



VETERANS FOR PEACE, CHAPTER 27
1806 Riverside Ave. #3A
Minneapolis, MN 55454

Minutes of Meeting - Final March 8, 2015

Attendance: Jim Brown, Steve Gates, Dick Foley, Dave Logsdon, George Mische, Charlie Bloss, Barry Riesch, Larry Johnson, Craig Wood, Wayne Wittman, Mary McNellis, DJ Synnoeve, Mike Madden, Vern Hall.

*Meeting called to order at 5:30 pm by Vice President Mike Madden.

* Statement of purpose read by student intern DJ Synnoeve, moment of silence observed, members check-in, Health updates (*Lydia, John*).

Secretary's report: Approval for minutes of February's meeting was postponed. In the absence of Secretary Ron Staff, student intern DJ Synnoeve volunteered to take meeting notes.

Treasure's report: Approved. Barry moved, Wayne second it.

Committee reports

1) Membership: Barry spoke of the Augsburg tabling. Dave suggested maybe doing it 4 times a month? Dave said members were doing a good job of networking, and wearing the "logo". He's been trying to establish a relationship with Mike Matson, a pastor at Augsburg who has a lot of connections. Dave wants to work with him on a "listening post" to connect with younger vets.

2) Education: Dave discussed the Drone Quilt Project and getting the high schools involved; also discussed success in the distribution of peace-themed books to area Little Free Libraries. He and DJ pasted cards inside with the VFP mission statement. The Chapter now owns a copy of "Beyond the Divide" and now have the rights to show it. Drone quilt project-> getting high schools involved. Larry reported that the World storytelling event on March 20th went very well. The presentations were powerful, the discussions afterward were very interesting.

3) Fundraising letter: Dave reported it wasn't so much a "fundraising letter", but an invitation to join in the peace making process. The focus is to touch base with churches and work together; if they choose to give us financial support all the better. Raffle tickets need to be ordered; we need to contact Rob to see where he's at on that. Dave will do event signups. Who is willing to table or volunteer for the raffle? A sign-up sheet was passed around.

4) Communications: There is a need for more communication meetings. Newsletter needs to be sent out by March 21. Hoping to get it out before because of the 20th March event. Writing an article about Pope Francis? Getting in touch with the two Kellogg middle schools, possibly speaking?

5) SOAWatch: Mary and Wayne reported the bus trip is on. The hard part is collecting the money and filling the seats.

6) MAP: Mary reported that the next membership meeting is Tuesday April 14 at the Plymouth Congregational Church. Starting in April meetings will begin at 11:00 AM, a half hour earlier.

She explained that Sook Holdridge, of the MAP leadership team, asked for MAP member organizations to sign on to the Charter for Compassion. It is an international coalition, a Call to Action, urging a more global perspective by all those involved in particular religions, faith traditions and interfaith efforts. That global perspective is the realization that all human beings – not just those with whom we share a community – urgently need our compassion, and the conviction that we must act to provide such compassion wherever there is suffering. In short, "treating all others as we wish to be

treated.” Membership does not entail any fees, only opportunities to partner with other organizations to facilitate the connection of people who share the hope of making a difference. **Mary made a motion for VFP #27 to sign on.**

Seconded. Motion passed.

Sook also requested support for “MN Peace Action” to lobby Washington on issues important to all MAP members. He asked which issues we would most like to focus on: Repeal of the 2001 AUMF? Opposing further sanctions on Iran? The Israel/Palestine issue? Human rights violations in Ethiopia? The military budget? Military disarmament? Ukraine? A bill to outlaw torture? The group consensus was that we support all of the above with the exception of “a bill to outlaw torture”. The US already has an air-tight law prohibiting torture, which we need to enforce, rather than trying to pass something else that could weaken the laws we already have.

Larry mentioned MAP is sponsoring a student essay writing contest, more details to come.

7) Direct Action: Bruce, Craig and Dave reported that the protest action at Creech, NV was a good and solid event. 6-8 people were working handing out flyers, giving the drone operators something to think about, the message being “We are veterans, we are not against you, we are against drones.” Direct action on the 3rd day, made a big impact as well as working together with other organizations. 32 people chose to get arrested.

8) Arts: Steve Gates reported that he and Chante Wolf will be participating Arts and healing, compass center for healing on March 21st in Stillwater for the Arts and Healing Forum. A three-day affair, there will be a variety of speakers, sessions on meditation, yoga, tai chi, private bodywork mini-treatments, and concerts featuring flute, harp and percussion. Steve and Chante’s presentation will focus on how art can help people suffering from trauma, depression and suicidal ideation. It can be particularly valuable for veterans with PTSD, those having trouble reentering society. They plan to do a bell-ringing at the conclusion. Free, everybody welcome.

9) Strategic Action Committee: No report.

10) Nielson Fund Committee meeting cancelled, and reassigned to March 18th. Discussion on what to spend the money on? Is it a burden or help? Should we send it back? Homework assignment: think about options for usage of the money.

New business:

1) Mary has taken over eBlast responsibilities from Greg. She expressed a goal of sending out a weekly eBlast and asked for member input on subject matter. Justin is trained and in line as a back-up.

2) Dave expressed gratitude to DJ for her helpfulness in stuffing church letters, pasting VFP Mission statements in Little Library books and helping him drive around distributing them. He is still collecting books and asks people to bring in their suitable VFP-subject used books.

3) The meeting with Al Franken was cancelled due to Al being out of town.

4) Grant writing seminar meeting: Mary reported that we need to have a concrete project in mind. Early brainstorming included ideas such as * Funding an art/writing retreat (ala Red Wing Art Retreat last summer), * purchasing a mobile vehicle/office, * relocating office (operational grant), *in lieu of moving office purchase and install a lift for disabled members, * Events: using funds for events such as Beyond the Divide or other movie screenings, Peacestock or similar, Storytelling event, *Speaker fees for said events, * Art project such as making bells or drone quilts, *sponsorship of peace-related activities. There are undoubtedly other uses, all suggestions welcome. Mary suggested it would be useful to survey the membership on what their Top 5 priorities are and is working on combining the various member databases to facilitate doing this.

5) Full Disclosure – May 1st deadline: No report

6) National Convention Workshops: Barry has registered our Chapter.

7) MayDay parade permit: Mary is planning to download application and send in check. Deadline is April 17.

Respectfully submitted, with assistance from D.J. Synnoeve,
Mary McNellis

Veterans For Peace Ch27 Treasurer`s Report
3-1-to 3-31-2015

3-1-2015 checking, petty cash, savings total \$7,122.52

Expenses

| check # | date | Payee | Purpose | |
|---------|------|--------------|-----------------|----------|
| 5615 | 3/3 | Century Link | Tec service | \$110.32 |
| 5616 | 3/3 | NCLP | rent | \$625.00 |
| 5617 | 3/19 | D. Logsdon | promotional mat | \$224.29 |
| 5618 | 3/26 | Carlson | printing N/L | \$881.13 |
| 5619 | 3/26 | Carlson | postage N/L | \$113.16 |
| 5620 | 3/26 | Carlson | raffle tickets | \$725.75 |
| 5621 | 3/27 | Century link | Tec service | \$110.30 |

Total Income \$2,789.95

Donations \$1133.08

Opening Balance \$7,122.52 + income of \$1,133.08 = \$8,255.60 - Expenses \$2,789.95 = \$5,465.65

Closing balance : savings, petty cash, and checking account \$5,465.65

Nielsen bequest in escrow \$10,000.00. Available only for the purchase of a building

VFP #27 Communications Committee

Thursday April 2, 2015 7:00 PM

Notes of Meeting

Attendance: Dave, Craig, Steve G, Barry, Steve M, Mary, Wayne

1) discussion about monthly meeting minutes

Motion: Send member letter including minutes "Draft, pending approval". **Seconded and Approved**

2) discussion regarding combining data bases

Mary has combined National's list and Gerald's database, added Mailchimp names and has Wayne's list to add those names not already on this master list. She needs to get Larry's old lists. Larry couldn't be present but wrote: "... a note on 'combining data bases'. Good. I was planning to send in something I discovered when promoting the March 20 event. I still had Bob Heberle's email list, from when he felt unable to continue, and before Dave Culver, and then Greg took it over. I also had the last list of members I got from Natl. Seems like that came, updated, fairly often. I decided to send March 20 emails to both. Found some emails no longer valid (so crossed them off), but also found many on the natl list not to be on Bob's. I realize there's some time discrepancy between those two lists, but I wonder if we automatically put official members, registered thru natl, on our email list. Certainly worth checking the latest list with our email blast list."

Who is an actual paid member? There are about 160 paid national members. Does it matter? Discussion about why it is a good thing to be a dues paying member:

- 1.Helps our chapter retain nonprofit status
- 2.Printed Material
- 3.Larger than one chapter, networking
- 4.They serve and support local chapters
- 5.National Board
- 6.National quarterly newsletter
- 7.National conference
- 8.National eBlast
- 9.position statements (i.e. Syria)
- 10.full-time staff
- 11.professional appearance/status/accountability
- 12.international presence
- 13.SOAW work
- 14.Legwork
- 15.Iraq Water Project
- 16.Treasury work

*Steve McKeown: "structurally one of the things I think that is missing is contact with National both for the newsletter and their E Blasts updates regarding our activities on a systematic basis. I believe this could be a useful endeavor..." We haven't really tapped into all that National can do for us – Mary volunteers to coordinate this with Virginia and/or Casey

*We should look into Google Chapter 92, they have a great website

*Dave said everyone should go and Facebook – like us – goal is 500.

*People who support #27 financially and energetically but don't belong to National. We appreciate them too. It would be good to know the ratio of people who join national vs. local non-dues paying supporters. We should identify lifetime members.

*Mary's: At tabling events it would be good if there was at least one person designated not for sales but to engage people in conversation, bring them to the table and inform about VFP and sign up, etc.

Motion: Buy/make 2 placards for use at tables to attract people interested in signing up, to spell out mission statement, etc. Discussion.

Mea Culpa: I don't recall if motion passed or not. Does anybody else recall?

3) news releases

*Twins opener: all day event, keep leaflets small, be there at 1 PM meet by the statues. Public sidewalk is legal for us to be on.

*Westbank office printing. Coffman Print Shop – union shop. Ask for "bug"

4) using broadcast media (KFAI, Air America 950 am, Democracy Now, MPR?)

*Steve is on next Thurs 4-9 with Don. How long is the program? Bob Hale – Vietnam vet, not a member

*Dave is tabling at Augsburg earlier on the 9th. Should ask Larry to be on. Talk about Beyond the Divide. Should we ask Michael Orange to be there?

*Is there anybody at Air America friendly to VFP? McNeill, a Marine, pro-Obama, BlueState. We need a portal to them. KFAI = Dale Connelly – Thurs AM announcements. We need to reach those "beyond the choir". How do we plug into mainstream media? MPR – need to speak to them.

5) leafletting for Beyond the Divide - everybody should place 1 or 2 or 5 places to post – if everyone does it, i.e. northern sun, American Legion, VFW we'll have a greater impact.

6) National e-blast. Vets for peace Chapter 27 password to log on is VFP1111118. Mary requests input from membership, especially core group for eBlast content subjects/news items.

7) Meet & Greet local media on Thursday April 23rd at our office? Justin sent out invite to 1000 people, only got one response. Nobody else RSVPed. Do we need to have somebody in the office that evening just in case somebody shows up?

Upcoming events:

1) Reminder to everyone: Twins Opener Monday April 13 3 PM - leaflet, invitation to Parkway Theater ("Beyond the Divide" April 30, 7PM). Meet at 1 PM on 6th Street No and 1st Ave, just west of Hennepin in front of statues.

2) World Law Day: A Special Evening with Annelee (Anneliese Solch) Woodstrom speaking on her book War Child: Growing Up in Adolph Hitler's Germany Dick Bernard: "I'd like to urge VFP to be a presence, as participants, in the attached event on **May 1**. Particularly, I am working to get individuals to bring along (sponsor) someone from the "younger" group - college, young adults and teens. Annelee has a unique perspective, very seldom heard, as laid out in the announcement. I've known her since 2003, when her book was first published. She'll speak the day following the 70th anniversary of Hitler's death, and 5 days before the 70th anniversary of Germany's surrender. I'm asking her to, in addition to her regular talk, reflect on what she remembers about 70 years ago that last week of WWII, and to also reflect on what learnings she has to pass along to us in the present day U.S. She has a powerful story. I am just now beginning to publicize this event now. Ask any questions you might have. PS: \$20 of the cost is for the meal. Gandhi Mahal restaurant deserves the support, it is supportive of progressive causes, and increasingly recognized in the broader community." FFI: <http://mapm.pjep.org/actions/World-Law-Day-May-1-2015-with-Annelee-Woodstrom>

***** *the end* *****

Notes respectfully submitted by Mary McNellis

Nielson Funds Committee

Wednesday, March 18, 2015, 7pm

VFP Office: 1806 Riverside Avenue

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Tim Hansen, Dave Logsdon, Wayne Wittman, Mike Madden

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7pm by Mike Madden.

Approval of January Minutes: The January minutes were approved as amended.

Communications with Attorney Ellen Abbott: Prior to retaining Ellen Abbott as our attorney, the estate's attorney, Donald Fluegel, had advised VFP on March 7, 2014 that he would recommend that the "\$20,000 not be paid as I understand that your organization would not be able to use it for the intended purpose". On March 17, 2014, Mr. Fluegel reiterated the requirement that the "device be used for a building" and that he needed to know our "organization's position". Without further communication that VFP was aware of, half of the bequest was paid on June 2, 2014.

On January 23, 2015, the NFC sent a request to Ms. Abbott regarding her communications with VFP and the Nielson estate. She responded on January 30, 2015 that she had received only one written communication from the estate. Part of that communication was a memo from Donald Fluegel providing Ms. Abbott with the phone number for a confidant of Mr. Nielson which she had previously requested.

On February 5, 2015, the NFC sent a second email to Ms. Abbott asking if she had informed the estate, by any means of communication, as to how VFP intended to use the bequest. There has been no response to date, and President Logsdon has informed the committee that she is on a two month vacation. The committee will renew its request in early April. Logsdon also noted that Mr. Fluegel is on the board of Winds for Peace, which is a principle benefactor in the Nielson will.

Suggested Uses for the Bequest: At this juncture, the NFC is examining potential uses for the bequest in light their benefits to Chapter 27. Reviewing suggestions made previously at the committee and membership level, the NFC eliminated the following options from consideration:

1. A mobile home
2. A garage or tree house
3. An addition to an existing building
4. An RV (recreational vehicle)
5. Co-mingling the funds with another organization for the purpose of purchasing a building

Options retained by the committee include:

1. Purchase a building outright (\$20,000 or less)
2. Purchase a building with a mortgage
3. Purchase a cabin or retreat space up north
4. Long term lease of building
5. Purchase a mid-size vehicle (step van or small bus)
6. Give the money back
7. Negotiate less restrictive terms with the estate for use of the money

The drawbacks to purchasing a building include property taxes, insurance, maintenance, closing costs, and finding a person to put their name on the mortgage. Wittman offered the difficulties experienced by the Peace House on Portland Avenue as an example of the headaches ownership can entail.

Drawbacks to purchasing a vehicle include insurance, gas, and maintenance. Logsdon said storage would not be a problem as the size of vehicle under consideration could be stored at his house. Madden said that any building purchased as a retreat must serve the organization's mission and not merely be a perk for board members.

The committee listed the following organizations as possible recipients of the money if VFP could not meet the terms of the will and arrangements could be made with them that would:

1. Habitat for Humanity
2. Doctors Without Borders
3. Iraq Water Project
4. Courage to Resist
5. Lawyer's Guild
6. Winds of Peace
7. KFAI
8. VFP National

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:29pm.

Submitted by,
Mike Madden