now have a much better understanding of VFP finances. Hopefully, I won't need to create the 2025 budget because we will have a permanent Executive Director, but if I need to, I will.

The budget, which includes up-to-date actuals, is shared with the board during every meeting. The Finance Committee, which is Paul Cox, Ellen Davidson, and myself, closely monitor the budget ensuring we stay on track.

Any current VFP member can request a copy of the budget by emailing me at vfptreasuer@gmail.com.

Not included in the 2024 budget, but closely tracked through the restricted funds spreadsheet, are 14 Special Projects that VFP helps support. Those projects include:

- Zinn Fund for Peace and Justice
- Iraq Water Project
- Deported Veterans Advocacy Project
- Save our VA
- Peace Sentinel
- Climate Crisis
- No War No Warming 2022
- Gamers for Peace
- Golden Rule
- Korea Peace Campaign
- National Campaign to End Korean War
- David Cline Memorial Fund
- Vietnam Agent Orange and Responsibility Campaign
- Peace Walk 2024

Appendix 2 Annual Membership Report, Josh Shurley:

Committee Work. Membership Committee meets monthly (first Wednesdays at 7:00 pm Eastern).

Overview of Member #s: Current 2,589 (2,016 vets + 573 associate members); Lapsed 150.

Membership trends. Since last convention, and especially since spring, membership numbers have been steadily increasing. However, VFP continues to be plagued by large numbers of lapsed members and dropped memberships and ongoing database issues. To recruit and retain members, VFP has taken the following steps since last year:

- (Re) hiring of Casey Steinmetz as National Membership Coordinator
- Initiating membership drives (3 x/year) with significant outreach efforts in March, August, and December
- Continuing monthly New Member meetings
- New Member numbers since spring
 - Mar – 59
 - Apr – 61
 - May – 58
 - Jun – 27
 - July – 38

- Larger increases correlate with the membership drives
- Implementing improved outreach with New Member Calls, so that each new member is contacted by a VFP representative (chapter/project/committee assignments)
 - Rationale of new member calls
 - Mixed/inconsistent results. Needs to improve.

Overview of Chapters. While chapter development is a success in some cases, there is room for improvement. As part of our efforts to clean up data and assign new members appropriately, VFP has attempted to reassess active vs. inactive chapters. As the foundation of our work is our chapters, this effort is vital to ensure engagement with new members and other parties who may benefit from contact with VFP chapters.

- Monthly Chapter Contact Meetings
- Continued efforts to review + refine our Chapter Contacts List
 - Ongoing successes vs. continued gaps in reliable information
- New chapter charters forthcoming. Interest in forming new chapters is substantial
- Welcome to Chapter 757 – Hampton Roads, Virginia

Next Steps. VFP seeks more robust direct engagement and outreach via New Member calls and Chapter Review calls. We are putting out a call to our members in search of:

- Join with Membership Committee in making New Member Calls.
 - Assist with making calls to new members so they get welcomed, engaged with, oriented, and placed in accordance with their interests and the needs of VFP.
- Help Membership Committee in Chapter Review Outreach.
 - Assist with outreach to VFP chapters to review and update which chapters are active, identify best chapter contacts, and facilitate new member assignment.

Thank you for your support of VFP's membership efforts. Contact us if you wish to help.

Joshua Shurley,
Chair, Membership Committee

Appendix 3 Proposed Bylaw Changes, Josh Shurley (changes in ***bold underlined italics***)

Bylaw Amendment 2024-1 (Recommended for acceptance by board. Straw Poll: 39/42 93% for, 2/42 5% no, 1/423 2% abstain)

ARTICLE XII. CHAPTERS

3. To resist racism and repression in our home communities
4. To oppose the militarization of law enforcement
5. To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons
6. To seek justice for veterans and victims of war
7. To abolish war as an instrument of national policy:
- 8. To promote a sustainable and peaceful world***

To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all

members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace. (Amended ~~August 2016~~, Dec 2024)

The rationale for the requested changes follow:

1. The Peoples' Climate Vote 2024 survey noted that 80% of people globally want their country to do more and take greater action on climate change; <https://peoplesclimate.vote/>. To better enlist the support of these climate change and environment activists and their organizations, Veterans For Peace should state its commitment to a sustainable world.

2. Changes will add credibility to the Veterans For Peace campaign to educate the general public of the links between militarism and the climate crisis. The Pentagon is the world's largest institutional emitter of greenhouse gasses and the largest contributor to total global military emissions, which it were a country would rank 4th in emissions, ahead of the total Russian Federation; (<https://ceobs.org/estimating-the-militarys-global-greenhouse-gas-emissions/>).

Submitted by: James M. Rine, Endorsed by: VFP – Climate Crisis & Militarism Project Steering Committee

Appendix 4 Proposed Resolutions, Josh Shurley:

RESOLUTION 2024-01: To Head Off the Imminent Threat of Nuclear War, We Must End US Wars Altogether (Recommended for acceptance by board. Straw Poll: 74 for, 0 no, 7 abstain)

WHEREAS the United States is actively engaged in multiple wars of choice, while preparing other such wars; and

WHEREAS, in particular, the US is engaged in a proxy war against Russia in Ukraine; is actively supporting Israel's genocidal war in Palestine; and is preparing for war against China and North Korea; and

WHEREAS, the US, Russia, Israel, China and North Korea are all nuclear-armed nations; and

WHEREAS many experts believe the world is closer to nuclear war than at any time since the Cuban Missile Crisis; and

WHEREAS the pursuit of aggressive military policies in an era of nuclear proliferation threatens all life on Earth, while emitting massive amounts of CO2, blocking international climate mitigation, and stealing resources from vital human needs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Veterans For Peace calls on the US government to:

- Support immediate Ceasefires and Negotiations to end the war in Ukraine and the genocide in Gaza;
- End its war preparations and provocations aimed at China
- Finally sign a peace treaty ending the Korean War
- Sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
- Provide leadership in international negotiations to eliminate all nuclear weapons
- Adopt a peaceful foreign policy that respects the sovereignty of all nations, that fosters international cooperation to mitigate and prevent climate catastrophe, and that prioritizes the needs of the poor.

Submitted by the Nuclear Abolition Working Group, the China Working Group and the Korea Peace Campaign

RESOLUTION 2024-02: Withdrawn by author

RESOLUTION 2024-03: Calling for Ceasefire in Gaza and Ending the Palestinian Genocide

(Recommended for acceptance by board. Straw Poll: 80 for, 0 no, 0 abstain)

Whereas, the preliminary findings of the International Court of Justice have documented actions by Israeli national leaders that constitute criminal behavior up to the crime of genocide against the Palestinian people;

Whereas, Veterans for Peace (VFP) is deeply disturbed by the disproportionate destruction in Gaza, the mass starvation, withholding of aid, and collective punishment of Palestinians, including the expansion of illegal settlements and racist state terror violence in the Occupied West Bank;

Whereas, the United States has been complicit in war crimes through its violations of the Conventional Arms Transfer Policy, the Foreign Assistance Act, the Arms Control Export Act, the US War Crimes Act, the Leahy Law, and the Genocide Prevention Implementation Act;

Whereas, continued US support for Israel amidst the Palestinian Genocide risks further regional and global escalation, with potentially irreversible consequences;

Whereas, VFP recognizes the plight of hostages on both sides, calling for the release of all Palestinian and Israeli hostages;

Therefore, be it resolved that VFP urges the US government to leverage its influence to demand:

- A total and permanent ceasefire in Gaza,
- An end to Israeli state terrorism against Palestinian civilians in the Occupied West Bank,
- Cessation of arms shipments to the Israeli regime,
- A massive influx of humanitarian aid to affected civilians,
- Recognition of full human rights for Palestinians under international law,
- Negotiations toward a lasting solution that provides self-determination, freedom, dignity, and equal rights for all people from the river to the sea,
- Reparations for Palestinians affected by the ongoing destruction; and

Be it further resolved, that Veterans For Peace fully supports US service members who conscientiously object to aiding genocidal US policies and calls for the prosecution of US officials and private corporate officers in the military industrial complex who have knowingly provided weapons and munitions used in genocide and other crimes against humanity.

Free Palestine!

Submitted by the VFP Board of Directors – July 2024

RESOLUTION 2024-04: Recognizing Veterans for Peace Chapter 113 Hawaii as an International Chapter

(Recommended for acceptance by board. Straw Poll: 64/77 for, 5 no, 8 abstain)

Whereas, the internationally recognized, sovereign Kingdom of Hawaii was illegally overthrown in 1893 and illegally annexed by the United States in 1898, resulting in its ongoing illegal occupation by the US government and its military;

Whereas, Veterans For Peace stands in unwavering solidarity with the Hawaiian people in their enduring struggle for peace, dignity, human rights, protection of the environment, and the restoration of sovereignty;


Whereas, Hawaii has been burdened for over a century as the un-consenting host to every branch of the US military, including the largest naval war practice in the world, the biennial Rim of the Pacific international military exercise, RIMPAC;

Whereas, the sacred lands of Hawaii, from Kaho'olawe to Red Hill, have suffered continuous bombardment and desecration for 130 years;

Therefore be it resolved, that Veterans for Peace Chapter 113, based in Hawaii and comprised of peace-seeking veterans of the US military, can no longer in good conscience remain solely a US national-affiliate chapter of Veterans For Peace; and

Be it further resolved, that henceforth, Veterans for Peace Chapter 113 Hawaii shall be recognized as the national chapter of occupied Hawaii and an international chapter of Veterans For Peace, on par with chapters in Okinawa, Ireland, Vietnam, Mexico, and throughout the United States.

Submitted by Jayson Mizula, Ann Wright, and Pete Doktor on behalf of VFP Chapter 113 - Hawaii


**Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, August 10, 2024
Minutes**

PRESENT: V-P Josh Shurley (chaired meeting), Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Ellen Davidson, Mike Wong, Stephen Zollman, Ellen Barfield, Enya Anderson. Office Manager Shelly Rockett.
EXCUSED ABSENCE: President Susan Schnall, Nick Mottern, Gerry Condon, Kelly Wadsworth, Matt Southworth.

MEMBERS: Martha Spiess, Ken Mayers

12:45 PM ET: **Videos of Statement of Purpose and Indigenous Worldview were played.**

Open Meeting, Comments by members: none offered.

JULY MINUTES: Postponed to Convention Biz Mtg.

Peace and Planet news, Mike Tork: The ExComm has been working on an MOU with PPN, and will email it to the entire board for an email vote.

RESOLUTIONS: (for final texts see [Appendix 1](#))

- **2024-01:** Endorsed by the board
- **2024-02:** Withdrawn by authors
- **2024-03 :** Submitted by Board, Calling for a Ceasfire in Gaza and ending the Palestinain Genocide. Ellen Davidson suggested a change for bullet points 5 & 6 as: *"5: Recognition of full human rights for Palestinians under international law", and "6: Negotiations toward a lasting solution that provides self-determination, freedom, dignity, and equal rights for all people from the river to the sea."* Resolution Endorsed by board as changed.
- **2024-04:** Submitted by Chapter 113: Recognizing VFP Chapter 113 Hawaii as an International Chapter. Endorsed by board.

Bylaws: (for final texts see [Appendix 2](#))

- **2024-01:** Submitted by Seattle Chapter 92: Wants to streamline the process for formation of college/university chapters by eliminating the 25-mile rule. Change is to add Section 1A in Art. XII. Endorsed by board with 1 opposed and two abstentions. The reasoning for the abstentions and opposition was that Section 1A is unnecessary because it adds nothing to the governance

document and is actually just a rationale for eliminating the 25-mile restriction. The sentence added to Section 2 was supported by all.

- **2024-02:** Submitted by Climate Crisis and Militarism Project to add an item to our Statement of Purpose: “8. *To promote a sustainable and peaceful world.*” Endorsed by board with one abstention.

FINANCE RPT, Mike Tork: Commerce Bank - Operating \$81,631.93; Commerce Bank - Restricted \$22,626.92; Commerce Bank Credit Card \$0; CapOne Business Savings \$1.07; CapOne Zinn \$19,449.25; Edward Jones \$16,492.76; Amalgamated checking \$58,762.61 plus CDs \$60k. Some of current Edward Jones’ funds will be moved to Amalgamated and used to purchase CDs soon.



Appendix 1: Board Recommended Resolutions:

RESOLUTION 2024-01: To Head Off the Imminent Threat of Nuclear War, We Must End US Wars Altogether

WHEREAS the United States is actively engaged in multiple wars of choice, while preparing other such wars; and

WHEREAS, in particular, the US is engaged in a proxy war against Russia in Ukraine; is actively supporting Israel’s genocidal war in Palestine; and is preparing for war against China and North Korea; and

WHEREAS, the US, Russia, Israel, China and North Korea are all nuclear-armed nations; and

WHEREAS many experts believe the world is closer to nuclear war than at any time since the Cuban Missile Crisis; and

WHEREAS the pursuit of aggressive military policies in an era of nuclear proliferation threatens all life on Earth, while emitting massive amounts of CO2, blocking international climate mitigation, and stealing resources from vital human needs.;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Veterans For Peace calls on the US government to:

- Support immediate Ceasefires and Negotiations to end the war in Ukraine and the genocide in Gaza;
- End its war preparations and provocations aimed at China
- Finally sign a peace treaty ending the Korean War
- Sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
- Provide leadership in international negotiations to eliminate all nuclear weapons
- Adopt a peaceful foreign policy that respects the sovereignty of all nations, that fosters international cooperation to mitigate and prevent climate catastrophe, and that prioritizes the needs of the poor.

Submitted by the Nuclear Abolition Working Group, the China Working Group and the Korea Peace Campaign

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RESOLUTION 2024-03: Calling for Ceasefire in Gaza and Ending the Palestinian Genocide

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Whereas, Veterans for Peace (VFP) is deeply disturbed by the disproportionate destruction in Gaza, the mass starvation, withholding of aid, and collective punishment of Palestinians, including the expansion of illegal settlements and racist state terror violence in the Occupied West Bank;

Whereas, the United States has been complicit in war crimes through its violations of the Conventional Arms Transfer Policy, the Foreign Assistance Act, the Arms Control Export Act, the US War Crimes Act, the Leahy Law, and the Genocide Prevention Implementation Act;

Whereas, continued US support for Israel amidst the Palestinian Genocide risks further regional and global escalation, with potentially irreversible consequences;

Whereas, VFP recognizes the plight of hostages on both sides, calling for the release of all Palestinian and Israeli hostages;

Therefore, be it resolved that VFP urges the US government to leverage its influence to demand:

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- An end to Israeli state terrorism against Palestinian civilians in the Occupied West Bank,
- Cessation of arms shipments to the Israeli regime,
- A massive influx of humanitarian aid to affected civilians,
- Recognition of full human rights for Palestinians under international law,
- Negotiations toward a lasting solution that provides self-determination, freedom, dignity, and equal rights for all people from the river to the sea,
- Reparations for Palestinians affected by the ongoing destruction; and

Be it further resolved, that Veterans For Peace fully supports US service members who conscientiously object to aiding genocidal US policies and calls for the prosecution of US officials and private corporate officers in the military industrial complex who have knowingly provided weapons and munitions used in genocide and other crimes against humanity.

Free Palestine!

Submitted by the VFP Board of Directors – July 2024

RESOLUTION 2024-04: Recognizing Veterans for Peace Chapter 113 Hawaii as an International Chapter

Whereas, the internationally recognized, sovereign Kingdom of Hawaii was illegally overthrown in 1893 and illegally annexed by the United States in 1898, resulting in its ongoing illegal occupation by the US government and its military;

Whereas, Veterans For Peace stands in unwavering solidarity with the Hawaiian people in their enduring struggle for peace, dignity, human rights, protection of the environment, and the restoration of sovereignty;

Whereas, Hawaii has been burdened for over a century as the un-consenting host to every branch of the US military, including the largest naval war practice in the world, the biennial Rim of the Pacific international military exercise, RIMPAC;

Whereas, the sacred lands of Hawaii, from Kaho'olawe to Red Hill, have suffered continuous bombardment and desecration for 130 years;

Therefore be it resolved, that Veterans for Peace Chapter 113, based in Hawaii and comprised of peace-seeking veterans of the US military, can no longer in good conscience remain solely a US national-affiliate chapter of Veterans For Peace; and

Be it further resolved, that henceforth, Veterans for Peace Chapter 113 Hawaii shall be recognized as the national chapter of occupied Hawaii and an international chapter of Veterans For Peace, on par with chapters in Okinawa, Ireland, Vietnam, Mexico, and throughout the United States.

Submitted by Jayson Mizula, Ann Wright, and Pete Doktor on behalf of VFP Chapter 113 - Hawaii

Appendix 2: Board Recommended Bylaws changes: (changes in *bold underlined italics***)**

Bylaw Amendment 2024-1

ARTICLE XII. CHAPTERS

Section 1. Charters for local chapters

Charters for local state chapters and foreign nation chapters may be granted on the petition of ten (10) Full Members in a state or foreign nation. Special regional circumstances may allow for a charter for a local chapter being granted by a petition of five (5) Full Members in a state, if approved by the Board of Directors.

Section 1A. Charters at colleges and universities

Charters for chapters located at colleges and universities may be granted on the petition of full VFP members whose numbers meet the minimum required for a student organization at the college or university. Membership at college and university chapters shall be open to all full and associate VFP member students, former students, and alumni of the college or university.

Section 2. Twenty-five (25) mile radius

The number of chapters in any state shall be restricted only in that a charter shall not be granted to any chapter within a twenty-five (25) mile radius of any other established chapter. The Board of Directors may waive this restriction. **The twenty-five (25) mile restriction does not apply to chapters at colleges and universities.**

Rationale:

We are proposing this after realizing the University of Washington, in our hometown of Seattle, currently has about 1,000 enrolled students who are veterans, active duty, or reservists. Seattle has several other colleges and universities within the city limits, too.

Colleges and universities across the nation have veterans who will have easier access to being active within Veterans For Peace. Veterans For Peace may be able to significantly build up its membership by tapping into this demographic group.

Submitted by James Williams, Pete Schoonmaker, & Marty Kunz. Endorsed by VFP Chapter 92 – Greater Seattle

Bylaw Amendment 2024-2

ARTICLE II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We, as military veterans, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others both nationally and internationally:

1. To increase public awareness of the causes and costs of war
2. To restrain our governments from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations
3. To resist racism and repression in our home communities
4. To oppose the militarization of law enforcement
5. To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons
6. To seek justice for veterans and victims of war
7. To abolish war as an instrument of national policy:
- 8. To promote a sustainable and peaceful world**


To achieve these goals, members of Veterans For Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organization that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace. (Amended ~~August 2016~~ **Dec 2024**)

The rationale for the requested changes follow:

1. The Peoples' Climate Vote 2024 survey noted that 80% of people globally want their country to do more and take greater action on climate change; <https://peoplesclimate.vote/>. To better enlist the support of these climate change and environment activists and their organizations, Veterans For Peace should state its commitment to a sustainable world.

2. Changes will add credibility to the Veterans For Peace campaign to educate the general public of the links between militarism and the climate crisis. The Pentagon is the world's largest institutional emitter of greenhouse gasses and the largest contributor to total global military emissions, which it were a country would rank 4th in emissions, ahead of the total Russian Federation; (<https://ceobs.org/estimating-the-militarys-global-greenhouse-gas-emissions/>).

Submitted by: James M. Rine, Endorsed by: VFP – Climate Crisis & Militarism Project Steering Committee



**Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, July 20, 2024
Minutes**

PRESENT: V-P Josh Shurley (chaired meeting), Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Ellen Davidson, Gerry Condon, Kelly Wadsworth, Nick Mottern, Mike Wong, Stephen Zollman, Ellen Barfield , Enya Anderson. Office Manager Shelly Rockett. **EXCUSED ABSENCE:** President Susan Schnall, Matt Southworth

MEMBERS: Al Glatkowski, Ann Wright, Becky Luening, Bob Keilbach, Bob Rhudy, Dave Logsdon, Dirk LACKOVICH-VAN Group,, Ed Brighton, Eric Wasileski, Eric Johannson, Gerald Hassett, Greg Corning, James Brown, Jack Gilroy, Jean Morris John Amadon, John Johnson, Johns Ivans, Ken Mayers, Libby Frank, Martha Spiess, Michael Kramer, Micheal Cervantes, Nancy Freeman, Octavio Sifuentes, Paul Edward Gringas, Phil Geliebter, Phil Pritchard, Regina Sneed, Richard Brodie, Russell, Russell Brooker, Sara Wilton, Steve Morse, Susan Lamont, Tina Jaroe, William Sanders, Windsor Wade, Zool Zulkowitz,

12:40 PM ET: **Videos of Statement of Purpose and Indigenous Worldview were played.**

Open Meeting, Comments by members

- **Steve Morse:** Reminded us of the 80th Anniversary of Port Chicago explosion. On Wed, July 17, Biden exonerated the courts martial convictions of the 256 black sailors who refused to return to work under the same dangerous conditions–50 of whom spent many years in prison. Also, mentioned [Veterans and Labor for Sensible Priorities](#), and their People Over Pentagon Act (H.R. 1134). Please get your chapter to endorse.
- **Jack Gilroy:** Related his experience at protesting General Dynamics at Biden's hometown that makes 155mm ammo widely used in Ukraine. They have also protested at Lockheed Martin on Tax Day. [More at bottom of notes]
- **Ann Wright:** remembrance of SallyAlice Thompson.

- **Dave Logsdon:** Midwest Regional Conference. September 20th-22nd. Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Workshops, speakers, music and more. FMI: dlvfp27@gmail.com
- **John Vail:** asked about Marianne Williamson speaking at the Convention.
- **Al Glatkowski:** July 24, DE, Red Line around Congress when Netanyahu comes to speak before congress. Meet John Marshall Park action. [Link to one organization](#) organizing action, and A.N.S.W.E.R.'s page: (https://www.answercoalition.org/arrest_netanyahu) FMI: Mike Marceau, 301-542-9867
- **Michael Kramer:** his chapter attended...
- **Sara Wilton:** has heard that the Netanyahu trip has been canceled. Needs to be checked into.

1:00PM

Call to Order of VFP Board Meeting

Check-ins

Approval of **Minutes** of June 15, 2024, Approved.

Approval of **Agenda**, approved.

Finance Report : Budget-2024; P&L June: Mike Tork:

- Fernando Orozco: Mike mentioned the [Go Fund Me campaign](#) in memory of Fernando Orozco who died in exile while waiting for permission to re-enter the US. Several other deported veterans have died in similar circumstances since the rules have changed to allow them to apply for repatriation.
- The National office supports the Deported Veterans Project, but they have had some financial shortfalls. Mike Tork and Mike Ferner are assisting them in some fundraising ideas.
- Gail Aquino has moved to full time assisting Shelly Rockett with a variety of office tasks.
- VFP got a demand letter for several thousand dollars from an attorney for our use of copyrighted photos belonging to his client, Agence France-Presse. Paul Cox and Mike Ferner are working on a resolution of this particular instance, but also to develop a policy related to our fair-use rights, as a non profit educational organization, of copyrighted materials and normal response for future demands for payment from other archives.
- Crown Family Foundation. We have gotten some donations from them over the last several years, but have just now found out that the fund is controlled by James Crown, CEO of General Dynamics. We will refuse further donations from them.
- Balances: In last month, expenses=\$55k, and income =\$50k
 - Checking \$73,880
 - Restricted funds \$23,777
 - Jones: \$16,463. (\$12k to be moved to Savings)
 - Zinn: \$19, 450
 - Savings: \$58,576 (non-interest bearing) and \$60,000 in CDs
 - Total non-restricted: \$208,919

Development Committee, Matt Southworth: Tabled.

Transformative Justice Committee, Kelly Wadsworth:

- If chapters or individuals are encountering friction within VFP, please contact Kelly and the TJC. Kelly.n.wadsworth@gmail.com
- Jawaharlal Nehru, in talking about the Salt March of 1930, addressed how to deal with stressful times:

“Of course these movements exercised tremendous pressure on the British Government and shook the government machinery. But the real importance, to my mind, lay in the effect they had on our own people, and especially the village masses.

...Non-cooperation dragged them out of the mire and gave them self-respect and self-reliance. ...They acted courageously and did not submit so easily to unjust oppression; their outlook widened, and they began to think a little in terms of India as a whole. ...It was a remarkable transformation and the Congress, under Gandhi's leadership, must have the credit for it."

Report from Korea Trip, Ellen Barfield and Elliott Adams, representing VFP were invited by a group of people in ROK to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the crushing death of two school girls by a US tank on a country road. Also, Ellen and Elliott are helping with the formation of a People's Tribunal in NYC in 2026 in support of a suit against the US for the 50,000 forced-labor Koreans killed in Hiroshima/Nagasaki in August 1945. She also discussed the vast expansion of US's Camp Humphreys in Pyong Taek near Seoul that has taken most of the arable land in that area of the ROK. [Elliot's video report on trip, here.](#)

Communications Committee, Gerry Condon: [See Appendix 1.](#) (Jim Wolgemuth of VFP Radio is part of that committee). Mike Tork mentioned that the GR got a great article in Times-Standard.

Gaza, Gerry Condon: [See Appendix 2.](#)

- Ann Wright discussed the Flotilla. And they are working on trying to encourage protests and perhaps [impoundment of fuel ships](#). A few months ago in Istanbul, there were at least 6 VFP members. Looking for additional participation from VFP in local communities. Also, here is a link to her article about [Israel and NATO](#)
- **ICAN Global Week of Action: No Money for Nuclear Weapons**, Proposal from VFP Nuclear Abolition Working Group, September 16-22nd. The Board voted to endorse the Week of Action and support the organizing of the Nuclear Abolition Working Group. [See Appendix 3.](#)

National Convention August 16, 17, 18

- **Theme: Ceasefire Now! Demilitarize and Decolonize!**
- Speakers, Due Dates for: Resolutions, Bylaws, Awards, Workshops, convention t-shirts available!
- Please REGISTER! <https://www.vfpconvention.org/registration>
- Get in your candidacy for the board:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScJfgle2OiiKQ_YPNdD9Ybf4QbJcGQ1IglDFbEGIFsZEmBBRQ/viewform
- Awards deadline July 25. <https://www.vfpconvention.org/>

ExComm Report, Josh Shurley,

- Five board members' terms are expiring. Josh Shurley, Enya Anderson, and Mike Tork will run for a second term. Nick Mottern will not run. Matt Southworth has not been polled. Candidates can apply [here](#).
- Indigenous Worldview Project will be addressed during the convention.
- The board is not in a rush to replace our ED, Will Hopkins continues to work with the National Office and board, Mike Ferner continues to work with a new title: Director of Special Projects. Board members have been assigned to various tasks that an ED would normally cover. But if you know of a good candidate, please send them [here](#).
- The deadline for resolutions has passed, but there were no resolutions on GAZA, so the board will likely submit one. Draft text was discussed, but in the interest of getting a position out immediately. ExComm will draft and approve a position statement prior to that.
- Jack Gilroy discussed his arrest while trying to deliver our letter to General Dynamics that makes 155 ammo in Scranton and Lockheed down the road. His trial is in process for criminal trespass. Urges us to do similar actions around the country.

Next Board Meeting: August 10, 2024 (review of resolutions, bylaw changes)
Adjournment, 2:47 ET.

Post meeting commentary:

- Sara Wilton: re, Gaza: last week's ICJ statement talked about reparations, but the resolution draft talks about ongoing destruction, but the destruction has been going on for 75 years, so suggests removal of 'ongoing'. As for 1- vs 2-state solutions should be debated. Also thinks the French forced to leave Algeria is a good example of not accepting settler arguments.
- Bob Rhudy: re Communications Committee report: Suggests chapters and members be encouraged to talk/write with their congress peeps on the issues important to VFP, and thinks it is a very effective way to take action.
- Regina Sneed, re 1) Code Pink/VFW arrested at Holloman AFB. Wants VFP to publicize those trials. 2) Likes delivering letters to war profiteers, as does Extinction Rebellion. 3) What resolutions have been submitted? (Josh briefly summarized)
- Eric Wasilewski: Randy Keeler who inspired Daniel Ellsberg has gone in hospice.

Appendix 1: Communications Committee Report

The Communications Committee is comprised of VFP staffers Shelly Rockett and Chris Smiley, part-time staffer Becky Luening, a rotating rep of the Climate Crisis and Militarism Project (Janet Weil, Gary Butterfield, Vince Dijanich) and VFP Board members Ellen Davidson (also *Peace and Planet News*) and Gerry Condon, who convenes our meetings. We recently decided to hold our Zoom meetings on a bi-monthly basis. We will meet again soon, probably in the next week or two. In between meetings, we communicate via Communications Committee email list serve and phone to coordinate our internal and external VFP communications. This seems to be working quite well, but of course we are a work in progress.

Becky Luening, who produces our VFP eNews every 2-3 weeks, will be making her own presentation to the Board.

VFP social media staffer Chris Smiley continues to reach out to younger veterans and others on several social media platforms, including Instagram. He has also produced several short videos to support VFP initiatives. Chris, Janet and I continue to post on the VFP Facebook page, which remains quite active.

The most significant development in recent months has been the successful promotion of VFP webinars. The June webinar of the *Nuclear Abolition Working Group* was promoted by Shelly to the national VFP list, and garnered over 400 registrants. The national office also promoted the recent Southwest Regional webinar featuring Gerry Condon and Helen Jaccard on the imminent threat of nuclear war and the Pacific NW voyage of the *Golden Rule*. That webinar attracted 100 people, which was the limit imposed by Zoom. This also limited the participants in the *Nuclear Abolition Working Group* webinar. We therefore recommend that Veterans For Peace pay to Zoom an additional \$50 per month to allow for 500 webinar participants. And that VFP makes this Zoom link available to VFP working groups, chapters and regions who are reaching out to a national audience.

Mike Ferner has also done some excellent media outreach, particularly with regard to VFP's call on the US government to stop sending weapons to Israel and end its complicity in the Gaza genocide. Mike wrote and distributed a press release about the trial of VFP member Jack Gilroy for "trespassing" at weapons manufacturer BA Systems. Gerry Condon turned it into an article that was published on several progressive media sites.

[*Peace and Planet News*](#), a project of New York City VFP, continues to be an important part of our media landscape, and an excellent new issue is in circulation. Similarly, the VFP Golden Rule Project is mailing

the *Golden Rule News* this weekend to 1,000 donors – that number doubled last year during the *Golden Rule's* "Great Loop" voyage.

Gerry's recent article, [Nuclear War Is Imminent \(unless the US embraces peace\)](#) was published last week in *Antiwar.com* and *Popular Resistance*, as well as on the website of the *Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action*, which is located next door to the Bangor Trident Submarine Base 25 miles west of Seattle. Embedded in the article is a link to the [Veterans For Peace Nuclear Posture Review](#).

Our most obvious shortcoming is breaking into the mainstream corporate media. That is a problem for anybody promoting peace and criticizing US foreign and military policy. Nonetheless, we must undertake more systematic efforts to get our message into MSM.

We welcome input from all interested members. And please let us know if you would like to join the VFP Communication Committee.

*Respectfully submitted by Gerry Condon
to the VFP Board of Directors meeting
July 20, 2024*

Appendix 2: Update on US/Israeli Genocide in Gaza

Tragically, the genocide in Gaza continues unrelenting, with the complicity and silence of the much of the world – including the US and most of the former colonial powers in Europe, and despite the worldwide outcry – from concerned citizens in the US and Europe, but primarily from what has come to be known as the "Global South."

In an article published this week in [LA Progressive](#) and elsewhere, Ann Wright wrote:

As Israel continued its relentless genocide on steroids of Palestinians in Gaza with over 140 killed in the past weekend, imprisonment without charges of thousands of Palestinians in the West Bank and destruction of the hospitals, universities, schools (8 UNRWA schools bombed in the past 10 days), cultural centers and indiscriminate bombing of markets, soccer fields and "safe area" residents of Gaza have been forced into, an assassination attempt was made on former President Trump and NATO finished its gala 75th Anniversary celebrations in Washington, DC.

As the genocide continued and a few days after the end of the NATO celebrations, an assassination attempt on former President Trump caused [President Biden to address the nation and orate that "political violence has no place in America and U.S. politics should never be a killing field."](#)

The statement of no political violence and no killing fields in America rings totally hollow as the Biden administration and NATO countries fuel the Israeli killing fields in Gaza with over 90 Palestinians killed and 300 wounded by multiple Israeli rocket attacks in Khan Yunis on Saturday, July 12, and 80 Palestinians killed in the past 24 hours of July 13 in several refugee camps.

In related news, the International Court of Justice ruled this week that Israel's settlement policy in the occupied territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem violates international law. This is a advisory opinion and, as the LA Times wrote, will probably "have more effect on international opinion than on Israeli policy."

The US peace movement continues to voice its strong opposition to the US/Israeli genocide. Ongoing protests in Washington, DC, at the national political conventions, and in many cities around the country continue to call for a permanent ceasefire to end the killing, for an end to US weapons shipments to Israel, and for massive humanitarian aid to head off mass starvation and a man-made famine. Notable examples are the weekly Gaza vigil co-organized by San Diego Veterans For Peace, and the recently completed VFP Walk for Peace, which culminated in the anti-NATO protests in Washington, DC., where VFP Vice President Joshua Shurley was a featured speaker.

Medea Benjamin, Code Pink and friends continue to speak truth to power in the halls of Congress, while student organizers are fighting back against increasing repression against pro-Palestine, anti-genocide protesters.

Also notable is a [World Beyond War campaign](#) to gain many signatures calling on the UN General Assembly to utilize Resolution 377.

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 377 (Uniting For Peace) allows the General Assembly to act when the Security Council fails. The General Assembly should NOT escalate the war or deploy armed troops. It should convene an emergency session and use "Uniting For Peace" to impose an arms embargo and targeted sanctions on the Israeli government, suspend the Israeli government from the United Nations, and send to Palestine unarmed peacekeepers (who have repeatedly shown their superiority to armed peacekeepers).

The General Assembly has already voted overwhelmingly for a ceasefire, but not for the actions above.

Thanks to Mike Ferner, Terry Lodge, Jack Gilroy and others, Veterans For Peace has gotten quite a bit of mileage out of its open letters to President Biden and the State Department detailing the US and international laws the US is violating by sending bombs and weaponry to Israel as it carries out genocide against Palestinian men, women and children. Recently the VFP letter to the State Department was recycled in press releases and articles about the trial of VFP member Jack Gilroy for "trespassing," while attempting to deliver this letter to the weapons manufacturer, BA Systems.

Most appropriately, VFP has also been supporting active duty GI's who are speaking out and taking action against US complicity in the genocide in Gaza. This includes joining together with other organizations to promote an *Appeal to Redress* for GI's to tell their Congressperson what they think. The response has reportedly been limited thus far, but might be further publicized and amplified.

While these various efforts are welcome and admirable, they have arguably had limited impact. We can never be satisfied with our response to the ongoing slaughter and starvation being blatantly carried out before the eyes of the world. It is not easy to maintain daily rage and to carry out urgent actions. But we must try.

Certainly it is time for new statements and initiatives from Veteran For Peace:

- 1) We could start by issuing a statement very much along the lines of [what Ann Wright has written](#).
- 2) Our VP Joshua Shurley, who heads up the Resolutions Committee, reports that that no Palestine-related resolutions have been submitted, and he suggests that the Board write one up.
- 3) Because Convention Resolutions are not formally passed and announced until mail-in and electronic ballots are counted in November, a more timely statement coming out of the Convention would be appropriate.

4) What about action? What new initiatives could VFP take that would rise to the challenge before us? I suggest that we should do some brainstorming and come up with something that is highly visible, that would bring together many VFP chapters and members, and would effectively lift up our veteran's voice in resistance to the ongoing genocide.

*Respectfully submitted by Gerry Condon
to the VFP Board of Directors meeting
July 20, 2024*

Appendix 3: Proposal from VFP Nuclear Abolition Working Group that VFP Endorse and Organize the ICAN Global Week of Action – No Money for Nuclear Weapons, September 16-22.

The VFP Nuclear Abolition Working Group continues to meet monthly (4th Fridays at 6 pm Eastern), typically with 12 to 25 regular participants, many of whom are very knowledgeable and active on various fronts of the movement for nuclear abolition. The “No Nukes” working group has organized two successful webinars – in February (over 300 registrants) and March (over 400 registrants). In the process we have developed working relationships with leading anti-nuclear activists and organizations, and have become a welcome and respected addition to the nuclear abolition movement.

In keeping with its collective desire to “take action” against nuclear weapons and the growing threat of nuclear war, the Nuclear Abolition Working Group recently voted unanimously to mobilize VFP chapters, members, friends and allies to take action during the [ICAN Global Week of Action – No Money for Nuclear Weapons, September 16-22.](#)

The ICAN Global Week of Action includes September 21, the UN-declared *International Day of Peace*, and comes just before the September 26 UN-declared *International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons*.

The Nuclear Abolition Working Group is requesting that Veterans For Peace endorses the Global Week of Action and helps us reach out to VFP chapters and members to encourage and facilitate their participation.

Six to eight active members of the *Nuclear Abolition Working Group* have volunteered to help organize the Global Week of Action. We will be meeting next week to pull together resources to provide to VFP chapters and members.

Here is a [flyer with action suggestions](#) from the sponsor of the Global Week, the [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons \(ICAN\)](#), who won the Pulitzer Peace Prize in 2017 for its role in shepherding the UN passage of the *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*.

Proposed actions range from protests at nuclear weapons manufacturers to social media messaging to reaching out to Congressional representatives. I think if we provide resources and reminders, many VFP chapters and members will be happy to participate. We have only two months, however, so we have to get busy.

The [Golden Rule](#) can also help to spread the word as we sail throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Because US involvement in the wars in Ukraine and Gaza/Middle East is drastically [increasing the possibility of nuclear war](#), we may also find ways to include these concerns in our statements and actions during the Global Week of Action.

Thanks to national VFP for your support and encouragement. Thanks in particular to Shelly Rockett, who has always been there to help us spread the word about our *VFP No Nukes Webinars*.

*Respectfully submitted by Gerry Condon
to the VFP Board of Directors meeting
July 20, 2024*

**Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, June 15, 2024
Minutes**

PRESENT: President Susan Schnall, V-P Josh Shurley, Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Ellen Davidson, Gerry Condon, Kelly Wadsworth, Matt Southworth, Mike Wong, Nick Mottern, Stephen Zollman, Mike Wong, Outgoing ED Will Hopkins, Ersatz ED Mike Ferner, Office Manager Shelly Rockett, Absent: Ellen Barfield (Korea), Enya Anderson,

MEMBERS: Al Glatkowski, Alice Slater, Becky Luening, Bob Keilbach, Brinear, Bruce MacDonald, Daniel Guy, Dave Hancock, Dave Logsdon, David, Don Kimball, Doug Rawlings, Gene Storm, Gene Storm, George McNeely, Gerald Hassett, Helen Jaccard, Jamie York, Jeff Roy, Jeffery Humfeld, Jim Brasile, John Caldera, John Spitzberg, Johns Ivan, Kathleen Gilberd, Keith Brumley, Ken Mayers, Lew A. (Lincoln) Welge, Mike Caggiano, Nancy River, Paul Edward Gringas, Phil Pritchard, Rachel Clark, Ray, Regina Sneed, Shelly C (VFP 159), Steve Morse, Susan Lamont, Ted Engelmann, Thomas A. Leonard, Jr., Tina Jaroe, VFP-WMC, Willard.

12:40 PM ET

Statement of Purpose and **Indigenous Worldview** videos were shown
Open Meeting

- **Dave Logsdon** reported his M/SP chapter 27's activities for the summer.
- **Steve Morse** reported on the Nine Chapters have endorsed People over the Pentagon, and 30 labor orgs . Please have your chapter endorse People over Pentagon - Veterans and Labor for Sensible Priorities, <https://bit.ly/VL4SPsignon> let us know at labor@veteransforpeace.org.
- **John Caldera** is concerned about VFP. He is also a member of a number of other veterans groups, and wants to be proud of us again. But we need to put the word "Peace" out there in parades, veteran-related or not, and wants the board to become more responsive to these issues. To talk more with him about this, SFCommishCaldera@aol.com,
- **Rachel Clark**, has been organizing VFP Peace Tour of Japan since 2016. Because of today's geopolitical issues it is critical to maximize the use of social media. Plugged 'HOW TO STOP WORLD WAR THREE with Abby Martin' https://youtu.be/KOi_BRcU6Eo
- **Paul Edward Gringas** is a member of the Smedley Butler Chapter, and asked for support for the film, *Draft Cards are For Burning; The Subversive Art of Tom Lewis*. FMI: (774) 696-8909 or (978) 350-6924 or <https://filmmakerscollab.org/films/draft-cards-are-for-burning/>
- **Alice Slater** would like for us to sign onto resolution coming up before the NYC City Council related to Gaza. She does not think two-state solution is workable, but South African example with Truth and Reconciliation is way to go to reduce tensions and gain peace in Gaza.

Call to Order of VFP Board Meeting, 1:00PM

Checkins

Minutes of May 18, 2024: Approved

Agenda: Approved with addition of Golden Rule report.

ED Will Hopkins' Statement: Susan opened by saying what a pleasure it has been working with Will. Will apologized to VFP for not being able to stay with VFP as the ED, and thought that it is important to step back. He will continue to work with some committees. Thanked VFP for giving him the opportunity to try. Nick commented that he is sorry that it did not work out for Will and VFP, and appreciates Will's work.

Appeal to Redress, Mike Ferner: reported that Appeal to Redress is off the ground but needs a lot more promotion. Only 16 people at this point have joined, but if you know of any active duty or reserve families, please pass the word.

Finance Report, Mike Tork: Budget-2024; P&L May: Checking \$93,000, but will move some to CD's; Restricted Funds \$24k, Ed Jones \$16k, but will move 12K some to Amalgamated CDs. Zinn \$19k. Once transfers are completed, Amalgamated Bank will have \$125k in CDs and \$5k in checking. In general finances are OK, and we are close to our budget so far. Mike Ferner will stay on as ED, and be paid. Ralph Nader has donated \$30,000 to function as a challenge fund to end August 1. Ralph wants VFP to have a presence in DC, and we are working on that request, possibly with the FNCL. (Regina Sneed in the CHat indicated that she is on a local support group for FNCL). Ellen asked about the effect of a DC person on IRS lobbying restrictions on non-profits. Mike Ferner explained that DC efforts will not put us into trouble. Nick thinks we need more discussion about the DC efforts with the entire board, wonders specifically what Ralph expects, and is concerned about differences in focus between FCNL and VFP. Mike Tork does not think it will be a problem with FCNL. Matt's conception is that we will simply rent a desk from FCNL, and we can use our Hill connections to work on progressive amendments to the NDAA. Thought also that many FCNL staff are in close agreement with our goals. Mike Ferner

Development Committee: Matt Southworth: reported that the Cash Calling, Planned Giving, Data Analysis, and Sustainers work is going forward and hopes to have a plan in place by the end of year.

Peace Walk: Ellen Davidson, Walk is now in Philly and they have been getting much support from church groups and local progressive groups. Went, also, to Israel Bonds office to draw attention to their work. Moving into Delaware on Monday, past Biden's house, and on to DC. Ellen showed off the T-Shirt used by the Walk (and they were donated by the printer. We will be using them for our store, too.)

Transformative Justice Committee, Kelly Wadsworth: Will be meeting this coming Monday for a specific issue. To contact the committee with an issue: Kelly.n.wadsworth@gmail.com

Membership Committee, Josh Shurley: meeting first Wed of month. Database issues are ongoing. Chapter Rosters need to be checked monthly. How we count our membership is still an issue. We have cleaned up our chapter list and we have just over 100 actual, active chapters. New Members: Mar 58, Apr 59, and May 55. Retention is an issue that needs work. New member calls are ongoing, but need more help, so call Josh if you can contact new members. There is a discussion of a renewed women's caucus. Chapter 113 in Hawaii has raised a question about being considered an international chapter since Hawaii is a conquered nation and will be taken up at the convention. The committee will be kicking off another membership drive in July.

Communications Committee: Gerry Condon: Reported that CC is working well together. E-News are going out on schedule—thanks Becky. Shelly is working with CCMP to update website. VFP Statements are happening, and CC is pushing them out, as well as publicizing events. They have shifted to bi-monthly meetings, but still work together constantly. Encourages members to join committee if you can help with writing—especially to turn statements and press releases into articles for publication.

VFP Actions re Gaza, Gerry Condon: [See Appendix 1](#)

Golden Rule, Helen Jaccard: Gave a PowerPoint review of the GR project: Interviews 4 people for manager, Recommends Michelle Marsonette who has pertinent management, and Helen will continue through end of year. There will be no effect on VFPs' budgetary commitment. She has been looking into cheaper insurance, for discussion. The event planning (16 Cities, 2 wooden boat shows, 4 protests, 2

Hiroshima/Nagasaki events, etc.) is going well. Working with Greenpeace folks in WA. Schedule is always available on the website www.goldenrulepeaceboat.org. All the previous captains and crews are returning for the summer program.

No Nukes webinar, ICAN Week of Action: Gerry Condon: No Nukes Webinar next Thursday, June 20, 4 pm PT (10 pm ET) titled Nuclear Power and Weapons in a Time of Rising Tensions, REGISTER <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/>. Also will participate in ICAN Global Week of Action, Sep 16-23 for **No Money For Nuclear Weapons**. FMI: https://www.icanw.org/week_of_action

National Convention August 16, 17, 18 Theme: **Ceasefire Now! Demilitarize and Decolonize!**

Speakers? (including Harrison Mann, who just resigned from Army over Gaza and others). Due Dates for: Resolutions, Bylaws, Awards, Workshop Proposals

ExComm Report, Susan:

- Four Arrows Proposal on Indigenous Worldview, that will be on their (unfinished) website designed for VFP Members.
- Personnel Issue has been turned over to the Transformative Justice Committee, with thanks to Kelly and committee members.

Next Board Meeting: July 20, 2024

Adjournment 11:28 am PT (2:58 pm ET)

Post Meeting discussion:

Regina Sneed indicated that a couple of members have offered to work on legislative issues. Regina is on an FCNL-affiliated team in Berkeley, and would like to arrange a meeting with other interested people. As an attorney, she also knows about the lobbying rules. Nick Mottern will work with her on lobbying rules.

John Caldera discussed that our statement of purpose talks about ending racism but should also include ending sexism, etc., in an effort to expand our work. Servicemen's Legal Defense Committee.

Gene Storm has a history of journalism, joined a few months ago, and is working on starting a chapter in Central Oregon.

Meeting end-ended 11:37 am PT (2:37 ET)

Appendix 1: Gaza Update, Gerry Condon:

The US/Israeli genocide of the Palestinian population in Gaza continues unabated, as the whole world watches. Over 37,000 Palestinians have been massacred, with perhaps another 10,000 under the rubble who have not yet been counted. Israel's assault on Rafah has displaced over one million Palestinians who had already been displaced refugees in their own land several times over. Despite US/Israeli claims to the contrary, a policy of starvation remains in place with only a trickle of aid allowed into Gaza. Over 15,000 children have been murdered, and now they are suffering and dying from malnutrition. A full-blown famine that could kill many thousands more is predicted by humanitarian aid workers.

I say "US/Israeli genocide" because the Biden Administration has given full support to Israel's actions from day one until today. It continues to provide the bombs that are killing Palestinian men, women and children. The US also provides intelligence assets and military advisers, and was probably actively involved in the recent massacre of over 200 Palestinians while rescuing four Israeli hostages.

The U.S. government continues to provide political cover and excuses for the continuing massacre of Palestinians. After vetoing multiple Ceasefire resolutions at the UN Security Council, the Biden administration has now presented a Ceasefire proposal, purportedly on behalf of Israel. Not a single Israeli official has publicly accepted the proposal, however, and Benjamin Netanyahu has stated that the war will continue until Hamas is eradicated. Hamas has consistently stated that a Ceasefire agreement

must include a permanent end to hostilities and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza. Not surprisingly, US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken is blaming Hamas for not agreeing to his Ceasefire proposal. President Biden desperately wants something to show all the voters who are appalled at his complicity with genocide.

In the U.S., the movement to end the US/Israeli genocide continues to grow and to dramatically transform the peace and justice movement. A recent anti-genocide gathering in Detroit, organized by several Palestinian American groups and the ANSWER Coalition attracted 3,500 in person participants, with many others watching online. Student protests continue even into the summer vacation. Universities continue to call in police to violently break up peaceful protest encampments. Thousands of students have been arrested. University presidents who don't crack down hard enough are called before Congress and accused of facilitating anti-semitism on their campuses. Some universities are, however, either negotiating with protesters or have agreed to look at divestment.

The Peace In Ukraine Coalition, alarmed by recent escalations of the war in Ukraine, and the growing danger of a wider war, possibly even a nuclear war, has recently re-convened, and is calling for a Ceasefire and Negotiations in both Gaza and Ukraine. While the US peace movement is united in its opposition to the genocide in Gaza, there is still plenty of confusion and a variety of opinions about the war in Ukraine, and therefore much education to be done.

It was recently revealed that a Ukraine-based NGO, funded by USAID, has compiled an [extensive list](#) of US journalists, activists and organizations that are opposed to continuing US weapons shipments and escalation of the war in Ukraine – over 300 individuals and 60-some organizations. Veterans For Peace is among the groups that made the list, along with Code Pink, Massachusetts Peace Action, the Peace In Ukraine Coalition and others. VFP Advisory Board members Ann Wright, Matt Hoh, Phyllis Bennis, Chris Hedges and Ray McGovern are also mentioned by name.

<https://texty.org.ua/projects/112617/roller-coaster/#Veterans%20For%20Peace>

Veterans For Peace chapters and members are primarily focused on the Gaza genocide, with many participating in and even initiating local and national actions calling for a Ceasefire. VFP members are regular, visible presence at local vigils and protests. The VFP Peace Walkers are carrying a big Ceasefire flag wherever they go, and recently joined the June 8 encirclement of the White House.

Building on previous statements and initiatives, including a letter to the State Department detailing all the US laws that are broken by sending weapons to Israel, Veterans For Peace recently joined with several groups, including the Center on Conscience and War, the Military Law Task Force of the National Lawyers Guild and About Face: Veterans Against War, to initiate and Appeal to Redress, an avenue for active duty GI's to express their opposition to US complicity in the Gaza genocide.

[Janet Weil shared this YouTube link yesterday](#) with a devastating report from an Australian aid worker in Gaza, who says essentially that the US and Israel have created a literal hell in Gaza. The suffering is immense and horrible. Janet asks people watch this interview. She says that instead of allowing ourselves to become numb to the suffering of the Palestinian people, we should be escalating our protests.

With that in mind, here are a few things that Veterans For Peace can do in the coming weeks:

- 1) Issue an updated statement – an urgent call for an end to US/Israeli genocide in Gaza.
- 2) Further publicize and pump up the Appeal to Redress.
- 3) Welcome the VFP Peace Walkers to Washington, DC on July 5.
- 4) Participate in the NO to NATO Actions in DC, July 6-7.
- 5) Make sure that the VFP Convention will be a strong venue for ending the genocide in Gaza, not just for VFP members, but also for our friends and allies

- 6) Participate in protest at the two national conventions in Milwaukee and Chicago
- 7) Ask VFP chapters and members for ideas about how to step up our protests

**Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, May 18, 2024
Minutes**

12:40 PM ET

PRESENT: President Susan Schnall, VP Josh Shurley, Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), ED Will Hopkins, Gerry Condon, Ellen Davidson, Ellen Barfield, Stephen Zollman, Mike Ferner, Kelly Wadsworth, Mike Wong, Nick Mottern, Enya Anderson. Staff: Shelly Rockett, Mike Ferner, Chris Smiley. Absent: Matt Southworth

MEMBERS: Helen Jaccard, Rachel Clark, Art Milholland, bob Keilbach. Brian Earley, Catherine de Leon, Dave Hancock, Dave Logsdson, Ed Brighton, Gene Marx, George Jiracek, Gerald Hassett, Greg Corning, Greg Werhan, James Brown, Jan Ruhman, Janet Weil, Jeffery Humfeld, Jim Brasile, joe Mondello, John Ivens, John Vail, Kathleen Gilberd, Lauren, Lynn Gilbert, Lyle, Michael Cervantes, Mike Caggiano, Mike Dempsey, Nancy Freeman, Nancy River, Octavio Sifuentes, Peter, Rachel Clark, Randall Burton, Regina Sneed, Ralph Galen, S Kureishy, Thomas A. Leonard, Tina Jayroe, Xander, Zool Sulkowitz

Statement of Purpose, and Indigenous Worldview videos were played

Open Meeting:

Janet Weil: Discussed the CCMP's new tri-fold brochure and showed it on screen share, available for printing at home or printed professionally (Get from National Office or [here](#) . The SD chapter recently protested the IMax showing of Top Gun. CCMP is also partnering with 350.org to raise issues of militarism and climate chan

Dave Logsdon: Minneapolis/St Paul is busy every day. Their chapter has more women than men at recent meetings. Murals are a great way to get messages out without paying the costs of billboards.

Zool Zulkowitz: Brit high court will decide on Monday, May 20, about Julian Assange's extradition. At 7 am ET will be a demo at the Today Show in NY.

Gene Marx: Kudos to Social Media committee.

Rachel Clark: Discussed the Peace-Speaking tour in Japan, but this year Project 1-0, wants to collect wood ash (two ounces) from all over to evaluate the historic radiation, and produce exposure maps in the US.

Call to Order of VFP Board Meeting: 1:06 PM ET:

Checkins

Minutes: April 20, 2024, Approved

Agenda: Approved

Former Director's Report, Mike Ferner: has been assisting with the transition to Will and made most of the staff meetings. Gave kudos to the Peace and Planet News and PeaceWalk by asking ALL for support for the PeaceWalk both personnel, logistics, and financial. Has traveled to NC Chapters 757 in Raleigh, encouraging new members and forming chapters in several locations. Also working on Appeal to Redress v2. There will be a new page on the VFP website live later this week.

Executive Director's Report, Will Hopkins: [See Appendix 1](#).

Finance Report, Mike Tork: 2024-05-18 VFP Treasurer Rpt to Board: Checking \$89,097.70; Restricted \$28,314.89; Credit Card, \$0; Edward Jones \$15,990.88 (moved \$20kk to Amalgamated this month); Savings \$0 (moved to Amalgamated); Zinn Fund, \$19,444.36; Amalgamated (CDs and unrestricted), \$118,281.31.
Pending CDs funds will be moved into CDs at Amalgamated on Monday 5/20/24. Proposed CD Purchase: 6-month - 2.31% - \$20.2K; 1 year - 2.25% - \$20K; and 2 year - 2.15% - \$20K
CDs - Moving money to a more socially responsible bank and protecting our money.
Recall - To withdraw money from a CD requires majority board approval.
Guy Blais - problem moving his donation to VFP. It WILL be resolved.
Zinn Fund - 12K has been invested in projects in the last 12 months. (Fresno, PeaceWalk, and Departed Vets)

Development Committee, Matt Southworth: tabled.

Peace Walk, Ellen Davison: The walk is going well, with much help from Will, and a number of others helping with logistics, finances, and publicity.

Transformative Justice Committee: Kelly Wadsworth: Met shortly after last board meeting, scheduled to meet again early June, and is just finalizing and formulating various ideas and strategies.

Membership Committee, Josh Shurley: Committee has been meeting monthly, making new member welcoming calls to gather information and encourage actions. Also hosting the monthly Chapter Contacts calls, with the last one having 12 new members. We have had a total of 475 membership interactions (new and renewals) March 58 new members, April 59 new members. Still struggling with data issues. Reminded people to check monthly chapter rosters for accuracy and send corrections to Casey or Josh. Casey is putting together a chapter tool kit. See, also, [Appendix 2](#).

Communications Committee, Gerry Condon: "The Communications Committee is primarily comprised of three VFP staffers – Shelly Rockett (website, e-blasts, etc.), Becky Luening (VFP eNews) and Chris Smiley (social media), and me, Gerry Condon, as Board liaison and committee facilitator. The Climate Crisis and Militarism Project also joins our monthly meetings, as does Ellen Davidson. Due to scheduling conflicts, there was no meeting in April. However, there has been regular coordination among us via email. Our next meeting will be on Monday, May 27.

Overall, the coordination has been quite good, and our work has been productive. Among other things, we have managed to get a fair amount of alternative media (and some mainstream) coverage of our statements and actions against the genocide in Gaza.

The VFP eNews has been particularly excellent. Much credit goes to Becky Luening, who does an awesome job assembling the contents and designing an attractive eNews. Becky also solicits input from other Communications Comm. members and the Executive Director. And she asks us all to review the eNews before it goes out. We aim for a bi-weekly, or twice a month, with some flexibility.

Chris Smiley continues to promote VFP, its messaging and projects on social media. Chris reported that we continue to grow on social media, including:

- [Twitter](#) (36.7k followers, up 10,571% in 30 days--yes that is right--!!!) based on the post about Air Force Senior Airman Larry Herbert's hunger strike at the White House over the plight of starving children of Gaza. Larry Bear's story reached 2 million. Today got a message from an active duty man who wants to join. Still much more growth potential.
- [Instagram](#): from a variety of video posts, we have had more than 1 million, with large increases in views, detailed engagement, and total followers (24.6k)
- [YouTube](#): 1000% over the last 365 days (Yup!) growth in all measurements of our YouTube Channel usage (241k views, 15.2k watch time hours, and 2.5k new subscribers). We even made \$20.15 in ad revenue.
- [Facebook](#).

If you haven't checked out our new expertise in the social media realm, go to the links above.

VFP Actions re: Gaza, Gerry Condon: [See Appendix 3.](#)

No Nukes webinar, ICAN Week of Action, Gerry Condon: The VFP Nuclear Abolition Working Group remains very active, with many people regularly participating in our monthly discussions. After three years of meeting twice a month, with one of those meetings featuring guest speakers, we are now meeting once a month on **fourth Fridays**, and periodically organizing *VFP No Nukes Webinars* with larger audiences. Over 300 people registered for our February webinar with Timmon Wallis of [Warheads to Windmills](#) and Ivana Hughes, president of [Nuclear Age Peace Foundation](#). About 150 people joined our Zoom webinar, and a video recording was made available to all who registered.

The next *VFP No Nukes Webinar* will be on Thursday, June 20. Titled *Nuclear Energy and Weapons in a Time of Rising Tensions*, it will feature three expert speakers – William Hartung, a notable expert on US military spending, Linda Pentz Gunter of [Beyond Nuclear](#), and Greg Mello of the [Los Alamos Study Group](#). The webinar will be facilitated by Anthony Donovan, an Associate Member of New York City VFP and a longtime nuclear abolition activist.

The **June 20** webinar will fall in the middle of the ICAN [Global Week of Action on Nuclear Spending, June 17-23](#). Veterans For Peace has signed up to participate in this week of action.

Our webinar will be the centerpiece nationally. We also want to encourage VFP chapters, members, friends and allies to take action that week.

Veterans For Peace has also signed on as a co-sponsor of the upcoming [Back from the Brink webinar](#) on Wednesday, **May 29**. We are promoting their webinar and asking them to do the same for ours.

Chris Smiley has designed a beautiful graphic promoting the VFP No Nukes Webinar and Shelly will soon be sending it out as an e-blast to the VFP list, as well as to the 300+ people who registered for our February webinar.

At a recent meeting of the Nuclear Abolition Working Group, there was consensus and excitement about launching a sustained campaign for the total abolition of nuclear weapons. We are still thinking about what that would look like. Our next meeting will be this coming Friday, **May 24**. VFP Board members are very welcome and encouraged to attend.

Report from Uruhu Conference, Josh Shurley: provided links of interest About the Uhuru Movement: w/ Chairman Omali Yeshitela (MUST WATCH)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqe6Kb1E5iU&t=465s>

and

Josh Shurley's remarks at the Uhuru Solidarity Conference

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcTe8DIRbcw>

Golden Rule, Helen Jaccard: 2024 Sailing season planning is getting quite busy. Helen announced her retirement for the end of this year, and has provided a plan to find her replacement, by July 15—the beginning of the sailing season for training. She also suggested a potential replacement person, but other candidates should be found. She plans to continue as a volunteer. She expects that there will not be an additional cost to VFP. She wants help from Board for selection/transition process. She announced that the Golden Rule has inspired a similar peace boat, Jonah's Whale by a Korean Group.

National Convention August 16, 17, 18, Theme: **Ceasefire Now! Demilitarize and Decolonize!**
2:30 PT next meeting this Tuesday, May 23, and everyone on the board is on the committee, so should try to make it. Announcements for Bylaws, Resolution, board candidacy and other information will go out in the E-News this week.

ExComm Report, Susan Schnall: Four Arrows has suggested a work group on indigenizing VFP.
Four Arrows Proposal

Adjournment 2:36 ET

Next Board Meeting: June 15, 2024,, 12:20 pm ET.

Post adjournment open discussion ;

Janet Weil brought up questions about whether the Appeal to Redress v2 has discussion of the genocide and the US military's overt and covert involvement. Mike Ferner, indicated that the draft letters that GIs can send have been carefully assembled by lawyers, so that they stay within the strictures of the law related to Redress, and cannot legally get harassed over it.

Paul Cox brought up the 2024, 10th Chapter 160 tour to Vietnam to evaluate the ongoing legacy of the war due to the US use of Agent Orange and the ongoing damage to people from unexploded ordnance. FMI, paulcox@sonic.net and www.vfp160.org .

Meeting ended.

Appendix 1, ED Report, Will Hopkins: My first few weeks have been exciting, my dance card has been kept pretty full, mostly with calls orienting me to our many projects and working groups. The board drafted and we released two public statements, one in solidarity with the campus protests around the country, and a second opposing a new law that is moving through Congress which would grant the Treasury Secretary the ability to revoke the tax-deductible status of any organization they deem to be providing material support to terrorist organizations. I issued a call for our members to stand in solidarity with College protestors and to offer nonviolent protection where we can. Unfortunately the police violence against campus protestors has generally come swiftly and without warning, making it very difficult to get members on site to form a barrier. Protestors have been routinely beaten, shot with nonlethal rounds, and pepper sprayed.

The Convention Committee has begun meeting. We have not decided on a weekly meeting time, but will meet next on Tuesday the 21st at 5 ET. Anyone who wants to help, drop me an email, will@veteransforpeace.org and I'll get you the link. We are hoping to have a call for workshop proposals and a schedule worked out in the next few weeks.

Becky put together two editions of the E-News, the first with a parting note from Mike Ferner and a note of greeting from me, and the second covering the work being done around the country.

I was privileged to spend five days hosting and supporting the Peacewalk (<https://peacewalk2024.org/>), which began in Ogunquit Maine, and is now moving south through Massachusetts. We held eight public events in New Hampshire, including visits to churches along the route, public vigils with speakers, and a visit to Congressman Chris Pappas'




office. The walkers are continuing to speak to communities along their route. Media coverage of the walk has been really great, with Maine Public Radio and In Depth NH, running stories.

I suspect it will take me several months to fully get my bearings, but so far, I've found that folks have been very proactive about getting in touch and helping me find my way to the places where I am needed! Mike has agreed to stay on for an undisclosed period to act as a coach and help carry some of the projects that he has been instrumental in getting off the ground. At present he is leading a multi-organizational "Appeal For Redress" campaign focussing on the right of active duty personnel to speak out against continuing to arm Israel during an active ICC investigation for Genocide which we hold is a blatant violation of the Leahy Law, the Foreign Assistance Act, and at least four other legal principles.

This month we expect to focus a lot of energy on cementing the details of the upcoming convention. Thanks to all for giving me a chance to serve in this position, I'm looking forward to many years of our good work together.

Appendix 2: Membership Report (May 18, 2024)

- **Membership Committee** has been meeting the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm EST. New member calls are ongoing. We reach out to new members with a welcome and informally gather some info (proximity to chapter, interest in projects/committees, how did they hear about us, etc)
- **VFP hosts a monthly Chapter Contacts call** and a New Members call (12 new members attended the most recent New Members call—good interest)
- **Membership drives** will commence every spring (March-April), just prior/during Convention, and a small push during the winter.
- **Spring 2024** membership drive (3/22-4/19) results:
 - o Total of 475 member transactions with \$24,180 in membership revenue over the 4 week campaign (of those, 58 were new members).
- **Broken down by month**, our new member trends are:
 - o March 2024 – 58 new members
 - o April 2024 – 59 new members
- According to organizational trends, will describe our **Total Membership** numbers as: 12,020 (all who have paid)
Breakdown:
 - o Current: 2,466
 - o Lapsed: 264
 - o Dropped: 9,291 (going back to 2007)
- We will continue our new member calls and will eventually extend this to lapsed member calls as well.
- **NOTICE TO MEMBERS:**
 - o Please check your chapter rosters for accuracy. Report any inaccuracies to casey@veteransforpeace or josh@veteransforpeace.org



Appendix 3: Israel's sustained assault on the people of Gaza has now officially killed over 35,000 Palestinians, including over 14,000 children. This does not include an estimated 10,000 people who remain under the rubble of buildings downed by 2000-lb. bombs provided by the U.S. The current attack on Rafah is causing the further displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian men, women and children who have no safe place to go.

To make matters even worse, Israel is systematically starving the people of Gaza, leading to the further death and permanent damage to children. There can no longer be any doubt that this is a systematic campaign of genocide. It has also become increasingly clear that the Biden Administration, despite its occasional wimpy noises about protecting civilians, is absolutely complicit, not only in the bombing, but also the starvation and famine, as even [USAID whistleblowers](#) have recently decried.

The good news is that there is a robust protest movement growing in the US, thanks largely to the students who have organized encampments, occupations and other forms of protest on well over 100 US universities and colleges, sparking a worldwide movement of student protest against the escalating genocide in Gaza. The crackdown by university administrations and police against nonviolent student anti-genocide protesters has been over-the-top and often brutal. Well over 2500 students have been arrested and many have been suspended from the universities. This has only enraged and emboldened the students, who are getting quite an education about how Zionism and militarism are thoroughly embedded in the fabric of US society, including the universities. Hence their demand that the schools divest from both Israel and from weapons manufacturers, and “not use my tuition dollars to support genocide.”

Veterans For Peace chapters and members are showing up to support the student protests and are also part of local coalitions sponsoring weekly vigils, etc. Some VFP members, including Board member Nick Mottern, have been fasting against the genocide.

At the national level, VFP has issued several strong statements condemning the genocide. We sent a letter to the State Department presenting the legal rationale for ending US weapons shipments to Israel, and a subsequent letter to President Biden demanding the same. We have written articles based on these statements and initiatives that have been widely published in online publications. And we regularly share the efforts of VFP chapters on our very active Facebook page, with 96,000 followers. The VFP Peace Walkers are carrying a huge “Ceasefire” flag and speaking out against the genocide at many events along their way.

We are also actively supporting active-duty US Airman Larry Hebert, who initiated his own well-publicized fast in front of the White House and Congress and is now back at his base in Spain, and seeking a Conscientious Objector discharge. We have secured Larry a good lawyer, James Branum, who is very experienced in military law. And several of us are in regular communication with Larry.

These efforts are admirable, and we can do more. I think that Gaza and the VFP response to this historic genocide should be a regular feature on the agenda of VFP Board meetings. I also think that Veterans For Peace should organize a Gaza Task Force to coordinate and amplify our efforts, and to consider launching new initiatives. After I proposed this at our April Board

meeting, I heard from six or seven members who are interested in participating in a VFP Gaza Task Force. Unfortunately, I have been busy traveling on a delegation to Guatemala and have not yet pulled that together. I hope that Will Hopkins and other concerned Board members might help me. One thing we might do is have a special page on the website where VFP chapters can share reports and photos of their local efforts. This might lead to even more local and nationally coordinated efforts on behalf of Veterans For Peace. Even if we are not in the forefront of the struggle against genocide in Gaza, we are a significant component of the antiwar movement. People want to hear from us, and our members want us to be heard.

**Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, April 20, 2024
Minutes**

PRESENT: President Susan Schnall, Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Ellen Davidson, Kelly Wadsworth, Gerry Condon, Ellen Barfield, Mike Wong, Steven Zollman, Nick Mottern, Matt Southworth, Enya Anderson, National Director Mike Ferner, . Excused: V-P Josh Shurley,

MEMBERS: Ann Galloway, Art Milholland, Barry Ladendorf, Bob Keibach, Chuck Tio, Chris Antal, Dave Logsdon, David Cooley, Diane, Eric McCammond, Fernando Islas, Gary Werhan, Gene Storm, Gerald Hassett, Hank Ikles, Humfeld, Ian Mooney, Jack Talcott, James Bryce, Jeffery Mondello, John Ivens, Joyn Jadryev, Ken Embers, Kenneth Mayers, Larry, Libby Frank, Lynn Mystic-Healer, Martha Spiess, Micha John Spitzer, Michael Cervantes, Micheal Kramer, Mike Caggiano, Peter Morgan, Phil Pflager, Randy Bryce, Regina Sneed, Robert, Russell, Sa Bir Kaur Khlas, Susan Lamont, Taylor, Tarak Kauf, Thomas Leonard, Vicki Ryder, Will Hopkins, Will Thomas, Zool Zulkowitz.

Meeting opened at 11:40 am CT: Videos were played of the Statement of Purpose and Indigenous Worldview

Public Comment:

- David Logsdon: Barry Riesch from our chapter is on the Freedom Flotilla.
- Ian Mooney: expressed a complaint from CCMP that they have been trying to make some changes to their webpage and brochure but changes have not been made, with excuses about heavy workload. This shows the disconnect between CCMP and the Board. He thinks that projects should have the ability to update their own website because VFP is very elderly, and needs to change to better appeal to younger people. VFP is on the verge of becoming irrelevant. SS response: Happy to discuss, but rather than couching concerns and problems as criticism, let's call these opportunities to improve.
- Jeffrey Humfeld: Reported from Kansas City: His chapter visited Congressmen Jerry Moran's and Tracey Mann's offices to follow up on letter from member that they were being reported to the World Court for their support of Genocide on Gaza. They have not heard back.
- Micheal Kramer: In Chattanooga, TN, 75% of VW employees voted for the Union.
- Thomas Leonard: Chicago, seconded Ian Mooney's complaint about relevance. Messages of our main priorities have been fractured, possibly since Aaron Bushnell's immolation. Seems that everyone has their own priorities. SS response: Perhaps we should have an open meeting with members of the board and staff, to improve communication.

- Zool: NYC Chapter good news: Jerry Hassett has been leading demonstrations. He also thanked Mike Ferner for his work.
- Vicki Ryder: Inviting 1,000 women in DC on May 9 to sing out about a ceasefire, and doing a day of lobbying. Concert that night by Emma's Revolution. On May 10 and 11 there will be further lobbying and possibly a wail-in. Please pass the word. Also Chapter 57's mobile billboard truck has been going around. FMI: <https://www.codepink.org/grandmasdc>
- Chuck Ti: Legislative Working Group seeks to stay in the faces of the legislators. Would like to get more help, so please let them know contact them through Mike Ferner, mike@veteransforpeace.org.
- Susan Lamont: Sonoma County, thought the Western Regional conference was quite good. With Earth Day coming up, we need to work with all the other groups doing climate actions.
- Ken Mayers: Was driving to Alamogordo for actions and would like to see others join them.

VFP Board Meeting was called to order at 12:13 pm CT, beginning with Board member checkins

Minutes of March 16th: Motion Nick Mottern, second Ellen, to approve. Passed

Agenda: Motion Mike Wong, second Gerry Condon to approve. Passed

Executive Committee Report, Susan Schnall: She thanked Mike Ferner and the Search Committee for their work to find a new ED. ExComm has agreed to bring it to the Board to nominate Will Hopkins as the new ED. Will has worked for the last 14 years as the ED of New Hampshire Peace Action. He is an Army veteran of the Iraq War. Motion Matt Southworth, second Ellen Barfield to elect Will Hopkins. Passed unanimously. Will will start May 1, but Mike Ferner will still hang around. Will spoke: He has been a lifetime member and our Statement of Purpose has been a core motivation for him for a long time. He hopes to extend Mike Ferner's good work. VFP's voices are very important and his goal is to increase our members' voices. He wants to work with the Legislative Working Group, especially.

Finance Report (Budget-2024; P&L March), Mike Tork: See Appendix 1

National Director's Report, Mike Ferner: See Appendix 2

Peace Walk, Tarak Kauff: www.peacewalk2024.org is the website. It steps off Alqongqing Maine, 9 am May 7 walking for planet peace and justice and democracy. Out in front will be Stop the Genocide. Various communities are hosting the walkers. Arrives on Dc July 5 at the Whitehouse with followup on July 6-7

Transformative Justice Committee, Kelly Wadsworth: Will be meeting this Monday and again April 22, 2:30 PT. Will report next month.

Communications Committee, Gerry Condon: We are getting increased media due to the disaster in GAza. Reminded us that we have bi-weekly E-News, VFP Radio, Facebook (97k followers) primarily due to chapter reports on activities. And many other social media results. Our letter to Biden was picked up by several other groups.

Ukiah Regional in person and virtual conference, Paul Cox: there were 32 attendees, and several more via Zoom for our first meeting since 2019, and our first ever using hybrid tech—which was not seamless, but adequately cobbled together for a first try.

National Convention, August 16, 17, 18: Theme: **Ceasefire Now! Demilitarize and Decolonize!**

Speakers? Assignment have been made, but not completed

Next Convention Committee Meeting? Need to choose a date.

Membership, Ellen Barfield: Committee has grown. They are systematically calling new members to introduce ourselves and connect.

Report from UNAC Conference, Gerry Condon: Mike Wong and KJ Noh presented to UNAC conference, and other members from various chapters were also present.

VFP Work re: response to US/Israeli Genocide in Gaza,

- Gerry Condon: We are at a turning point with the exposure of the nature of Zionism as never before, and in a very dangerous time with the specter of a wider regional war. The silver lining to this otherwise horrible situation is that there is an energized and, in many ways, new anti-war movement with lots of young people, and VFP is also doing more work and actions. There are a few active duty GIs stepping out, too. Still all of this is somewhat helter-skelter, and he suggested improved coordination to maximize our impact and outreach to other veterans and other organizations.
- Mike Wong: reiterated that this is a critical turning point with Ukraine running out of troops. Because of US actions and sanctions, etc. much of the remainder of the world is turning away from the US, united by not wanting to be oppressed by the US even with many different systems. Iran has shown that it can hit targets if it goes all out, including the danger of hitting Israel's nuke system. We are looking at a multipolar world, no longer dominated by the US, which may be an improvement if we can stop the US from escalating.
- Mike Ferner: We (the US) are not writing the rules of the game at this time, and it is our job to shape putting out the arsonists' fires.
- Gerry Condon suggested that we need to have these kinds of discussions at board meetings, but also in other forums. Proposed that we form a team to provide guidance. If people are interested in that work, please email gerrycondon@veteransforpeace.org.

Next Board Meeting: May 19, 2024 11:40 pm CT

Adjournment: 1:57 pm CT

Appendix 1

Finance report, April 20, 2024

Current balances: Checking account - 175K; CapOne savings - 26K; Amalgamated Bank (AB) checking - 5K;

Restricted funds - 28.8K; Zinn Fund - 20K

Ed Jones CDs - 35.6K

10K mature - move now to AB

10.2K cash - move now to AB

5.5K Mutual funds - move now to AB

10K matures 6-24

Budget review

Ralph's 30K donation - Restrictions?

Other expenses (create a line item for unbudgeted expenses)

- Palestinian Children's Relief Fund 2K DONE
- Travel fund 5K Available
- Atty James Branum retainer for Larry Herbert's UCMJ troubles: 750.00 DONE
- George Grider refund 1K DONE
- Paul 5K VFP Store loan repay DONE

Moving money - Objectives

- Move money into a socially responsible bank

- Protect our money so it just doesn't "disappear". Board approval is required before withdrawing money from CDs.
- Have 120K readily available (3-months expenses)

Build staff/capacity

When the dust settles we would have 110.5K in Amalgamated CDs and 120K total between Amalgamated and Commerce checking accounts (readily accessible).

How should we distribute funds?

Current Amalgamated CDs

Maturity	APY
6-month	2.3
12-month	2.25
18-month	2.15
24-month	2.15

Appendix 2

National Director's report, April 20, 2024

Membership:

What every one of us can do at no cost

- Forward each e-News to friends and family.
- Keep the wallet-sized card in your pocket that has our logo and a QR code to the membership page (and thence to the rest of the site). Use it at rallies, the P.O., grocery check-outs, funerals, etc. Sign up new members! Link to a 10-up, ready to print pdf is in the chat.
<https://www.veteransforpeace.org/files/2217/0614/1337/NewWalletCard.front.back.pdf>

New chapter organizing

- **Norfolk/VA Beach/Hampton Roads** for meetings in Norfolk, Hampton Roads, VA Beach. Ann Williams, Steve Baggerly and Kim Williams, Clayton Tye have headed up the organizing committee for several months. Last month's board meeting they got official recognition.
- **From there to NC** to meet with Ray and Matt in Raleigh and two active members from Greensboro interested in forming a chapter.
- **From the new member call last month** members in Bend, OR and Lost Wages NV want to organize chapters.
- **Interest in new chapters in Cleveland and Columbus, OH** needs to get re-stoked
- **In Atlanta** we have a member who organized a presentation to the Atlanta office of the State Dept. of our letter to State. He wants to get the Atlanta chapter going again.
- Binghamton NY, Chapter 90, Jack Gilroy's recent work with the Am. Legion post.
- And there are a couple more waiting in the wings

Appeal for Redress v2: a few active duty people and I are working with reps from G.I. Rights Hotline and Center on Conscience and War to craft a new version of the one done after the invasion of Iraq. VFP will be the central point of contact and we'll be able to get in touch with everyone who signs. Press clips on Appeal for Redress v1 in 2007 [60 Minutes](#), [NYTimes](#), [Atlantic](#) (written by VFP advisory board member, Andrew Bacevich), [NPR](#)

DC Fasters: Larry Hebert back in Spain. We paid \$750 to atty James Branum to represent him while he gets separated from the A.F. Marshall Burns, brand new assoc. member from NOLA, ended a couple days ago for health reasons. Jeff Berger, new veteran member from Mpls., went to DC, still on fast;

went to Doctors Against Genocide news conference at the VA HQ this week; proposed outline for a support committee if this one continues or for the next one.

Organizing calendar: I'm going to propose to the new director a yearly calendar of events we can get chapters and indy members involved in if they're not already:

- April—public readings of MLK's "Beyond Vietnam" speech,
- May—Memorial Day,
- November – Armistice Day
- ...and various anniversaries and other occasions that can be annual projects for which we can provide organizing guides, literature, banners, etc.

Organizing partnership with Move to Amend to pass local resolutions in city and county governments. [Strategic Partnership with Move to Amend proposal](#)

Getting VFP on TV stations with our professionally-produced, [30-second "Climate Crisis PSA"](#) with [these instructions](#) on how to get it aired

Letter to Biden etc. re: naval escort for Gaza flotilla

Casey Stinemetz' report: tabled

Communications:

- [News release re: Israel nukes](#). Gerry Condon rewrites turns our releases into op eds and shops them around to web sites that want that format. Common Dreams, Counterpunch, Pressenza are some of the ones who've run them.
- Climate and militarism PSA: volunteer in Toledo asked re: VFP and I picked CCMP
- Press interviews, radio shows and podcasts: there've been several in the last month. Some get posted to "VFP in the news" on the home page, some in the e-News and some on social media. We need to keep a central list of these and hopefully the next director will start one.
- Check our web site regularly to keep up with what's available. Be familiar with it so you can guide new people to it.
- Chris Smiley continues to improve our "reach" via social media. Go to our home page and check them out regularly if you don't have an account for each of them. Spread the word by using the ["how to" instructions](#) Chris wrote.



Finance: Three things: 1) \$2,000 sent to Palestinian Children's Relief Fund in memory of Aaron Bushnell; 2) a heartfelt "thank you" to Shelly Rockett, Mike Tork and Paul Cox for wrangling the 2024 budget into shape and doing all the other tasks important to watch the money. I did my best to see there was some money to watch and they did the hard part of dealing with numbers and spreadsheets, and 3) the finance item I'm most proud of: when I started we had \$1,200 in savings and about two weeks of operating funds in checking. A year later we have \$175,000 in operating funds and \$115,000 in savings and restricted funds. We did it by reductions on the expense side and solely from individual donation, except for one modest bequest, on the revenue side. In the last 8 months I've sent 45 personalized "VFP dove" plaques to people who donated a \$1,000 or more plus written around 75 thank-you notes on VFP note cards to individuals. I wanted to have a report for you on the number of individual donors we had compared to the previous year, but that will have to wait until next month.

Mike Ferner's Farewell Speech: Most importantly, *"we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."* **Eisenhower**

We now know the people behind the military-industrial complex as the Madmen Arsonists. And in case you've not been introduced to them, with a moment of personal privilege, and most importantly, how we can describe them as part of our ongoing messages:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OA58cjxCyII>


The most rewarding highlights have been in no particular order:

- The response from many hundreds of donors that stabilized our finances,
- Working with a wonderfully dedicated staff and feeling now like we have a team that clicks; hiring Chris Smiley and re-hiring Casey Stinemetz; adjusting Shelly and Becky's pay a little closer to what it should be,
- Recruiting some new members from special projects I've worked on like the Fast for Gaza and people I've met at rallies; helping develop the Norfolk chapter and others,
- Working with last year and this year's boards. Through their dedication to VFP and thousands of hours of unpaid, skilled labor have made it possible to handle this job,
- Reconnecting with many old activist friends in VFP and meeting lots of new ones all over the country, and feeling the renewed sense of commitment to the cause and pride in VFP's role in it, and
- Getting the opportunity to put into practice, at a critical time for the organization I love, all the bits and pieces I've learned about organizing and fundraising over the years; to be part of the team that got VFP back on the rails and chugging full steam ahead. Thank you all!!

TAKE THE STREETS!!! OCCUPY OFFICES!!!!

- [wallet-size cards](#)
- [MLK Day planning document](#)
- [30-second "Climate Crisis PSA" with these instructions](#)
- [Strategic Partnership with Move to Amend proposal](#)
- [Peace & Democracy Working Group](#)
- ["How to forward social media postings"](#)
- [News release re: Israel nukes](#)
- [Appeal for Redress v1 in 2007 60 Minutes, NYTimes, Atlantic \(written by VFP advisory board member, Andrew Bacevich\), NPR](#)

—END—


**Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, March 16 2024
Minutes**

PRESENT: President Susan Schnall, VP Josh Shurley, Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Mike Wong, Ellen Barfield, Gerry Condon, Stephen Zollman, Ellen Davidson, Nick Mottern, Nya Anderson, Matt Southworth. National Director Mike Ferner. Absent: Kelly Wadsworth.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ann Wright, Art Roche, Arthur Ratcliffe, Barry, Becky Luening, Bill Tiwald, Bob Keilbach, Chris Antal, Clayton Tye, David Cooley, Doug Rawlings, Ed Brighton, Gary Butterfield, Gerald

Hassett, Gerry Werthan, Gil, Jeffrey Humfeld, Jim Brown, Joe Marcikowski, John Amidon, John Spitzberg, Ken Mayers, Kenneth Baer, Larry Orr, Libby Frank, Michael Cervantes, Michael Kramer, Mike Marceau, Munjo Yu, Nancy River, Paul Edward Gringas, Rachel Clark, Ray, Rick Staggenborg, Robert Rhudy, Scott Johnson, Shane Meserve, Steve Morse, Susan Lamont, Thomas Leonard, Tim Farley, Tina Jayroe, VFP 757, William Hopkins, Woody, "Somebody in Korean"--(58 participants at peak)

Meeting opened: 12:40 PM ET

Videos were played of the Statement of Purpose and Indigenous Worldview

Public Comment:

- **Bob Rhudy:** Saw VFP's job opening announcement, like it, and will send it out to some folks who might be interested.
- **Gary Butterfield:** CCMP will do joint events with 350.org in a groundbreaking collaboration on militarism. Actions will include protesting military air shows (of which there will be 65 this year). He urged people to attend the event by Zoom on **Mar 26, Noon ET, 9 am PT**. To register: bit.ly/protest-airshows FMI: garyvfp@gmail.com
- **Ann Wright:** Thanks to everyone who went to DC to lobby Congress this past week. Thanks to Ellen Davidson for the new T-Shirt, VFP-Veterans Against Genocide
- **Paul Cox:** announced the next VFP Chapter 160 tour, Oct 11-27. If you are vaguely interested, FMI: Paulcox890@comcast.net
- **Susan Schnall:** asked people to present ideas for the upcoming August convention.

Board meeting opened: 1:00PM with **Checkins**

Minutes: February 17, 2024. Motion Gerry, Second Enya: Approved

Agenda: Motion Matt, second Mike Wong: Approved

Finance Report, Mike Tork: Presented the 2024 Budget and the P&L for February

- Current finances: Checking: **\$132k**. Restricted: **\$21k**. Savings: **\$31k**. Ed Jones: **\$36k**. Zinn: **\$27** to be reduced by end of month by \$8k (Deported Vets and Fresno Chapter Podcast Equipment).
- Opening additional CD's in Amalgamated Bank (for their socially conscious investing) is still in process.
- Mentioned the Swarthmore Peace Collection of VFP's papers that are available online and worth perusing.

National Director's Report, Mike Ferner:

- Sally Alice Thompson Fund: Motion Ellen, second Gerry: "A motion to establish the fund: that this Board of Directors, in an open meeting on Mar 17, 2024 approves and establishes on the records of the Veterans For Peace, Inc., a separate fund to be known as The Sally-Alice Thompson Legacy Fund administered by the Finance Committee. Interest generated by the Fund's investments may be transferred to the organization's operating accounts by recommendation of the Committee. However, the principal of the Fund may be expended only upon a vote of a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at an open meeting of the Board of Directors." Passed. Mike suggested that the Fund could be used as a place to park planned giving and bequests. The interest income, could be spent for capacity building—to increase membership and Chapter work and to improve communications.
- National will send out a Call To Action (CTA) this week about Gaza
- Casey Stinemetz will stay in her ¾-time position as membership director through June.
- We now have wallet-sized cards with QR code available from National here: https://www.veteransforpeace.org/download_file/5560 that can be used to get new memers.

- Urges chapter to organize the April 4 MLK memorial, possibly with a reading of his Beyond War speech. File with ideas for Spring Actions for Chapters:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xr2rN7kK1tcHQsxY7M4dgA6eksy7II1OPtvDJ8oR14/edit#heading=h.bc4s5yitlctf>
- A Search Committee has volunteered to work on finding a replacement for Mike Ferner as National Director. Nick Mottern, Ellen Davidson, Matt Southworth, Gerry Condon, and Mike Wong comprise the committee and will meet next week. Suggestion for advertising the position from Shane Meserve in Chat: www.idealists.org.
- Recommended Uncle Devin's video about moving DoD money out of 'defense'. Also, recommended Peter Coyote's 4-minute video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPMxwVfIKhs&feature=youtu.be>

Development Committee, Matt Southworth: committee met Feb 26 that included Rhudy, Zool, Dirk, Thomas, and Bruce. They have split into three task forces: Data Analysis, Solicitation and Stewardship, and Planned Giving. Next meeting on Monday, Mar 18.

Transformative Justice Committee, Kelly Wadsworth's written report: "TJC has 5 members and has met twice since the last board meeting. We are reviewing the TJC webpage and aim to have it up back up on the website within a month or so. At our next meeting we plan to review the steps and process for referrals as well as hand-off procedures to the Membership committee as well as the Board. We are exploring how to provide some best-practices education to all of VFP. We are always accepting new members so if you'd like to join us, please reach out."

Membership Committee, Josh Shurley: Thanked Ken, who is stepping down, for his help with the committee. They are meeting first Wed of each month. Motion Josh, second Mike Wong, to approve creation of two new chapters: Norfolk, VA, Chapter 757 (their Area Code). And Chapter 122 in Auburn, CA. See written report, **Appendix 1**.

Peace Walk, Tarak Kauff: Thanked Nick Mottern for sitting in Jim McGovern's office. The Peace Walk will start May 7 in Algonquin, ME, and move to formal kickoff in NH. The Walk still needs donations. He expressed that we could benefit from participation by Quakers, Menonites, Buddhists, and anyone who supports all life, the environment, and peace. Ellen and Tarak just bought a 12-passenger van for the walk. They still need people to assist with finding places to stay, venues, etc. In response to Nick Mottern's comments, Tarak indicated that Justice for Palestine will likely be the focus for the Peace Walk since the war on Gaza is likely to be ongoing, but that a ceasefire in Ukraine is the other main topic. FMI, www.peacewalk2024.org

Communications Committee, Gerry Condon: he showed his T-shirt commemorating the Irish struggles created by and worn in memory of George Johnson. Gerry's written report is attached as **Appendix 2**.

Executive Committee, Susan Schnall:

There will be two zoom meeting on Gaza on Mar 17, and April 17, here?

1. Report from Washington, DC: several members met in DC to walk the Hill, and visited the spot where Aaron Bushnell self-immolated in front of the Israeli Embassy.
2. Zinn Fund Grants approved:
 - a. Deported Veterans
 - b. Fresno Proposal for equipment for podcasts
3. Recommendation that VFP donate \$2,000 to the Palestine Children's Fund in memory of Aaron Bushnell. Motion Gerry Condon, second Nick Mottern. Passed. Mike Ferner promised to publicize this donation to allied organizations.
4. Start organizing for conventions 2024 (virtual) and 2025 (in person)

5. VFP Statement regarding attacks on progressive organizations by the press and politicians
6. Executive Director/National Director position posted, notice below as **Appendix ZZZ**

Next Board Meeting: April 20, 2024, 12:40 pm, ET

Adjournment: Motion Mike Tork, Second Gerry Condon. Passed at 2:56 ET

Appendix 1

Membership Committee Report, Mar 16, 2024

The Membership Committee is continuing efforts with improving how we orient new members, retain existing members, and reach out to lapsed members, while working through database issues.

- Welcome back Casey as Membership Coordinator. Expanded hours in order to help sort out our database issues and help get VFP Membership running smoothly.
- Immediate focus on orienting new members.
 - Have been averaging 60 members per month during the past quarter.
 - Committee is in the process of making phone calls/reaching out to new members each month. Each newly joined member will receive a call from one of us, asking about them and informing about projects, committee work, chapters, etc.
 - Someone from Membership will be on each monthly New Member call.
 - New Member Form to track these outreach efforts and gather useful membership data.
- Continued tracking, outreach to lapsed members. Will be organizing calls to lapsed members. Retention calls similar to welcoming calls
- Will have two annual membership drives: one in spring, one at Convention time.
- Someone from Membership will be on each Chapter Contacts call.

Josh Shurley, Co-Chair, Membership Committee, 3/16/2024

Appendix 2

Communications Committee Report VFP Board Meeting, March 16, 2-24

The Communications Committee was established in order to facilitate coordination among the various VFP means of communication, including our printed newsletter – now twice a year, the VFP eNews – now twice a month, VFP Radio – weekly, the VFP Facebook page, social media and the VFP-All list serve – daily, and occasional eBlasts from the national office. VFP activists from all of these media are represented on the Communications Committee. I am serving as Board liaison and facilitator. We meet monthly, 3d Monday. We have a listserv which includes VFP staff and volunteers, as well as the Executive Director Mike Ferner, Board president Susan Schnall, and Ellen Davidson from *Peace & Planet News*. Over the last few months, we have achieved considerable coordination and impressive output.

During the last two months of February and March, we have been particularly productive. First of all, the VFP eNews is truly outstanding. Becky Luening does a terrific job putting together an attractive and comprehensive newsletter that reflects a definite uptick in the activity of VFP chapters and members, particularly in response to the US-backed genocide in Gaza, as well as the twin existential threats of Climate Catastrophe and Nuclear War.

We have also been able to promote and build participation in special VFP events. The VFP *Warheads to Windmills* webinar, Feb 29, by our Nuclear Abolition Working Group, was a huge success. Over 300 people registered and 150 attended, which I think may be unprecedented outside of VFP Conventions. The large participation was directly the result of coordinated promotion on multiple platforms, including the VFP eNews, Facebook, VFP-All, and a VFP eBlast, thanks to Shelly Rockett in our national office. Probably VFP Radio as well. So, good job, everybody. We have begun to do similar promotion for a March 26 webinar by the VFP Climate and Militarism Project, co-presented with 350.org US, the largest climate organization in the U.S.

We are learning more about how to project VFP statements and actions into the media. I should say “alternative media” because the corporate media is really tough to crack. Progressive alternative media is gaining larger and larger audiences, however, so should not be taken lightly. Even progressive media needs to be approached systematically, including building relationships with the editors. When Veterans For Peace issues an important statement – such as calling for an end to US weapons shipments to Israel, only rarely will that entire statement be published. So we tried summarizing those statements in shorter press releases, and didn’t have much luck with that either. Finally, we decided to develop that press release into a full-blown article, with the VFP statements embedded, and we began to get published more often.

For example, VFP Board Vice President Josh Shurley and I collaborated on an article decrying the hypocrisy of Biden’s airdropping MRE’s onto the beaches of Gaza, while continuing to supply the bombs that are still being dropped on Gaza, and failing to pressure Israel to open up border crossings for the massive aid that is needed to stave off famine. It was titled, *Veterans Are Not Fooled by Biden’s Mixed Messages on Gaza*. We embedded in the article links to the VFP statement on the self-immolation of Aaron Bushnell, and the VFP letter to the State Department detailing the illegality of shipping arms to Israel while it was violating human rights on a massive scale. The article was published by *Popular Resistance*, [Common Dreams](#), *Antiwar.com*, and *LA Progressive*.

Another article by Helen Jaccard and me, marking the 70th anniversary of the Castle Bravo nuclear test – the largest ever US test – was also published in *Peace & Planet News*, *Antiwar.com*, *Common Dreams* and [LA Progressive](#). The article included a link to the website of VFP’s *Golden Rule* anti-nuclear sailboat.

So writing and submitting timely articles and linking to VFP statements and projects appears to be effective way of making veterans’ voices heard. Which tells me we should be cultivating a team of VFP writers.

But we are not giving up on the mainstream (corporate) media either. Renowned progressive media activist Norman Solomon has offered to do a media workshop for Veterans For Peace – how to break into the mass media. We are talking with Norman about doing a webinar with him sometime in April.

Finally, Ken Mayers has suggested that the task of VFP recruitment is something that might most effectively be shared by the Membership Committee and the Communications Committee. We will be discussing how best to do that.

Gerry Condon Communications Committee Chair

Post-meeting informal discussion of August Convention :

- Ken suggests that there be concurrent in-person regional conventions in a few locations. Mike Ferner is concerned about the staffing issues that will arise with multiple conventions.
- Dates for the convention have not yet been chosen.

- Ellen B suggested Chris Antal, and Joe Wiinikka-Lydon be called in for discussion of Moral Injury.
- From Chat for Convention: Reproductive rights/women's rights/MST. Support for Lejeune families and GIs. Update on Ukraine (Peace and Justice in Ukraine Coalition, perhaps). On Gaza use advisory board members as speakers (e.g. Hedges, Peled, Cohn, Nadar, Bacevich, etc.). Film *Israelism* (<https://www.israelismfilm.com/screenings>). Substantial strategy discussion. Outreach to other allied groups. Naomi Klein as speaker: <https://www.redpepper.org.uk/global-politics/palestine-middle-east/the-iron-dome-is-global-and-so-is-the-resistance/>
- Tarak: South African Foreign Minister, **Nalleti Pandor, Italian Clare Daly Francesca Albanize,**
- Mike Ferner: Corporations: Citizens United and other corporate unjust rights and protections. Move to Amend You Tube video by Peter Coyote
- Joe Marcikowski: Max Blumenthal, Aaron Matte, **Dabe Matte** The Grayzone. South by Southwest musical festival
- Gerry Condon: wants a sharper theme about decolonization. Proposes convention dates to sync with GR, last Sat of July would be interesting with Kayacitists. Proposed **Free Palistine. Decolonize the Planet** as the Theme. Other offerings from Chat: 'END CORPORATE RULE TO END INVASIONS AND OCCUPATION.' Or, 'FREE, FREE PALESTINE - Decolonize the Planet!'
- Nick Mottern suggests some direct action about Nukes at Congress.
- Ken Mayers discussed his chapter's thinking about doing Albuquerque convention in **2025**
- Josh Shurley, suggested that we need to oppose the increased gummit actions against progressive groups, support decolonization, and show solidarity with other states such as S. Africa and Ireland. Wants us to schedule the conference before schools start in mid-August.

**Veterans For Peace
Board of Directors
Saturday, February 17, 2024
Minutes**

Present:

Board: President Susan Schnall, VP Josh Shurley, Treasurer Mike Tork, Secretary Paul Cox (notes), Mike Wong, Ellen Barfield, Gerry Condon, Stephen Zollman, Ellen Davidson, Kelly Wadsworth. Excused absence: Nick Mottern. Absent: Nya Anderson, Matt Southworth.

Staff: National Director Mike Ferner, Shelly Rockett

Members: Alice Slater, Ann Wright, Barry Ladendorf, Bill Habedank, Bob Rhudy, Bushrod007@gmail.com, Charles Powell, Chris Berg, Dan Shea, Dave Logsdon, David, David Ransom, Denise Sellers, Denny Riley, Doug Monroe, Ed White, Ed Lorenz, Fernando, Gary Butterfield, Gary May, Gerald Hassett, Hart, Helen Jaccard, James Williams, Jean Morris, Jeff Merrick, Jeff Gray, Jeff Humfeld, Jim Brasile, Jim Rine Jonn Vail, Keith Orchard, Ken Mayers, Ken Kohler, Larry Orr, Larry S., Libby Frank, M Cervantes, Michael McPhearson, Michael Kramer, Munjo Yu, Nancy River, Paul Edward Gringas, Paul Dordal, Peace Action Maine, Phil Jossleyn, Phil Pflager, Rachel Clark, Ralph,, Susan Lamont, Regina Sneed, Tarak Kauf, Thomas, Tina Jayroe, Willam Hopkins.

Meeting opened: 12:48 pm ET with videos of Statement of Purpose and Indigenous Worldview

Open mic:

Tarak Kauf: Thanked board for letter to State Department.

Libby Frank: She would like to hear from chapters with a speakers' bureau? Also her chapter lost access to their email, etc. and would like for National establish a system to maintain information/access for the chapters.

Gary Butterfield: CCMP has been at it for 2.5 years and is negotiating with www.350.org for CCMP to give a presentation at their national meeting. 350.org has begun taking note of the military's role in pollution. Their presentation with 350.org will be March 6. CCMP will stress targeting the 65 military air shows this year. Here is an Instagram video by 350.org slamming the military's contribution to pollution: https://www.instagram.com/reel/C310E_CJ6-t/

Ann Wright: Echoed Tarak's comment. Yesterday, her delegation on the Hill talked to 20 reps and gave them the VFP press release. No to NATO will be in DC for NATO's 75th Anniversary, on July 5-7. Lastly, the Gaza Freedom Flotilla will find a fast boat to challenge the Zionist war on Gaza.

John Vail: Liked the Indigenous Worldview video. Thinks that efforts to get money out of politics will address all the other problems in our society.

Phil Josslyn: Greetings from San Salvador, where he went to observe shit-show elections. Supports VFP's draft letter about the potential for a new McCarthy era that he thinks is on the horizon, and hopes that Board passes it.

Gerry Condon: Webinar that the Nuke Abolition Working Group is sponsoring will be Feb 29, 7 pm ET. Check VFP website.

Ed White: Suggested we protest AIPAC. Has been trying to do so in Chicago.

Jim Brasile: Shout out to Ann Wright for her work at UN and in DC. Also to Jim W and Harley Bennet for their VFP radio show. Thinks we need to focus on UN re: Gaza.

Dave Logsdon: Has been working with young anti-war folks in Minneapolis. He also plugged the movie *Dome* about Marshall Islander's efforts.

VFP Board Meeting called to order by President Susan Schnall at 1:17 pm ET

Merle Ratner: Susan Schnall passed the news that Merle Ratner died in a traffic accident on Feb 5 in NYC. A lifelong and tireless friend of Vietnam, Merle started Vietnam Agent Orange Relief and Responsibility Campaign (VAORRC) with Dave Cline and her partner Ngo Nhan, and led the support efforts for first the lawsuit against chemical companies from 2004 to 2009. After the lawsuit was dismissed by the Supremes, VAORRC shifted to legislative efforts on behalf of AO victims from 2009 through today. She was awarded the Vietnam Friendship Medal in 2016. Paul also spoke about his work and friendship with Merle.

Ben Chitty: Susan Schnall, related how Ben was an early and long-time leader of VVAW, a two-tour veteran of the American War, and was active in labor struggles. He passed this week from cancer.

Board Member check in. Jan 20, 2024, Minutes approved, and agenda approved.

Finance Report, Mike Tork: Budget-2024; P&L December:

Unrestricted: Checking 137K, CapOne Savings 31K, Edward Jones (CDs) 36K: TOTAL = **\$204k**

Restricted: Projects Account. 22K, Zinn Fund 27K: TOTAL **\$49k**

Mike discussed the approved budget and PL, pointing out that our January income was better than predicted.

Development Committee: Matt Southworth—Tabled

National Director's Report, Mike Ferner: Casey Stinemetz will extend her work contract with membership through June. Membership Committee will have a subcomm in Recruitment and Retention. If we make our unofficial goal of 1,000 new members, it will eradicate our financial fragility. He also related that he has enjoyed his emergency year as interim ED, and helping with financial and membership retention difficulties. Development Committee, to be run by Matt Southworth will be meeting soon. Contact MF if you are interested in helping with it. Urged all members to forward our E-News to all your friends as a way to extend our outreach. Chris Smiley is doing a great job with social media. We need to get started on the 2024 Convention and also the 2025 convention. The State Department letter is getting much attention, due to social media help from Sean Nestor and Terry Lodge (who drafted it). Also, Nick Mottern put us in touch with Josh Paul, a State Department employee who resigned over illegal weapons shipments, and who is sending out that letter to hundreds of other State Department employees to nudge them into their own actions. Also Ralph Nader's current column and radio show feature discussion of this letter. While individuals cannot sue the State Department, Ralph suggests that we all lobby our congressional reps to do their job.

Golden Rule, Helen Jaccard: Reported that the Great Loop was finished last year with many important actions and memorable moments. For example, every member of the House and Senate was handed a copy of VFP's Nuclear Posture Review. Also, the GR crew went to the UN and met with 13 international missions, including the Marshall Islands delegation. 2023 financials: income \$105.5k. expenses: \$111.6k. The 2024 Sailing Plan is to go to the Northwest from Jul 15 through Sep 30, to include Eureka to Seattle, and will show GR film, demonstrate, and talk about nukes. The 2024 budget: income \$58k, exp \$58k, with VFP's support to be \$21.4k mitigated by \$4k in restricted income to VFP. Currently GR has about \$49k—close to the income goal already. Helen has put much of the GR report in a PowerPoint presentation on their website.

Peace Walk, Tarak Kauff: "Silence the Drums of War, Justice and Democracy" will be their slogan, and will likely be connected to the Gaza debacle that can reasonably be expected to be an ongoing disaster. There will be a workshop at 5 pm ET today (Feb 17) on this matter (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83426011852?pwd=RzRzTisvLzJuV0ovYUQ4a3NFa3lrZz09>). Walk will start Apr 27 in Augusta Maine, and end 700 miles later in DC by July 5 in time for actions around NATO's 75th anniversary. The project needs help! FMI www.peacewalk2024.org.

Executive Committee Report: Susan

- 1- **Socially Responsible Investments:** Recommendation that VFP investments be made through socially responsible banking institutions.
 - Motion Mike Tork, second Stephen Zollman, to put additional CD's into Amalgamated Bank (started by Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America in 1923). Our current checking has \$137k. Move \$40k of that into a 7-month CD in AB. Passed.
 - Motion Mike Tork, second Mike Wong: Withdrawing money from any of our CDs will require the approval of the majority of the VFP Board. Passed.
- 2- **Administrative Fee:** Motion Paul Cox, second Mike Tork, to reduce 8.5% administrative fee to 5%. Passed.
- 3- Start organizing for conventions 2024 (virtual) and 2025 (in person). Tucson has offered to host 2025, and Santa Fe/Albuquerque chapters will also consider. Note that 2025 will be the 40th Anniversary of VFP!
- 4- **Attacks on progressive organizations** by the press and politicians Mike Wong drafted a statement, opposing such slander, which is attached as Appendix1. Ellen Barfield suggested that

references to “Americans” be changed to “US” or “US citizens”. Ellen Davidson thought the statement was too long, and suggested that she edit it for length without changing its meaning. Gerry Condon thought that we should run the statement past Code Pink since they are mentioned so often. Josh Shurley also thought it is too long and needs to be shortened. Compromise suggested by Susan is to put it up on PPN and on Website, but Ellen D will shorten it and seek approval through ExComm. No vote. Accepted without objection.

5- **092 Greater Seattle Washington:** Requested name change to Daniel Ellsberg Chapter 092. Motion Mike Wong, second Josh Shurley, to approve. Passed.

6- **Board Committee List** of chairs/liasons and members, Accepted without objection. Susan pointed out that committee membership is open to all members, not just board members.

ExComm: President Susan Schnall, Vice President Josh Shurley, Secretary Paul Cox, Treasurer Mike Tork, National Director: Mike Ferner

Membership and Chapter Support: Chair Josh Shurley, Nick Mottern, Dave Logsdon, Enya Anderson, Ellen Barfield

Recruitment and Retention: Chair Gerry Condon

Transformative Justice: Chair Kelly Wadsworth, Mike Wong, Stephen Zollman, Ellen Davidson, Barry Reich, Greg Corning

Communications: Chair/Liaison Gerry Condon, Ellen Davidson

Delegations: Chair Ellen Davidson, Josh Shurley, Enya Anderson

Finance: Chair/Treasurer Mike Tork, Ellen Davidson, Paul Cox,

Development: Chair Matt Southworth, Stephen Zollman

Personnel: Chair Paul Cox, Enya Anderson, Kelly Wadsworth, Nick Mottern

Convention: Co-chair Susan Schnall, Co-chair Mike Ferner, Board of Directors

Awards: Chair Josh Shurley, Becky Luening, Nick Mottern, Mike Tork

Bylaws: Chair Josh Shurley, Stephen Zollman

Resolutions: Chair Josh Shurley, Bob Gryzinski

Nominations: Chair Ellen Barfield, Enya Anderson, Dave Logsdon

VFP Advisory Board: Chair Paul Cox

Next Board Meeting: March 16, 2024

Adjourned at 3:20: **Rump Session** followed: Barry Ladendorf brought up that Jerry Genesio and a few others started VFP in July ,1985, and suggested we plan 40th Anniversary events. Also suggested Advisory Board members be asked to write why they joined VFP statements that we can use to drum up interest. He is willing to work on the Advisory Board Committee. Mike Ferner mentioned that Matt Hoh may also be willing to help with AB.

Appendix 1: Veterans For Peace denounces false allegations of foreign funding to peace groups by Nancy Pelosi, the media, and Washington politicians.

California Democratic Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's recent claims that Code Pink and other peace protesters calling for a ceasefire in Gaza are either Russian or Chinese funded is absurd and insulting, and Veterans For Peace calls on her to withdraw such allegations and apologize. In October of 2023, Pelosi told a group of Code Pink protesters (all of whom were White US citizens), to "Go back to China where your headquarters is." Then in January of 2024, Pelosi said in an interview, "I think ... some of these protesters are spontaneous and organic and sincere Some, I think, are connected to Russia. And I say

that having looked at this for a long time now, as you know." When asked whether she thought some pro-Palestinian protests were Russian plants, she responded, "I don't think they're plants.... I think some financing should be investigated... and I want to ask the FBI to investigate that."

"Go back to China!" is a common racial insult that historically has been hurled at Asians, but now Pelosi has crossed racial lines and thrown the insult at Whites. It should also be noted that prominent White members of Veterans For Peace have reported that in advocating for peace, they have in the past been told to "Go back to Russia!" The stereotyping and irony is embarrassing, defies reality or logic, and highlights the absurdity and falsehood of these claims.

Groups such as Code Pink and others have been around since the "War on Terror" began with our tragic and foolish wars on one nation after another in the Middle East. Now that the US has declared Russia and China to be our latest enemies, she's trying to connect dots that simply aren't connected. For example, why can't Pelosi decide whether peace folks are funded by Russia or by China? Because there's no evidence for either, simple as that. She is claiming things that just don't exist.

On August 5, 2023, the New York Times attacked Jodie Evans and Code Pink and other peace groups in an article entitled, "A Global Web of Chinese Propaganda Leads to a U.S. Tech Mogul." But if one reads the article carefully, the evidence provided actually shows that the headline was false, the US tech mogul in question made all his money in America, and is donating his American money to American and international peace organizations. The tech mogul lives in Shanghai and has a wide range of contacts there, including Chinese officials. But it's perfectly normal for business people in any country to have many contacts including government officials, just as both American and foreign business people in America normally have contacts in both government and private agencies in order to do business.

The peace groups he donates to criticize American foreign policy, but based on fact, not anyone's propaganda.

Yet following the NYT article, Republican US senator Marco Rubio asked the United States Department of Justice to open an investigation into Code Pink and other entities for potential violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). Then in November of 2023, ten Republican House members of Congress signed a letter saying that they are 'deeply concerned' with Code Pink's ties to the Communist Party of China and requesting documentation.

When multiple people and groups make similar observations about US aggression around the world and support each other in speaking up about it, the US mainstream media calls it a "conspiracy." But when the CIA and its offshoot the National Endowment for Democracy fund projects such as the "Voice of America" and "color revolutions," stage coups and fund, arm, and train insurgents in foreign countries around the world, they call that "democracy." And when Washington politicians receive money from pro-Israel lobbying groups, the right wing Taiwan DPP party, or American weapons contractors supporting our (big money making) foreign wars, that is considered business as usual. There's a double standard here: peace groups are falsely accused - without evidence - of having funding from foreign sources, while Washington politicians are openly taking money from compromised sources with serious conflicts of interest as a "normal" practice.

One has to ask, if this is how much our American leaders falsely stereotype and demonize our own citizens advocating peace, how much are they doing the same to the foreign nations and governments that they oppose?

This is a bipartisan attack on peace and those who advocate it, in essence, a new McCarthy Period. The McCarthy Period was one of the darkest periods in living American history, and Veterans For Peace denounces a return to such a period. We must rise above such darkness, seek diplomatic rather than military solutions to problems, and cultivate peace rather than war with other nations. In today's world of high tech and nuclear weapons, either we humans will all learn to live together, or we will all die together. Veterans For Peace urges our American leaders to promote living together.

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

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

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

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

Member Comments:

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

Chuck Ti expressed thanks to VFP, and wants to revive legislative and lobbying group

Nancy S: We should add “ending Colonialism” to our Statement of Purpose

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

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

Board Meeting Convened: 1:08 pm ET

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

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

Checkins/self introductions by board members

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

Agenda: Motion Wong, second Barfield to approve: Passed

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

President: Susan Schnall only nomination

Vice President: Josh Shurley only nomination

Secretary: Paul Cox only nomination

Treasurer: Mike Tork only nomination

All positions filled unanimously

REPORTS:

Finance, Mike Tork:

Cash On Hand: \$156k

Savings: \$31k

Ed Jones: \$35k CDs mostly

Restricted Funds: \$22k

Zinn Fund: \$27k

TOTAL: \$271k

P&L: 2023 Income: \$523,177.62; 2023 Expenses: \$400,118.67; finished with \$123,058.95 excess.

Budget 2024, Mike Tork: Motion Tork, second Shurley, to add line item of \$5k to the 2024 budget for assistance with members' travel costs. Approved. Secretary will change Policies and Procedures to reflect application procedures as proposed and passed. Proposed Budget for 2024 Projected Income \$482,809; Expenses \$434K; Expected \$54,367 excess. Motion Barfield, Second Shurley to approve budget as submitted. Approved.

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

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

Spring organizing opportunities for chapters and indy members. [See this document](#) for details and "how to" suggestions:

1. **April 4:** anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination. Many cities have public readings of his "Beyond Vietnam" speech he gave at Riverside Church, exactly one year before his murder. **VFP chapters and independent members need to join those efforts that are**

already being planned and organize ones where there aren't any. Keep your QR code membership card on you!

2. If we want to recruit younger members, the ongoing ceasefire rallies are where we'll find them – and many are post 9/11. Keep your QR code membership card on you!
3. We've started circulating VFP's 30-second "Climate Crisis PSA" to members with these instructions on how to get it aired on local TV stations
4. An excellent indy documentary, "What I Want You to Know," is available for chapters and members to show for very reasonable rates. One chapter has done so and more should. The vets in the film are all post 9-11. The interviews are stunning.

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

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

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

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

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

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

VFP National Board Committees and chairs

1. Communications Committee—Gerry Condon
2. Convention Committee—Susan Schnall **and Everybody!!**

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

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

1- **National Projects:**

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

2- **Working Groups**

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

Descriptions of Committees

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

Convention Committee: Charged with the planning and organization of the annual convention. The membership of the Convention Committee changes with each convention but will include at least

representatives from the previous year's convention, the current year's convention, the upcoming year's convention, the Executive Director and the President.

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

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

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

1. Receive proposed amendments or suggestions from a member, a chapter, or the Board.
2. Study, draft, or redraft proposed amendments as appropriate.
3. Make a recommendation to the Board as to their disposition.
4. Periodically review the bylaws to identify needed amendments, or rescissions.

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

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

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

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

Membership and Chapter Development Committee Charged with supporting individual members and chapters. Membership support: building an outreach campaign and supporting new and existing members to include orientation of independent members and connecting members to local chapters. Chapter support: assist in the chartering, formation, and ongoing support of VFP chapters and providing support and assistance to reinvigorate inactive chapters. Staff provide direct assistance to the committee by verifying veterans' status, providing reports, and issuing charters and related paperwork. Due to the intense workload of this committee, it shall include a steering committee made up of two members of the Board of Directors (chair and co-chair of the committee), two members of staff (the executive director and membership coordinator) and one member at large as appointed by the President of the Board of Directors. Additional members can serve to help support the committee's goals as needed.

Transformative Justice Committee: Charged with overseeing the internal health of the organization, to include continued exploration of Transformative and Restorative Justice, updates to the Code of Conduct based on member input, and investigating complaints and grievances about members and chapters. Because of the sensitive nature of this committee's work, this committee will be composed of members with a specific background in restorative justice, misconduct/harassment investigations, social work, or

other applicable areas. The committee shall work to ensure that our Code of Conduct and Misconduct/Harassment policies and procedures are transparent and serve the needs of our community.

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

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

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

Next Board meeting: February 17th, 2023