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## Veterans For Peace Board of Directors

### Approved Meeting Minutes

January 2024 - Present

For View Only Access at [www.veteransforpeace.org](http://www.veteransforpeace.org)

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

**Not yet approved**

**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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:gerrycondon@veteransforpeace.org).

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

**Adjournment:** 1:57 pm CT

## 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](http://bit.ly/protest-airshows) FMI: [garyvfp@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](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/1xr2rN7kK1tcHqSxY7M4dgA6eksys7II1OPtvDJ8oR14/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](http://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](http://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 listserve 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 70<sup>th</sup> 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/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 Palestine. 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](mailto: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](http://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

airs shows this year. Here is an instagram video by 350.org slamming the military's contribution to pollution: [https://www.instagram.com/reel/C3I0E\\_CJ6-t/](https://www.instagram.com/reel/C3I0E_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 observer 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](http://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/liaisons 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.

—END Feb 2024 Notes—

  
**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 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023