

**Broome County Peace Action
Minutes of Meeting, October 13, 2009
Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Binghamton, New York**

1 Welcome, Agenda Review, and Revisions

1.1 The meeting was opened at 7:05 pm by Vice President, Ann Clune

1.2 **Present:** Pat Creighton, Ann Clune, Jim Clune, Larry Roberts, Jack Gilroy, George Haeseler, Sue McAnanama, Jack Sexton, Heda Libby, Herb Bix, Len Bjorkman, George Homanich, Judy Homanich, George Damasevitz, Dave Duncan, Marisi Starzmann, Doris Reed

2 Approve Minutes from September meeting

2.1 The minutes were approved as e-mailed

3 Treasurer's Report

3.1 Pat presented the treasurer's report. Balances: BCPA - \$3362.67, BCNWRC - \$389.62, STPMF - \$7571.24, BCWTRF - \$200

4 Committee reports

4.1 **Letters to the Editor – Sue McAnanama:** There were a few good letters. Sue sent newsletters to those who are not already on our list. She commented that the best letters were written by members of the Board.

4.2 **PANYS – Sue McAnanama:** Cheryl Wertz will be making a trip to upstate. She would like to meet with some of the chapters now since she is pregnant and next spring will be restrained somewhat with a new baby.

4.3 **Membership – Sue McAnanama:** We have had some tabling events and have some new names. George Haeseler reported that thirty-four have not renewed from last year. A letter will be going out to them soon.

4.4 **Southern Tier Peace Makers Fund (STPMF) –** Gabriel Piser received \$300 to go to Pittsburgh for the G-20 meeting. He will be reporting to us at the end of our meeting. He was arrested there. There was a short discussion on whether he would be eligible for a further grant. A motion was made that the committee be given the power to grant further funds to a person making an additional request. That is, the person does not have to come to the BCPA Board. Seconded and passed. There will be reports from some of recipients of funds at the close of the meeting.

4.5 **STPMF Memorial – Dave Duncan** reported that the committee has been meeting for over a year about creating a physical memorial honoring the Southern Tier Peacemakers. They have worked with Mike Haas who is the landscape architect for the River Walk. Everything has been so expensive that the effort has been abandoned. Some Board members thought that funds in the STPMF account could go to the memorial. George Haeseler pointed out that the money in the fund was for living peacemakers, not for a memorial. He felt that funds for a memorial should come from the city of Binghamton like for memorials to past wars. George said he would contact the Mayor after the present election campaign to see if the city would fund such a memorial.

4.6 **World March for Peace– George Haeseler** reported on the planning for the World March. The weekly vigil will be used to promote the World March for Peace. A banner has been made which will be used at the vigils and in New York. A bus will be traveling to New York City on November 30 to greet the participants of the World March. Ten local organizations have endorsed the March so far. Jim Clune paid \$236.52 for the

banner. A motion was made and seconded that Jim be reimbursed. Seconded and passed. Jim and Jack Gilroy will attend a Binghamton City Council meeting asking them to endorse the march. George Haeseler asked for a budget of \$200 for expenses for the World March for Peace. Seconded and passed. Jack Gilroy filled us in on his efforts to organize the bus and getting people signed up. It would cost about \$30 a piece. He said he would like to get a stipend in order to lower this price. George Haeseler would like to have BCPA fund the bus and then get reimbursed from those traveling and those making contributions. He made a motion to this effect. Seconded and passed. George will be sending out a mailing asking for money from them who will be going on the bus and from others who will contribute to the bus but will not be going. **Sue** encouraged people to collect signatures on the petition in the last newsletter. **Marisi** will ask the GSO (Graduate Student Organizations) to help fund the bus.

4.7 **Israel-Palestine – Jim Clune** reported that an e-mail has been sent out announcing a meeting of the committee on October 29 to be held at his house.

5 Old Business

5.1 **School of America Watch – Jack Gilroy** reported on organization efforts for the annual trip to SOA at Ft. Benning. As a result of Fr. Roy's visit, there has been a lot of support for the demonstration. A reporter from *Die Zeit* in Germany was here to cover Fr. Roy's visit. She then went down to the SOA and talked to the officers there. The SOA/WHINSEC fight in congress is running through the Defense Authorization Bill. There is an amendment to force WHINSEC (SOA) to release the names of graduates. The bill to release the names passed this summer in the House of Rep. but then had to go to a Senate-House Conference Committee for review. In review, Blue Dog Democrats and Republicans stopped the release of SOA/WHINSEC names for 2005, 06, 07, 08 and agreed to allow names to be released for this year—depending on national security.

5.2 **Update on resolution calling for National Peace Action – George Haeseler** reported on his effort to get support from other PA affiliates for the UN reform petition. The response has been very poor so George has dropped this effort.

5.3 **350.org Week Campaign – Sue** passed out brochures about the campaign and the talk by **Chris Hedges**. He will be speaking at the UU Congregation on Oct. 24, 7:00 pm.

5.4 **Kathy Kelly, Voices for Creative Non-Violence**, will be speaking November 6 at the First Presbyterian Church in Binghamton. She was recently in Afghanistan and in Gaza. Her visit is sponsored by the St. James Peace and Justice committee. Jim Clune made a motion that we endorse her visit. Seconded and passed.

5.5 **Jim Clune** reported for the Veterans for Peace's request for support for a speaker from **The Iraq Veterans Against War**. They hope to bring in a speaker who will talk about the human aspects of war. Len made a motion that we support this for the amount of \$100. Seconded and passed.

6 New Business

6.1 **Mid-Atlantic Witness for Peace – Bonnie Mondo** has arranged for a speaker at St James Church and at the University on October 22. **Doris Reed** made a motion that we support this with a contribution of \$100. Seconded and passed.

7 Announcements

7.1 **Cynthia McKinney** will be here on November 10 to give a talk at BU about Palestine sponsored by The Walter Rodney committee. Len made a motion that we support this

for \$200. Seconded. George Haeseler proposed a friendly amendment to raise this to \$400. Passed. This talk will conflict with our November 10 meeting. It was moved and seconded that we hold our November meeting on November 17. Passed.

8 Adjournment at 8:21 pm

9 After adjournment we had some talks:

- 9.1 **Report on the G-20 meeting in Pittsburgh by Gabriel Piser.** Gabriel went to Pittsburgh as part of a medical team to provide emergency care to demonstrators. They created a clinic space in an old, unused clinic. It was staffed by doctors, medical assistants, nurses, etc. They dispatched 20 pairs of first-responders into the protest. Our \$300 was used to purchase two cell phones and some medical supplies. He said he really appreciated our support. Some of the protests are on *YouTube*. This can be seen by searching for "G-20 Pittsburgh" He and others were arrested for "unlawful assembly" but there was nothing illegal happening. In fact, he was treating an AP reporter for tear-gas injuries when he was arrested. The authorities used a noise weapon called L-RAD (Long-range acoustic device) that directed a very loud beam of noise at the demonstrators to disperse them. His description of his arrest and detention could only be described as torture. He has to go back to Pittsburgh for arraignment and will contact us after that if he will be requesting more funds.
- 9.2 **George and Judy Homanich** reported on their trip to Creech Air Force Base in Nevada to protest the drones being used by the US attacking sites in Afghanistan and Pakistan. George and Judy were each given \$300 from the STPMF for their trip. They joined **Kathy Kelly** and her group, **Voices for Creative Non-Violence**, which had an action going on there. The drones can see in great detail and have great precision but still kill children and women. The people controlling the drones are young Air Force personnel who have developed their skills on video games.