

VFN Board Meeting Minutes

January 6 – 7, 2020

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The VFN Board of Directors meeting convened at 10:01 AM, January 6, 2020, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, 1021 Koger Center Blvd, Richmond, VA; VFN President Dr. Constance Bails presiding.

Attendees:

Dr. Constance Bails, President
Leslie Ravenell, Immediate Past President
Maureen “Moe” Nolet, 1st VP
Karen Cheatwood, Secretary
William “Bill” Martin, Treasurer
Jeanne Garrison, Area I AVP
Julia Hobbs, Area II AVP
Raymond Orland, Area IV AVP
Mark Fisher, Area VI AVP
Luther Santiful, Area VII AVP
Mary Heck, Area VIII AVP
Patricia Jack, Area IX AVP
Ted Pasek, Area X AVP

Gaston Gianni, National Legislative Chair
Arlene Arthur, Service Chair
Bob Martin, State Legislative Chair
Donna Shackelford, Alzheimer’s Chair
Frances Boatman, Membership
Doris McAdams, Public Relations Chair

Non-Voting:

William Shackelford, Region X Vice President
John Bails, Sgt.-at-Arms/Network Coordinator
Marilyn Riddle, Chaplain

Non-Attendees (voting):

Eddie Eitches, 2nd VP

Wynn Hasty, Area III AVP

Call to Order, Invocation and Pledge: Dr. Bails called the meeting to order at 10:01 am. Marilyn Riddle gave the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda: President Bails presented the agenda which was approved unanimously.

Minutes of Oct 2019 VFN Board Meeting: Corrections were received from Moe and Frances Boatman. The minutes were approved as corrected.

Region X Report: Bill Shackelford reported on the National Executive Board (NEB) meeting Nov 6 – 8, 2019:

- RVP Shackelford is strictly a volunteer for any meeting with the exception of conferences and NEB meetings. This is the result of the NEB cutting all travel for the RVPs and NARFE staff to \$0.
 - As it related to the VFN conference, no staff from headquarters, with the exception of the President and Secretary/Treasurer, will be able to attend/present at the conference unless we are willing to cover their costs of travel.
 - The August ballot will include a referendum to cut the RVPs salary in half starting in 2022 and eliminate it starting in 2023.
 - The ballot will also entail a vote to cut the funds that go the federation from membership dues from 10% to 5%.
 - Additionally, there is a proposal to increase dues from \$40 to \$48/year. This will also have to be voted on in August.

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- Per request, minutes of the NEB meeting were provided.
- Status – Since November 18th, 54 chapters have closed.
- Jessica Klement is heading up a committee to develop a NAFE legislative plan for the 117th Congress. Gaston Gianni is the VFN representative to this committee.
- The fiscal issues for the organization are due to reliance on investment income rather than operating income and especially the drop in membership
- Questions from attendees included:
 - Has headquarters explored the possibility of merging with other organizations? Response was possibly but they also have issues.
 - What is being done at headquarters to increase membership?
 - Today IT is a partner in a successful organization, it isn't a support strategy. Considering the issues with AMS, what is NARFE doing in this regard?
- Connie indicated that the Federation needs to work on where new members are registered; we need to give 110% to get new members into our chapters. She asked the group to come up with initiatives that headquarters should take the lead on and the VFN will support.

President's Comments:

- Dr Bails reported on activities to support the VFN:
 - Attended meeting with over 10 chapters in the last 2 months.
 - She is very interested in setting up some VFN training and having facetime with members in Virginia
 - The VFN newsletter is on the web and has been sent out to all members
 - She would like to have attendees consider ways to contact those members that don't use a computer or other electronic communication
 - President Bails is getting good feedback regarding the information that is sent directly to all members

Summary of Executive Committee meeting: Karen Cheatwood reported that the discussions at the executive board meeting were on the agenda for the full board. The issues that the executive committee will present include additional funds for the President's travel budget and an out of cycle voucher that was submitted for 2018 training.

Treasurer's Report: Bill Martin provided the following information:

- Bill handed out pages updating quarterly status reports
- He recommended the reports be adjusted so that the Immediate Past President's budget be moved to the executive committee as she is a member. He also recommended that the budget for the Parliamentarian be moved to the executive report.
- Bill provided an update on approved vouchers that he has received and said that he will work with anyone that has questions on their personal vouchers later in the day.
 - He reiterated Voucher 101 procedures for preparing expense vouchers, the form and answered any questions. Additionally, it is important to submit your vouchers to PresidentBails@VANARFE.org with **Vouchers** in the subject line.

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- Bill will be out of commission for 2 weeks in February so please provide time for processing.
- Connie noted that out of ordinary voucher claims need to get approval before hand to see if the VFN has the funds.
 - One check will be if the activity is within your position description. If not, definitely get approval ahead of time.
- Stan Palen asked if he could purchase software that is covered in his budget. Request was approved by President Bails.
- Motion was made to accept the treasurer's report for review and audit. Motion was seconded and passed.

Additional Financial Agenda Items:

- Karen reported on the Executive Committee recommendation that an additional \$3,000 be moved to the President's Budget. Gaston moved that the funds be transferred from the Region X conference budget as there was money available. Motion was seconded and carried by unanimous vote.
- Karen also reported on a 2018 Invoice for training that was conducted by the VFN. Leslie indicated that since she had appointed Dr. Bails as the training coordinator, she needs to submit the invoice for payment.
 - Attendees were reminded that the training was held in 3 areas within the state and trained just under 100 members.
 - The invoice is for \$1626.33 and the executive board was recommending paying this invoice.
 - Gaston moved that the invoice be paid. The motion was seconded and passed by the full board.

Bylaws Update:

- Karen provided an update that the VFN Bylaws including changes approved at the 2019 Conference were signed and approved by the National Secretary/Treasurer on January 1, 2020.
 - The changes that were made as a result of many recommendation from headquarters included both revisions to the already approved by laws and the VFN submitted updates.
 - Connie did a lot of facetime and communications to get them approved and signed.
- Leslie informed everyone that headquarters should have only be reviewing and requesting changes to the updates submitted and not to the Bylaws that ere approved the previous year. Something the remember for the future.

1st Vice President Comments & AVP Reports: Maureen Nolet reported:

- Area I – Since Oct 1st, Jeanne Garrison attended 4 visited 4 chapters and installed officers for 3 of them. Connie installed the officers for the remaining chapter.
 - She has 1 chapter tat takes off I Jan/Feb/Mar which is an idea other chapters may want to consider.
 - There is also a chapter that has co-presidents. Something else to think about.

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- Area II – Julia Hobbs reported they have accomplished many items in support of membership, working tables at health fairs such as the Coast Guard base in Chesapeake and the Army Corps of Engineers in Norfolk.
 - She attended Christmas Luncheons and installed chapter officers.
 - Needs to check on the Eastern Shore chapter to determine the status of chapter efforts.
- Area III – Wynn Hasty (also the VP of Petersburg). Wynn was unable to attend.
- Area IV – Ray Orland reported that he is no longer the President of the Suffolk chapter; Dillard Horton is taking over that position. Ray will be the chapter secretary.
- Area VI – Mark Fisher joined the Roanoke chapter in their membership drive at the health fair.
 - Chapter 1837, Highland Trail has closed and submitted the paperwork to do so. HHe was advised that the chapter isn't closed until headquarters say that is the case because they need to stop monthly payments to the chapter checking account before it can close.
 - Chapter 1134, New River Valley is starting the closing process. They are currently giving members the choice of what they'd rather move to another chapter or become National only.
- Area VII – Luther Santiful reported that all chapters are doing reasonably well. He is currently doing officer installation.
 - Luther indicated that the most effective meeting is when you have Blue Cross or GEHA as the program.
 - Jeanne Garrison suggested having all 3 of the big health plan representatives come to the same meeting rather than 1 each month in Sept, Oct and Nov. Also as they are Affinity Partners with NARFE, outside members/visitors can be invited to the meetings.
- Area VIII – Mary Heck reported that Falls Run is working things out to move forward. She is working on ideas and suggestions with them.
 - The Fredericksburg chapter had someone stand up as VP and the other chapters in her area are doing okay.
- Leslie noted that the F-7 still needs to be updated, if headquarters gets a complete F-7 nothing else is done so chapters can still keep running with the members who want to have/plan meeting but not be a named officer. If anyone needs help updating their chapter F-7, call headquarters and ask for help.
- Area IX – Pat Jack noted that the Springfield chapter is in trouble even though it has approximately 600 members. Chapter 232 is closing, no one wants to restart it.
- Area X – Ted Pasek reported that they did a \$25 gift card raffle for non-members only. The winner has been contacted.
 - Chapter 737 is working on an Alzheimer walk in Manassas.
 - Dulles chapter received their audit information.
 - There are a couple of shaky chapters but he is working on it.

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- Luther Santiful is the lead for preparing a handbook for AVPs, it needs to include a chapter for vouchers and the process for closing chapters.

Program Reports: Note: Eddie Eitches was not at the meeting.

- National Legislative – Gaston Gianni advised that there are 3 vacancies in the CDL/SSLL positions; they include District 5 as Ray Brandenburg is stepping down, District 9 since Mary Kelly is unable to cover the position and District 10 since Jim Lynch is stepping down. He is working with a couple of prospects but looking for more.
 - No update on PAC funding at this time.
 - The National Legislative budget includes funds for CDLs/SSLs registration for the VFN Conference.
- State Legislative – Bob Martin stated that the House of Delegates and the Senate seem flipped for this session from the way they were in the past. The House seems put together while the senate is still working it out.
 - As of Jan 5th 892 bills had been filed in the state legislature. HB-1 covered early voting, there are a large number of bills on redistricting, HB-361 to provide a tax credit for family care givers, along with bills restricting cellphone use when driving.
 - State PAC funds. The plan is to watch the issues and see how delegates/senators vote; then donate funds to those running in competitive districts that voted to support those goals included in the VA Strategic Plan.
 - Jan 15th Bob was scheduled to attend the Democratic fund raiser as about 50 legislators would be there.
- Service – Arlene Arthur had received some information on chapter service officers but needed a list from each chapter. She asked the AVPs to help.
 - Arlene attended the Army Corp in Norfolk and accomplished a lot of work with the federal community there.
 - She would like to set up some training around the state and wants to work with Connie to make this happen outside of the VFN conference.
- Membership – Frances Boatman noted that chapter membership had dropped from 7,136 in Sept 2019 to 6,941 by Jan 2020 while noting that national members increased over the same period. She recommended that folks contact new members to see if they might be interested in switching to chapter membership. She stated that the VFN needs to put some effort in place to provide new member information to the chapters in this area.
 - Frances reviewed efforts at recruitment events and some of the results.
 - She would like to do some training at the conference to include recruiting and retention.
 - Frances asked the AVPs to send her a list of membership chairs.
 - Connie suggested that Frances contact the membership chairs and talk about conference training.
 - When it comes to matching funds, headquarters required the Federation Public Relations chair (For VFN Doris McAdams) be the POC when asking for matching funds.

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- Connie noted that membership is different than matching funds and the VFN needs to get a handle on this.
- Alzheimer's – Donna Shackelford provided a VFN 2019 Report electronically. If anyone would like to have it e-mails, please let the Secretary know.
 - Summarizing the report, Virginia has donated over \$61 thousand in 2019, that is more than 9 other federations.
 - In the past VA has donated over \$1.75M. It was suggested that this should be an announcement in the paper as it is good news for our organization and our state.
 - There is a new leaflet in process that shows the relationship between Alzheimer and NARFE. Donna will share it once she gets a copy.
 - January is the month to start registering for Alzheimer Walks. Once someone registers, they can also begin to collect donations. The funds donated go the local Alzheimer's organization but NARFE does get the credit.
 - The Zenith Society is the group of big \$\$ donors for Alzheimer. NARFE is the only non-profit that is a member. The rest are big companies.
- Public Relations – Doris McAdams sent Thank You notes to people who completed cards at Gerry Connelly's Health Fair in November. This lets folks know that we are interested.
 - If anyone has pictures from these activities, please send them to Doris and she will post on Facebook.
 - Doris wants to visit chapters and talk about ideas for membership.
 - She also asked for a VFN PR page that can be linked to the VFN Facebook page.
 - Input for the Spring newsletter is due April 30th.
- Nominating Committee - Marilyn Riddle provided an update that Connie and Moe agreed to run for their positions again. Bob Martin agreed to run for 2nd Vice President. They still need folks to run for Secretary and Treasurer. Nominations are due to Jim Little by Feb 6th.
- Chaplain, Marilyn Riddle asked the AVPs to send a list of deaths ASAP so she has the information in case headquarters might not be able to provide it. Please email to mriddle@cox.net
 - Bill Shackelford recommended that we still ask headquarters because chapters won't be providing national members.
- Audit Committee– Frances Boatman and the committee members were working their way through the FY19 records. They would probably have to meet another one or two times to finish the review. Note that annual review is required in the Bylaws.

Status Reports:

- **VFN Calendar:** it was recommended that each of the members of the board be given access so they could update the calendar with activities planned in their respective areas.

The Board Meeting recessed at 5:30 pm and reconvened Tuesday, Jan 7th at 8:11 am.

Federation Presidents Report: Connie is working to increase awareness of the state federation and assisting chapters so they don't feel that they are left out there alone. This is one of the reasons that she included a letter from VFN president to chapters. She recommends that they include it in the chapter newsletter.

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- President Bails brought up with Bill Shackelford about folks that are supposedly chapter members but are not showing up in the chapter lists.

Morning Updates:

- National Legislative Chair since he attended the fundraiser for Whitman 1st congressional District. As done with Connelly and Wexton, national PAC has donated funds to their campaign since they support the goals of NARFE.
- Achievement committee- Marilyn went over guidelines they are developing. Leaning towards certificates due to cost of awards. Marilyn will provide copy of draft guidelines.
 - Connie developed a certificate for Jack McMurtry as the chapter asked VFN to recognize his efforts since he had to step down due to health issues.
 - Discussion followed on the President's award that used to be done at each conference. Should these be combined with achievement committee or kept separate. Connie reason was to recognize those that people supported the VFN and left so this is a way to say Thank You to them.
 - We should be able to do a President's and a Management Award without an achievement committee.
 - Connie wanted more than 1 set of eyes on making sure those leaving know their work was appreciated, that's the purpose of the Achievement committee.
 - Should we have awards that recognize outstanding chapters? Should that be included in the guidance?

Remaining Agenda Items:

- Dick Gingerelli sent note to discuss the Bylaws proposals from the Calif Federation, which was added to the agenda. 1 - Voting Member Privileges updated the National Bylaws to state that all members can vote on National Issues, all members within a Federation can vote on Federation issues and only Chapter members can vote on chapter issues. 2 – allows discussion/debate during the National Conference prior to a ballot vote.
- There was a good bit of speculation and discussion on these proposals to include the AVPs taking the issues to their chapters. Will there be discussion in NARFE magazine. Do we address proposed bylaws changes at the April conference, possibly having a session on these and related items.
- Connie would like to have a training coordinator or add to current duties for an existing position.
 - Also need to consider costs to the VFN so adding to a current position would be more cost effective.
 - Could this be part of the 2nd Vice President's position description?
 - Had the attendees break into small groups to discuss possible ways to engage chapters and new members; suggestions included; open lines of communication from the VFN to chapters (Connie had already started on this effort), outreach by encouraging program chairs to visit chapters along with their AVP, VFN provide training, use local newspapers, establish a chapter Facebook page, advertise on 'Next Door', if a local cable channel is available use it to advertise meetings, consider using GoToMeeting as it can

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accommodate 50 people and that would help with those that can't make it to the meeting.

- With a training committee, some of these could be done. The first training should cover the structure of NARFE
- VFN Bylaws committee - Connie reminded that the committee is composed of a member from each area who is appointed for a 3 year term. Some of the current member's term has expired so she asked the AVPs to provide a nominee.
- 2020 Conference:
 - Milton will be the photographer. It was suggested that we provide bullets with expectations for photos.
 - Bulletin #1 is out and on the webpage.
 - Agenda items may include: Speakers that have been requested include someone from the FTC, Representative Spanberger and/or McEachin, a class on photography, a speaker from the Chesterfield Board of Supervisors, a session on wills and trusts, session on caregivers and talking to the elderly, New Officers training, AED training, parliamentary training, how to run meetings, an Alzheimer presentation and Greeter training. There was also discussion on asking Barb Sido to speak and possible another person from headquarters. There will be caucus meeting to select/reappoint AVPs; discuss nominating committee members and discuss area issues.
- Annual Meeting requirement and having a conference was discussed; do we go to every other year or not. A decision wasn't made.
- We were reminded that 2021 will be the 100th anniversary of NARFE. A celebration may be added to LegCon.
- Closing chapters – Leslie reminded all that you can't close a chapter until headquarters closes it as the funds going to the chapter have to be stopped.

Benediction: Marilyn Riddle led the Board in a short invocation.

Adjournment: It was moved that the meeting be adjourned, motion seconded – approved by unanimous vote. The VFN Board meeting adjourned at 11:42 pm on January 7, 2020.

Karen Cheatwood, VFN Secretary