

Dear Veterans For Peace Comrades and Friends,

It's been several months since the VFP Board elected its current officers: Jeremiah Knowles-Vice President, Joshua Shurley-Secretary, and Mike Tork-Treasurer. Together we have worked as a team to face a number of crises and difficult issues. During this time, we have maintained transparency regarding board decisions and functioning. As you know, we have opened the monthly board meetings to VFP members, with public comments welcomed at the beginning of the meetings. Minutes are now publicly posted as soon as they are approved at the following meeting.

Our first major issue occurred in February when the Executive Committee reviewed our national bank account and discovered that 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.

The agendas for the Board meetings are set by the Executive Committee several days prior to the monthly meetings, requesting recommendations for additional items from board members. We have also been meeting the Friday prior to the board meetings to join together in a community circle during which interpersonal and political issues are aired and discussed. With the assistance of Jeremiah Knowles, the board members have maintained civility and respect, giving everyone the opportunity to speak without interruption, and calling for votes on major issues.

National and International Issues

Nuclear weapons are illegal under international law with the ratification of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) one year ago. The United States refuses to sign this binding treaty. Veterans For Peace issued its Nuclear Posture Review that included full spectrum cooperation, calling on the U.S. to implement a verifiable No First Use Policy, take nuclear missiles off hair trigger alert, and remove the sole authority of the president to launch a nuclear war. VFP is also calling on the U.S. to sign the TPNW. Please join us in this effort by writing letters to the editor of your paper, informing your elected officials of your support, educating your communities.

VFP's most visible example of its anti-nuclear and peace position is ocean going sailboat the Golden Rule. For the past several years, there had been substantial disagreement among members of the VFP board regarding the costs and benefits to VFP of maintaining the Golden

Rule. We did a financial analysis of costs over the past year 2021. We agreed to continue taking fiscal responsibility for operating costs and insurance. Additional costs for salary for the manager of the Golden Rule were raised independently. The Golden Rule had a successful trip from northern California to San Diego with major publicity in the San Diego Tribune and San Francisco Chronicle and even Stars and Stripes. Starting in September the Golden Rule will begin a 2-year Great Loop project traveling the Mississippi, the East Coast, and the Great Lakes. It continues to be our most visible and popular educational symbol for nuclear disarmament, under sails of VFP and peace.

We have been actively involved with a number of peace coalitions and developed positions on the crisis between Russia and Ukraine. It is clear that the role of the war industries complex is the major winner in the current war between Russia and Ukraine. VFP denounces Russia's invasion of Ukraine, recognizes the role of NATO in the development of the current situation, and is respectful of the multiple analyses and opinions within our organization.

VFP is a major supporter of the War Industry Resisters Network (WIRN).

The draft VFP Strategic Plan has been completed. A number of focus groups have been organized to review the plan for feedback and further refinement.

VFP's Climate Crisis and U.S. Militarism National Project continues to educate our members and the public about the connections between global warming and habitat destruction and the U.S. military.

There are many statements the national organization could issue regarding recent decisions by the Supreme Court. Please let the Board know how you think we could address them: whether about corporate destruction of the environment, violating the right to individual choice, gun proliferation, voting rights, etc. During the public comment of the Board meeting June 25th a VFP member asked for the national organization to take a stand against the Court's ruling on Roe v Wade. We brought together an intergenerational committee that worked for four days, struggling to write a statement representative of the concerns and values of the national organization.

Recent agendas for the board include reports from board liaisons regarding Committee work, and status of National Projects and working groups. In order to improve communication between the board and chapters, Garrett has developed an assignment sheet for each board member's responsibility to attend chapter meetings and identify members' concerns.

The board has conducted a review of suggested changes to the VFP By Laws including converting one veteran seat on the board to that for an associate member. Jeff Paterson, chair of the By Laws Committee will summarize each and present the Board's recommendation and vote when the decision was not unanimous approval.

Roger Waters has embarked on his last North American concert tour called [*This is Not A Drill*](#)—Roger's way of issuing a call to action. He has reached out to some long-time activists, members of Veterans For Peace—specifically the staff of Peace and Planet News (PPN) who have printed 35,000 copies of newspapers for distribution at Roger's concerts, Roger was disgusted by the veterans who participated in the violent overtly fascist attack on the capitol on January 6th and has been calling attention to veterans who stand with him as anti-fascists and nonviolent activists for peace, justice and truth. PPN staffers have been driving long distances to attend the concerts and organize VFP members in local chapters to do the tabling. They have worked with Roger's staff to make sure the relationship is well coordinated and have shipped papers and materials all over the country. The group has coordinated with Ban Killer Drones and the climate change and anti-militarism national project to make sure that their materials are distributed at the concerts along with the newspapers.

Additional Board Issues

Recent agendas for the board include reports from board liaisons regarding Committee work and status of National Projects and working groups.

In order to improve communication between the board and chapters, Garrett has assigned each board member a chapter to contact and discuss their current issues and offer to attend that chapter meeting to identify members' concerns.

The board has conducted a review of suggested changes to the VFP By-Laws including converting one veteran seat on the board to that for an associate member. Jeff Paterson, chair of the By-Laws Committee will summarize each and present the Board's recommendation and vote when the decision was not unanimous approval.

Garrett will be discussing the terrific work of the national staff on a number of projects-and, specifically on helping to make this year's convention a success.

On the board we continue to work on intergenerational issues in our organization. One of our goals as a board is to honor and make effective use of the contributions of all generations involved in the organization. Older members have long histories of organizing and dedication. Younger members have new ideas, different vantage points, new ideas and great energy. As a result, we also create misunderstandings, resentment, anger. We must organize our collective strengths to overcome our differences to become a more effective veteran voice for peace.

Thank You.