

AAUW Board Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2022
Zoom Meeting

Members present: Board – Bonnie Auchincloss, Cyd Averill, Mary Ann Boylan, Mary Lou Davis, Beth DeFiglio, Sue Doyle, Barbara Durniak, Betty Harrel, Gwendolyn Higgins, Marcine Humphrey, Diane Jablonski, Pat Luczai, Linnea Masson, Margaret Nijhuis, Mary Scalise-Annis, Celia Serotsky.

President **Celia Serotsky** called the meeting to order at 7:01.

Secretary **Beth DeFiglio** had distributed the December 2022 minutes. The Board approved them as distributed.

President's Report

Celia Serotsky reported that the branch received a very nice thank you note from the Dutchess Community College Foundation for the donation of \$1890.

Note: Although the minutes are correct, this amount was questioned at the March 2, 2023 Board meeting. See the March, 2023 Board minutes for clarification.

Treasurer's Report

Diane Jablonski discussed her distributed report.

Diane noted that dues input will change over time because of the policy from National that requires new members to renew on the anniversary of their joining date. **Sue Doyle** noted that National seems committed to this new policy, and suggested that a column could be added to the member spreadsheet for renewal date, and then the spreadsheet sorted by renewal date in another tab. **Mary Scalise-Annis**, along with others, noted that it's best for Poughkeepsie members to renew through our branch and not through national.

Program

Program VP **Marcine Humphrey** reported that the following programs are planned:

February (Zoom) – Panel discussion of school board members. Marcine thanked **Peggy Kelland** for suggesting the program and especially **Maria DeWald** for setting it up.

March (In-person) – speaker from the Art Effect

Membership

Membership VP **Mary Scalise-Annis** reported that she and co-VP **Bonnie Auchincloss** continue to contact new members. Through national's "Shape the Future" membership campaign, the branch is owed three free national memberships for the past three years because of new members recruited. Mary continues to follow up, including what start date.

Membership Treasurer

Sue Doyle reported that two new members joined in January. This is typically a slow month, so she congratulated those people who are working to bring in new members.

Development Vice President

Mary Lou Davis stated that large donations came in after the fundraiser, for a total of \$2050.

The Woman of the Year will be Jewel Ratzlaff, who was Board Chair of Love, Inc., coordinated Big Read activities, secured National Endowments for the Arts grants, and has worked with Betty Harrel on Leading to Reading. The event will be on April 23, from 12-3, at Mill Creek Catering.

Honors & Awards

Irene Keyes Fund:

Marcine Humphrey reported that the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) is live this year, and there is enough money in the fund to send two women. Marcine thanked **Betty Harrel** for the press release, which is ready to go, and the website has been updated. The committee is soliciting applicants before the March 20 deadline.

Marcine moved to approve the following change to the Working Rules regarding the Irene Keyes Fund. Add the phrase “**or a similar leadership program for girls and college women**” at the end of the current wording: Named after a distinguished member and past President of the branch, the fund helps one or more local female college student(s) attend the annual National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) in Washington, DC.

It was noted that if this change were adopted, the wording would have to be changed in several places on the website and in the Working Rules. The Board decided that the original purpose and intent of the Fund should be kept, which retains the connection to local colleges and the focus on NCCWSL. The Board clarified that it can vote to send women to other worthwhile conferences using other funds in the Treasury, in addition to using the Irene Keyes fund for the scholarships to NCCWSL.

Marcine withdrew the motion.

Honors & Awards Chair **Margaret Nijhuis** proposed that all awards presented by the Branch be approved at least by the Executive Committee, and by the whole Board if possible. She reminded the Board that this is already a Policy in the Working Rules; they do not need to change. However, as a Board we have not been following this and we should tighten up our process.

The Working Rules state:

“The Honors and Awards Chair is responsible for selecting recipients for honors and awards presented by the branch. “ Under Overall responsibilities: “Present to the Board for approval all selections made by the subcommittees”

Margaret also noted that the Chair should be an ex-officio member of all the Awards subcommittees, and all subcommittees report to the Chair (under the current Rules).

The Board agreed that we should follow the Working Rules, and clarified the process that each subcommittee should notify the Chair first of a selection, and then either the Chair or the subcommittee should bring it to the Board for approval before announcing the selection. If there is not time (or a need for secrecy), then the Executive Committee could approve the selection instead of the complete Board.

Celia stated that it is healthy for a Board to review their processes and that the Working Rules should always be followed.

Communications VP

VP **Barbara Durniak** reported:

- 1) Barbara and Diane just renewed the Branch’s Zoom contract for another year (before it expired on February 25) for \$104, which included a 30% discount. The payment (credit card) and contact (Diane) information was also cleaned up. It was noted that the Branch uses Zoom a lot, and renewal does not need to be specifically approved if the money is already allocated for it in an approved budget.
- 2) Barbara and Bonnie continue to investigate solutions to replace Amazon cloud storage. Barbara thanked Bonnie for all the time and effort she has spent on this. So far, most solutions are more expensive and complicated than we need.

Margaret reminded the Board that links to all programs are on the website, in case an email gets lost.

Community Service Initiatives Liaison

Mary Ann Boylan discussed her submitted report:

Days for Girls (report from Judy Longacre) sent the components for 25 complete kits with extra washcloths and soap to the distribution center in Pittsburgh. The distribution center is working to provide 10,000 kits to Cuba in 2023. Days for Girls continues to support local efforts in Dutchess, Ulster, and Orange counties.

Leading to Reading (report from Betty Harrel) had a planning meeting and is seeking new places to donate books, especially to school-aged children, as well as tabling opportunities at community events. A committee is setting up a "to go" packet so they are ready when an event takes place.

Court Watch - Ann Pinna – no report

STEM -Barbara Van Itallie. Nothing to report

Gwen Higgins noted that Extending Girls Horizons is very active. On February 4, there is an all-day program called Amaze, which six Girl Scout Cadette (middle school-age) troops will attend. “New Cuisine” is scheduled for March. Gwen also stated that troop leaders are reaching out to AAUW directly, which shows the success of the program.

Interest Groups Liaison

Linnea Masson reported that all groups are doing well.

The movie group, now called Movie Mavens, went to a movie and then the Eveready Diner. Soleil visited WPA Post Offices, and has planned the whole year. Cuisine went to the High Tea at West Point.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion –

Gwen Higgins presented her written report and proposed a task force:

AAUW Task Force 2023

A few members of the DEI Committee have been discussing how to:

- 1. Make DEI part of the DNA of our AAUW branch,*
- 2. Make the branch visible in the community,*
- 3. Increase diversity in the membership,*
- 4. Connect with community organizations that support the mission of AAUW,*
- 5. Form alliances with other initiatives for women*
- 6. Celebrate the diversity among the people in our community,*
- 7. Educate our membership in areas of Social Justice.*

*The idea of an AAUW Task Force was suggested by **Betty Harrel**. This task force would be comprised of AAUW passionate members who would attend community events sponsored by various community organizations. The responsibility of this group would be to participate in the events, be visible to the attendees and report back to the membership about their experiences. They would present themselves as AAUW members, take written information when appropriate and discuss the AAUW with interested women they encounter.*

A calendar of community events would be made and updated by the DEI Committee chair so that members of the Task Force can sign up to attend. Members of the Task Force would seek opportunities to talk to discuss or present to community organizations that may ask for more information.

A file could be kept containing contact information and appropriate materials and reports of the outreach experiences. This information would be available to the membership.

Gwen has compiled a list of 13 organizations that lean towards social justice. Voter registration/suppression might be one topic to tackle, with others to come later. Betty noted that her original idea was to have a Zoom meeting to interact with these organizations, make them aware of AAUW and find out how AAUW can help, which could be a simpler approach.

The Board supported the idea of a task force. Mary Scalise-Annis will ask that data be pulled from the Membership database with members' organizational affiliations and sent to Gwen. Gwen will put an article in the Branch with information about the task force and she will solicit participants.

Public Relations

Betty Harrel reported that the Women's Professional Network does not appear to be functioning. When it does, she'll report back with dues information. A committee from Leading to Reading is developing a to-go kit that could be used at both AAUW and Leading to Reading tabling events. Publicity through local papers seems to be a dead end.

Public Policy – Patricia DeLeo – No report

Nominating Committee Chair - Pat Luczai – Nothing new to report

Newsletter Editor

Cyd Averill reminded the Board that articles are due by the 10th.

She has generic AAUW business cards that she will bring to the March program meeting. If anyone needs some before then, please contact her.

Cyd brought up the idea of starting an Instagram account. She will investigate and bring a proposal back to the Board. She also asked members to be sure to take pictures of AAUW activities, which could be used for Instagram in the future. It was noted that pictures can be taken of activities/work product without directly showing someone's face. The Board agreed that pictures are important, both for social media and the archives. Any pictures sent to **Mary Coiteux** for Facebook should also be sent to Bonnie, who is head of the Photography Committee, and who catalogs the pictures for the archives.

Historian - Marge Barton - No report

State/National Liaison - Barbara Van Itallie – No report

No Old Business

No New Business

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth DeFiglio, Secretary