

VFP CHAPTER 69 BYLAWS

Veterans Speakers Alliance/
Veterans For Peace, Chapter 69, San Francisco
Adopted at regular Chapter meeting July 16, 2013

ARTICLE I. Origin, Name, Legal Foundation

Section 1. Origin:

In 1983, as vicious covert US wars against several Central America countries were under way, about a dozen veterans in San Francisco formed Veterans Speakers Alliance (VSA). It seemed that the US was about to send troops to invade, and VSA thought that young men and women who might soon be fighting should at least be given access to accurate information about the military and the true costs of war. VSA began providing combat-veteran speakers to high school and college classes, as well as engaging on numerous anti-war actions.

In 1985, a Veterans For Peace, Inc. was formed in Portland, Maine, and quickly became a national organization with many dozens of chapters. In 1994, Veterans Speakers Alliance decided to become a chapter of the national organization, and became Chapter 69 of Veterans For Peace.

There were local organizations in the late 1960's, whose members opposed the Viet Nam War, that used the name Veterans for Peace; there was, however, no national Veterans for Peace at that time.

Section 2. Name:

Veterans For Peace Chapter 69's formal name is Veterans Speakers Alliance/Veterans For Peace Chapter 69, San Francisco, however in many usage forms (including certain legal and/or financial documents, the title is sometimes abbreviated as VSA/VFP 69, Veterans For Peace Chapter 69, or VFP-69.

Section 3. Legal Foundation:

Veterans For Peace, Inc. (www.veteransforpeace.org) (herein sometimes referred to as VFP or VFP National) was incorporated in Maine in 1985, and was given 501(c) (3) status under provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, a designation that also applies to Veterans For Peace chapters.

Individual chapters within Veterans For Peace, Inc. each operates with its own bylaws, mandated (under Article XII, Section 6 of the VFP National bylaws), "to mirror those of national VFP where appropriate and shall adhere to principles of democracy and openness."

ARTICLE II. Statement of Purpose/ Statement of Nonviolence

The Mission of Veterans Speakers Alliance, Veterans For Peace Chapter 69, is close to that of VFP National, namely:

Section 1: Statement of Purpose:

We, having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace. To this end we will work, with others

- To increase public awareness of the costs of war
- To restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations
- To end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons

- To seek justice for veterans and victims of war
- To abolish war as an instrument of national policy.

Section 2: Statement of Nonviolence:

To achieve these goals, members of VFP-69 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. In working toward the achievement of such goals, we have also adopted a Statement of Nonviolence, which shall be in effect at such times when members are participating in actions or marches as members of VFP, or as part of a VFP delegation, or otherwise representing or identifying as a member of VFP.

- We will use our anger at injustice as a positive nonviolent force for change.
- We will not vandalize.
- We will refrain from insults and swearing.
- We will not assault, either verbally or physically, those who oppose or disagree with us.
- We will protect even those who oppose us from insult or attack.
- Our attitude as conveyed through words, symbols and actions will be one of openness, friendliness, and respect toward all people we encounter including police officers, military personnel, members of the larger community and all marchers.
- We will carry no weapons.
- As members of a nonviolent demonstration, we will cooperate with the designated coordinators.
- In the event of a serious disagreement, we will remove ourselves from the action.

ARTICLE III. Membership

Section 1 – Membership Requirements:

- In alignment with National VFP Membership, VFP Chapter 69 Membership includes Full Members (i.e. Veteran members) and Associate Members (i.e. non-veterans).
- All persons who maintain “Member in Good Standing” status and paid-in-full National VFP Membership dues automatically retain equal and concurrent Chapter Membership.
- The option to maintain membership in Chapter 69 (without maintaining National VFP membership) is also available. The annual dues for Chapter Only Membership shall be set at 50% of the National Dues, for both Full and Associate applicants. Chapter Only Members may vote in all Chapter votes and elections, and hold Chapter Office; but will not appear on the National VFP Roster, and have no standing for National VFP voting.

Section 2 – Rights & Responsibilities of Membership:

- Members in good standing shall have the right to vote on all matters before the chapter.
- Members who maintain active membership with VFP National have additional rights to participate in VFP National matters in accordance with provisions of the VFP National bylaws

ARTICLE IV. Officers and Board of Directors, Elections and Terms of Office

Section 1. Officers.

- a. The Board of Directors of VFP-69 shall be comprised of the following Chapter Officers:
 - President (must be Full Member)
 - Vice President (must be Full Member)
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Director of Membership
- b. Unless specifically authorized by a chapter meeting vote, no board member shall hold more than one board office at the same time. In no case shall the President also be the Treasurer.

Section 2. Election of Officers:

- a. Nominations for chapter officers shall be opened at the regular December meeting in even-numbered years. If there is no December meeting, nominations shall be opened during the regular November meeting.
- b. During nominations any chapter member in good standing may be nominated for any chapter office that they qualify for. No 'second' is required for nomination; however all persons nominated shall state if he or she accepts the nomination and, if elected, is available and prepared to fill the duties of the office.
- c. Finalized nominations and election of officers shall be the first practicable agenda item during the regular January meeting of V FP-69 in odd-numbered years.
- d. Officers must receive a majority (50% + 1) of votes cast. Immediate runoff elections will be made between top two candidates for each position if none receives a majority.
- e. Newly elected officers shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the January meeting.
- f. Chapter officers serve at the pleasure of the membership, and can be removed or replaced by a 2/3 majority of members at any regular meeting.
- g. Officers shall serve for a two-year term, or, in the event of an interim election, shall serve for the period remaining until the next scheduled election (i.e. January of the next odd-numbered year.)

Section 3. Voting Rights and Voting Procedures:

- a. Only chapter members in good standing have voting rights for chapter business.
- b. Since there are often numerous guests at meetings, all votes determined by the President (or meeting chair) to be of sufficient substance or controversy shall be taken by a method known as Standing Vote.
- c. In this method, before the vote, all members in good standing will be asked to stand, thereby individually affirming that they qualify as members in good standing (as described in Article III Section 1b, above). While members remain standing, the meeting chair will administer votes by requesting a raised hand so that members can signal their vote. The Secretary shall count and record the vote on all matters (including election of officers) by recording (number of yeas, nays, and abstentions).

d. A simple majority (of members voting) rules, in all instances, unless otherwise specified herein.

ARTICLE V. Primary Duties of Officers

Section 1. Primary Duties of the Chapter President:

The primary duties of the President include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Preside over the general meetings of the chapter and meetings of the board of directors (including electronic meetings).
- b. Author the agenda for chapter meetings.
- c. Exercise oversight responsibility of chapter officers, committees, and functions to ensure that all activities are within the mandate of the chapter as expressed in these Bylaws and by vote in chapter meetings.
- d. Represent the chapter to the public other chapters, and the VFP National (as authorized by the chapter or board of directors).
- e. Sign official correspondence of the chapter, or, when impractical, authorize Secretary to sign "For the President".
- f. At start of term and each year, present goals, plans, and budget for the chapter for discussion and adoption by the chapter.
- g. The President shall have a vote in all board of directors' votes. For chapter meeting votes, the President is only required to vote to break a tie.

Section 2. Primary Duties of the Vice-President:

The primary duties of the Vice President include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Fulfill the duties of the President at such times when the President is absent or otherwise unavailable to execute duties of the President.
- b. The Vice President shall be responsible for the orderly organization and maintenance of the chapter office. This includes the establishing appropriate mail collection locations, maintenance of communication equipment, coordination of website content, safe storage of all chapter property, record keeping for keys to the office, and general office security.

Section 3. Primary Duties of the Secretary:

The primary duties of the Secretary include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Creating and disseminating the meeting notes of the chapter as an official record of its proceedings. Meeting notes are to be distributed to the chapter membership, within two weeks after subject meeting. Notes and other correspondence can be distributed by electronic means when appropriate.
- b. Keep archives of meeting minutes, correspondence, and other written work products of

the chapter.

Section 4. Primary Duties of the Treasurer:

The primary duties of the Treasurer include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Keeping accurate and current financial records of the chapter.
- b. Maintain chapter bank accounts, including a monthly reconciliation of all account records.
- c. Make all chapter financial records available to any member in good standing upon request, with reasonable and convenient arrangements.
- d. Deposit incoming chapter funds into appropriate accounts.
- e. Disburse chapter funds, as authorized by approved budget or chapter vote.
- f. Prepare and deliver a monthly finance report to chapter. Report shall include (at a minimum), current balance of accounts and current payables to reflect the general chapter financial condition.
- g. Assist President in creation of an annual budget.

Section 5. Primary Duties of the Director of Membership:

The primary duties of the Director of Membership include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Maintain and update chapter membership lists and reconcile discrepancies with membership staff of VFP National.
- b. Outreach to lapsed VFP members to encourage membership renewals and to chapter members to encourage them to contribute voluntary Chapter dues.
- c. Outreach to non-member veterans in the Bay Area to encourage them to join the chapter

Section 6. Primary Duties of the Board of Directors:

The primary duties of the Board of Directors include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Assisting President in setting general direction and goals for the chapter.
- b. Decisions for the chapter on issues that cannot be postponed until the next regular chapter meeting, such decisions to be reported to the membership at the following meeting.

ARTICLE VI. Meetings

Section 1. – Monthly Public Meeting:

The general meetings of the Chapter shall be held on a monthly schedule as set from time to time by the membership at a regular meeting. All membership meetings shall be open to the public.

Section 2. Special Membership Meetings:

Special meetings may be called by the President or by the board of directors. The purpose of the special meeting shall be stated in the call. Except in cases of emergency, at least three days' notice shall be given. Changes in these bylaws or election of officers cannot be made during special meetings.

Section 3. Quorum to Transact Chapter Business:

The quorum threshold of chapter meetings is defined as follows:

a. A quorum to transact chapter business at a regular chapter meeting or a properly scheduled and announced special meeting is defined as the presence of at least two of the Board of Directors plus a minimum of five chapter members in good standing.

b. A quorum to transact chapter business amongst the board of directors is defined as the presence or participation of a minimum of three of the five members of the board. In the event of a tie vote on any issue, the vote of the remaining board members must be obtained to declare a decision on the subject issue.

Section 4. Meeting Attendance by Board:

Members of the board of directors are expected to attend, as far as is possible, each regular or special meeting of the chapter.

ARTICLE VII. Committees and Leadership Assignments

With chapter approval, the President may create other positions and committees to address specific tasks and challenges.

ARTICLE VIII. Parliamentary Authority

The Condensed Version of Roberts Rules, as published by San Diego State University may be used as a reference guide to conduct meetings. The overriding purposes in the use of Robert's Rules are to facilitate democracy, accountability, and openness, while maintaining forward motion through an agenda.

These bylaws may be amended at any regular membership meeting of VFP Chapter 69, by a two-thirds vote of members in good standing in attendance; provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing to at least one previous general meeting.

In addition, the chair, or the meeting as a whole, may choose to give every attendee a brief period with a time limit, to comment without interruption or debate, on a topic of importance.

---END---