

**AAUW Board Meeting
February 3, 2022
Zoom Meeting**

Members present: Board – Bonnie Auchincloss, Mary Lou Davis, Maria DeWald, Barbara Durniak, Betty Harrel, Barbara Hespenheide, Marcine Humphrey, Monique Jones, Pat Luczai, Margaret Nijhuis, Mary Scalise-Annis, Celia Serotsky and Sheila Zweifler.

President, **Monique Jones**, called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Secretary, **Margaret Nijhuis** presented for approval the December board minutes. They were approved as presented.

President

Report from the president, **Monique Jones**:

We had the following two votes by email in December & January:

- Approval of Branch delegates for January 22nd AAUW-NYS special meeting. Delegates were approved with 12 yes on first vote; 14 yes on second vote; no opposition for either vote. Delegates were **Monique Jones, Mildred Jones, Sandy Lash, Marcine Humphrey, Diane Jablonski, Margaret Nijhuis** and **Celia Serotsky**
- Approval to move money to supplement donations to Greatest Needs Fund. This passed with 16 yes votes; no opposition. We needed to give \$301.50 from our treasury to make the \$3,000.

AAUW-NYS Special meeting:

- Three proposed state bylaw amendments passed - focuses on the new position of president-elect, duties, when elected, length of term
- State dues will be \$7 for 2022-2023 year – **Barbara Van Itallie** has a more thorough report

National will be updating its website and transferring Membership Services Database to new server between 2/4 and 2/15. Members won't be able to access the MSD during this time.

Five Star Program – January 31st Zoom meeting with AAUW-NYS, attended by Monique.

- Janice Brown, President of AAUW-NYS, wants us to become a 5 star state. One of the requirements is that 10% of the branches become 5 Star branches. Monique reviewed criteria for doing so. We meet some of the criteria already and would like to work toward achieving at least a few stars before June. A committee was formed consisting of **Celia Serotsky, Betty Harrel, Barbara Durniak** and **Maria DeWald** to see where Poughkeepsie AAUW stands and what we can do before June to further this process.

Rockland has reached out to us about co-sponsoring its annual Diversity Brunch. This would help both branches meet one of the 5 Star Program criteria. The board agreed to this and publicity will be sent to our branch members in time for this February 26 program. Gwen Higgins will be asked to further publicize it through our DEI committee.

Received \$100 check for Zoom stipend from AAUW-NYS in November – the board had no objection and the Zoom subscription will be renewed when it comes due in March.

Annual Meeting update – location and speaker secured.

- Have reserved the Poughkeepsie Grand for June 9th. We've made the deposit which will be transferred to next year if we have to go virtual
- We've secured the current Poet Laureate, Dr. Lucia Chercui as our speaker. She will read her poetry, explain the role of the DC Poet Laureate and speak to our theme of coming together. She is willing to go virtual if that's what we decide
- We will use Woman of the Year to determine interest of our members in gathering in person as a barometer for moving forward.
- Tickets will be \$49; registration will be due May 30th
- We'll begin promotions in the March newsletter.

Treasurer

Pat Luczai reported as of February 3, 2022, Total Assets are \$67,790.05. For the current fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021, Total Revenue is \$11,235.98 and Total Expenditures are \$13,813.93.

For this fiscal year, local donations are currently at \$4,076.36 - \$300 of which was designated for AAUW National. At year end, that amount was transferred to the Greatest Needs Fund along with the necessary funds to bring Poughkeepsie Branch donations to \$3000.

Program Vice Presidents

Program VP **Marcine Humphrey** reported that the February program, *The ABC's of LGBTQ+: Why Language is So Important* presented by Karen Marder from The Dutchess Pride Center, will be quite exciting. The center has moved to a new location and has improved its programming. The March program, *The World through the Eyes of Women Photojournalists* presented by Gary Miller will fascinate all.

Program VP **Maria DeWald** continued the reporting asking if the February meeting could be recorded. The board was reminded that a vote had been taken earlier not to do this because of privacy issues. **Tara Dalbow**, our December speaker, asked that her honorarium be donated to one of our fellowships. It was decided to donate it to the AAUW Greatest Needs fund. Maria further reported that the committee to find an in-person meeting location had been in touch with Freedom Plains Church in LaGrange. The approval process is extensive and that must be completed before we get a price. Most places will be more than we paid at the Unitarian Fellowship. The board decided we need to find a place under \$200. They will continue to check other locations.

Membership Vice Presidents

Mary Scalise-Annis told the board that the dues will be \$90 next year with the national dues increase and the lower NYS dues. Anyone interested in joining at this point is told to wait until March 15th so they will get 1 ¼ year for their dues. The Membership Booklet has been included in the website so that by the Open House – the booklet will be removed from the website and the rack cards will be given out at the opening meeting.

Bonnie Auchincloss reported on their efforts to reach the new members. They were very happy with the involvement of the new members and the women seemed pleased with their membership.

Membership Treasurer

Sue Doyle – no report

Development Vice President

Mary Lou Davis reported that the Woman of the Year event had to be changed to April 9 to avoid conflict with the last day of Passover. Price is \$55, we need 45 attendees to break even and they can seat 54 with extra space we requested. Publicity has been started.

Honors & Awards

Margaret Nijhuis informed the board that the gift for the Cornerstone Award has been received. Honorees (except for Cornerstone) will be announced in the April newsletter.

Communications Vice President

Barbara Durniak reported "The website editors and the membership committee met via zoom in January to discuss the transition of information from the Membership Booklet to the website. We confirmed that all the content in the booklet is represented on the website. The booklet and all links leading to it will be removed this summer during the annual website review/update.

Two enhancements were made to the website to help members locate pertinent information.

- A new main menu selection - Interest Groups - was created and the descriptions of the various programs are now listed there as well as under the original Programs menu.

- A “Become a Member” link (and eye-catching “Join Us” graphic) was added to the list on the right hand side of the website. The links in this section always display no matter which webpage is being viewed.

The two groups also discussed creating some sort of interactive membership forms (for both new and returning members). Two options, each employing different technologies that would require a bit of a learning curve, are being explored:

- A form that would allow information to be typed in but would still require the member to print out and mail the form to the Membership Treasurer.
- A form that could be filled in and submitted electronically.”

Margaret Nijhuis added to Barbara’s report that Barbara had indeed worked very hard to produce a writeable PDF to be used for membership using a program that would be at no cost to the organization.

Community Service Initiatives Liaison

Sheila Zweifler gave the following report

Days for Girls team:

- Gail Barrick (new member) has arranged for an interview with Kerry Butrick Dowling. She's a journalist who writes for local papers. She has known her for a long time. **Sabashnee Govender** wanted to inform the board about this prior to agreeing to the interview and make sure this was acceptable.
- DfG have resumed in person work sessions and they are now the 2nd Saturday of the month at the Zion Church in Wappingers Falls
- DfG have made contact with a local food pantry (Redeemed Christian Church of God) and we are in the process of accessing the need for sustainable feminine Hygiene supplies (pod = shield and 2 liners)
- DfG received \$426 donation from the Student Occupational Therapy Association of Dominican College

Court Watch is monitoring once again, after a hiatus of 2 years. **Ann Pinna** reported they still go to court, but monitor virtually, on a TV screen in a conference room---away from the courtroom itself. Though they are a team of about 10, only 3 have begun monitoring again, since the process is currently a rather burdensome one. **Merrilee Osterhoudt** has graciously agreed to stay on as the data entry person, even though she is not a member of AAUW at the present time. She will be testing out using a free google data sheet, rather than the expensive Survey Monkey that they used to use. If it doesn't work out, they will go back to paying over \$500 for Survey Monkey, but---time will tell. They are looking to determine if the google program can provide us with the same effective quantitative analysis as in the past.

Extending Girls' Horizons resumed our events this January. **Gwen Higgins** and **Peggy Kelland** presented the "A-Maze" Journey in a Day twice at Zion Episcopal Church in Wappingers Falls. Despite last minute cancellations due to COVID quarantining, they had 18 girls on January 8 and 26 girls on January 22. The girls came from the Towns of Poughkeepsie, Wappingers, Fishkill, East Fishkill, Hyde Park, Pleasant Valley, and the City of Poughkeepsie. They also had Girl Scout Troops from Pine Bush and West Point. They are planning future events, but are awaiting pandemic developments before committing to dates.

Interest Groups Liaison

Linnea Masson - no report

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Gwen Higgins – no report

Public Policy

Celia Serotsky stated that most of her work has been in producing reports for the newsletter. She mentioned that District 19 will have an interesting race between Delgado and Molinaro. The hope for a debate was expressed by board members.

Nominating Committee Chair

Betty Harrel noted that the announcement of the slate will be made later in the spring.

Newsletter Editor

Report from **Cyd Averill** was a reminder that deadline for the March newsletter is February 10th.

Historian

Barbara Hesperheide reported that materials have been taken to the library so the archives are up-to-date.

State & National AAUW Liaison

Barbara Van Itallie sent the following report:

“Hello Membership and Financial leaders of AAUW-NYS,

The State Board has voted to reduce the 2022-23 state dues from the anticipated \$13 to \$7.

You will recall that when we announced the state dues waiver a year ago, we anticipated that we would return to our usual \$13 annual dues this year. However with the pandemic still continuing to affect membership, with state expenses low, with another national dues increase, and with the state treasury continuing to be healthy, the state board decided that another dues decrease could be helpful to our branches.

You will continue to submit your state and national dues the same way you had done in the past. National AAUW will be aware of the state amount. We will continue to accept grant requests in the coming year as well. Don't forget that the national dues will increase to \$67 for this coming dues year. So when you begin collecting dues for 2022-23, calculate total dues as: your branch dues + \$7 + \$67...”

New Business Gloria Gibbs' granddaughter made a request that members send her stories of AAUW that she could share with Gloria. This was approved. Article will be in newsletter and emails can be sent to event.aauw.poughkeepsie@gmail.com . **Margaret Nijhuis** monitors this email and will make a booklet of the notes with pictures that **Bonnie Auchincloss** will help find.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Nijhuis, Secretary