

AAUW Board Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2023
Zoom Meeting

Members present: Board – Bonnie Auchincloss, Cyd Averill, Beth DeFiglio, Barbara Durniak, Betty Harrel, Barbara Hespenheide, Gwendolyn Higgins, Diane Jablonski, Pat Luczai, Linnea Masson, Kay Saderholm, Gail Sisti, Celia Serotsky.

Non-Voting members: none

President **Celia Serotsky** called the meeting to order at 6:59pm.

Secretary **Beth DeFiglio** had distributed the June Board meeting minutes, and the June Business meeting minutes. The Board approved them as distributed.

Beth thanked everyone who had already sent the Conflict of Interest form, and reminded members to sign and return it as soon as possible. She also noted that she would not be able to attend the October Board meeting, and Betty Harrel has graciously agreed to fill in.

President's Report

Celia Serotsky welcomed new Board members **Gail Sisti, Kay Saderholm, Kathy Friedman, Barbara Hespenheide. Betty Harrel** is returning with a new role as Development VP, and **Bonnie Auchincloss** will be the sole Membership VP.

Additionally, Celia noted the following items:

- **Darlene Yerdon** has received notice of Google reviews linked to AAUW. All members should make sure they are in their own Gmail account if posting a review, and remember to logout of any AAUW Gmail id as soon as they've finished using it.
- **Betty Harrel** ordered a new AAUW banner to replace the missing one. In the future, it will be kept by the President, along with the gavel and the mailbox key (Betty has the second one). This will be noted in the President's Calendar and Task List.
- The Strategic Review Committee will meet with Ingrid Kulick on September 20 via Zoom. She will present how she would help us review and revise our Strategic Plan, and the committee will then decide if we will hire her to help us. That decision will then be brought to the Board for approval. The committee consists of: **Cindy Emmer, Maria DeWald, Betty Harrel, Pat Luczai, Diane Jablonski, and Celia Serotsky.**
- **Paula Greenspan** has accepted the Assistant Secretary Off-Board Position.

Treasurer's Report

Diane Jablonski stated that since summer activity was low, there was nothing significant to note on the distributed reports. She finished the State and Federal taxes and was able to use the short form. Diane will follow up on **Pat Luczai's** suggestion to look into CD's since interest rates are rising. Diane also noted that **Kathy Friedman** has jumped right into the Membership Treasurer role, and the transition has been seamless.

Program

Program VPs **Kay Saderholm** and **Gail Sisti** reported that the following programs are planned:

September 14 – Open House

October 12 – 75th Anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights

November 9 – The Vassar Haiti Project and Empowering Women's Financial Sustainability in Haiti

December 14 – Festive Feasts

January 11 – Zoom – A View of the Clean Energy Future/Citizens' Climate Lobby Group – Sean Daque

February 8 – Zoom – Black History Month: Slavery and Freedom in the Hudson Valley- Peter Bunten

March 14 – Stockholm Syndrome

April 11 – History of Reproductive Rights- Richard David

May 9 - TBD

Membership

Membership VP **Bonnie Auchincloss** thanked Kathy Friedman for the great job she's doing and the help she's been to Bonnie. Bonnie reported that 30 invitations have been sent out for the Open House, including 11 new members and 19 prospective members. She asked for guides to escort new and/or prospective members. She also thanked Margaret Nijhuis for organizing all the refreshments. Bonnie is putting together a slide show of activities throughout the year.

Membership Treasurer - Kathy Friedman – No report

Development Vice President

Betty Harrel reported that an enthusiastic Development Committee will focus on two fundraisers: Wine Tasting and Presentation in October, and a small fundraiser in the spring to solicit donations with membership renewals. Pat Luczai, who is in charge of volunteers for the October fundraiser, asked for people to help with set up.

Honors & Awards

Chair **Barbara Hesperheide** reported that **Barbara Van Itallie** and **Cyd Averill** have agreed to remain on the Committee, and **Mary Scalise-Annis** will join this year. They begin meeting in October, and Barbara asked for nomination suggestions for the Poughkeepsie honorees, Emerging Leader, and Cornerstone awards. Marcine Humphrey has agreed to chair the Irene Keyes Award. The Committee is also responsible for Science Fair judges.

Communications VP

Barbara Durniak thanked **Margaret Nijhuis** and **Joanne Scolaro** for their work in updating the website over the summer. Barbara reminded members to keep their sections current.

Community Service Initiatives Liaison

Mary Ann Boylan submitted a written report:

Days for Girls passed a US recertification process for Gold Standard Criteria, receiving high praise: "Your team's attention to detail is wonderful to see and will ensure that kits sewn by your team are durable and functional for at least 3 years." Congratulations to the Team!

Leading to Reading – **Betty Harrel**

Several members of Leading to Reading had a table at the Dutchess Outreach food giveaway in August. They handed out free books (especially bilingual books) and AAUW information.

Math Buddies, Court Watch – No report

Although Mary Ann did not receive a report for Extending Girls Horizons, **Gwen Higgins** reported that she and **Peggy Kelland** need help. They plan at least six programs a year, including one full day program, but most times Gwen and Peggy are by themselves running a program. Celia suggested that Gwen ask **Darlene Yerdon** if any members have indicated an interest.

Interest Groups Liaison

Linnea Masson reported that all Interest Groups are doing well, except for two. Canasta has a lack of participants, and there have been complaints about the Trekkers lack of planning and communication.

International Relations – Jackie Vierno

Informational e-blasts were sent over the summer to invite members to the following local events of an international nature:

- July 19 - Potluck dinner and game night sponsored by the Race Unity Circle to welcome the asylum seekers. Moving forward RMM website (www.ruralmigrantministry.org) may list further ways to help the asylum seekers under "Welcoming the Stranger."
- August 6 - 16th annual Guelaguetza Festival held in Waryas Park.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Gwen Higgins reported that there has been very low attendance at monthly meetings, so they will be discontinued. Instead, Gwen will concentrate on a future book study and topical discussions. In addition, Celia had passed on the idea from a NYS presentation of a 10 minute "Infusion Inclusion Activity". Gwen will discuss the possibility with the Program VPs of having a small activity/discussion before a program begins every month. Any DEI activities should also be communicated in the newsletter and the website. Gwen will also attend the monthly AAUW-NYS DEI meeting.

Public Relations

The previous Chair, **Betty Harrel**, feels that an overall chair is not needed since there is little local media, and it's very hard to get articles publicized. She suggested that chairs of individual events use community bulletin boards, Facebook, the newsletter, and the website to generate publicity.

Public Policy – Patricia DeLeo – No report

Nominating Committee Chair

Pat Luczai is in the process of forming a committee for this year.

Newsletter Editor

Cyd Averill noted that September 10 is the deadline for the October newsletter. She also explained that she is trying to keep the newsletter mailing list as small as possible by removing any people who are no longer members.

Historian

Marge Barton submitted a report that she is getting ready for the Open House.

State/National Liaison

Celia Serotsky explained that **Barbara Van Itallie** does not feel this position is needed any more. Barbara is no longer State Treasurer, and Celia, as President, will receive all communications from AAUW-NYS.

No Old Business

No New Business

Margaret Nijhuis notified Celia that nominations for the Athena Award (honoring strong, successful women) are due by September 15. Celia can provide more information to anyone who requests it.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth DeFiglio, Secretary