

AAUW Board Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2023

Zoom Meeting

Members present: Board – Cyd Averill, Mary Ann Boylan, Beth DeFiglio, Kathy Friedman, Betty Harrel, Barbara Hesperheide, Diane Jablonski, Pat Luczai, Linnea Masson, Kay Saderholm, Gail Sisti, Celia Serotsky

President **Celia Serotsky** called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

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

President's Report

Celia Serotsky expressed her admiration and thanks to Diane Jablonski for the awesome job Diane did of applying to the Dyson Foundation for a grant to support strategic planning. The Dyson Foundation quickly approved the requested amount of \$4200. Diane acknowledged the proofreading help of Betty Harrel and Pat Luczai. The Board agreed to collect gifts for Grace Smith House in May 2024, in conjunction with Mother's Day, rather than this Christmas. Celia noted that the 100th Anniversary of AAUW Poughkeepsie will be in 2025, and she is forming a Committee to make plans. Celia reminded the Board of the decision to make quick introductions of Off Board members at the program monthly meetings, and Bonnie is coordinating introductions of new members in the Branch. Gloria Gibbs's granddaughter sent her thanks for all the birthday messages her grandmother received from AAUW. Celia also announced that the Poughkeepsie Journal published a wonderful article about Leading to Reading today. **Betty Harrel** was interviewed and a photographer came to a work session.

Treasurer's Report

Diane Jablonski noted that the CD was redeemed and a new one issued. The penalty incurred for redeeming the CD was \$126.04, which at the new rate of 5% that amount will be made up in a few months.

Diane noted that the Dyson grant for strategic planning contains the stipulation that AAUW must contribute \$1000 to strategic planning. She has also applied for an AAUW-NYS program grant for strategic planning, and stated the available amount has increased to \$550. Diane asked Celia to send a note to Carol Griffith emphasizing the importance of receiving the grant.

Diane was concerned about the note from National AAUW that all dues will be tax-exempt, noting that it is illegal to use 501 (c)3 funds for political activity. She will send out the response she received to her question.

Program

Program VP **Kay Saderholm** discussed December's Program meeting, "Fabulous Foods".

Program VP **Gail Sisti** said that all the programs for the coming year are set except for May. An Honorarium was given to the Vassar Haiti Project.

Membership

Celia Serotsky gave Membership VP **Bonnie Auchincloss's** report: The Committee has completed the first pass of proofreading the Directory. **Margaret Nijhuis, Betty Harrel, Pat Luczai and Barbara Durniak** will do the second pass, with the goal of sending it to the printer on Monday. It will then be distributed in person as much as possible to save postage. Bonnie thanked everyone who has or will be giving her time to the Directory.

Membership Treasurer

Kathy Friedman stated that no one has renewed since early November. Total number of members is 234, which is only 13 less than last year. Thirty-eight did not renew and there were 22 new members, plus 3 that rejoined.

Development Vice President

Betty Harrel stated that we will not have a table at the Wallace Center for the Human Rights Expo, but we should do that next year. Betty will send the Leading to Reading article in the Poughkeepsie Journal to AAUW-NYS for possible

inclusion on their website. Betty also noted that Barbara Van Itallie suggested that AAUW Poughkeepsie might be eligible for a second program grant. Betty will pursue this after AAUW-NYS responds to the first request.

Honors & Awards

Barbara Hesperheide reported that the committee of **Barbara Van Itallie, Cyd Averill, Mary Scalise-Annis, and herself** worked very well together and recommended six Named Awards and an Emerging Leader award. The Cornerstone Honoree will be approved in the spring.

Barbara moved that the Board approve Named Awards to Sandy Goldberg, Peggy Kelland, Linnea Masson, Margaret Nijhuis, Ann Pinna, Darlene Yerdon, with \$500 going to National for each, and the Emerging Leader award to Beth DeFiglio. The motion was passed unanimously.

Communications VP

Barbara Durniak sent the following announcement:

In February, the price of our Zoom subscription will increase by \$10 to \$159.90. Providing it is offered again in 2024, we will apply for a \$150 grant from AAUW-NYS to cover Zoom costs.

Community Service Initiatives Liaison

Mary Ann Boylan summarized her written report:

Days for Girls will send 25 kits to the distribution center, and by March 1, 2024, 57 kits to local distribution. The workshops are well attended and very productive.

Leading to Reading received a United Way Holiday Helping Hand grant to purchase books for the children at Hudson River Lodging, and the Poughkeepsie Journal published an article (mentioned earlier).

Math Buddies, Court Watch, Extending Girls Horizons – No report

Interest Groups Liaison

Linnea Masson stated that Interest Groups are doing well. Soleil and Gourmet Out and About, in particular, were well attended this month. Some leaders are having trouble getting responses, so a message will be in the Branch asking members to check their email.

International Relations

Jackie Vierno sent the notice that Information related to International Women's Day and NGO CSW 68 for March 2024 was included in the Branch.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Gwen Higgins - No report

Public Policy – Patricia DeLeo – No report

Nominating Committee Chair - Pat Luczai – No report

Newsletter Editor

Cyd Averill reminded the Board of the December 10 deadline for January articles. She also thanked **Gail Sisti, Kay Saderholm, and Celia Serotsky** for providing program information that looks ahead a couple months.

Historian - Marge Barton – No report

No Old Business

No New Business

Announcements

Celia reminded the Board that the Human Rights Expo celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would be held from 10am-4pm at the Wallace Center in Hyde Park on Sunday, December 10.

Diane Jablonski noted that Sen. Michelle Hinchey created a bill to name March 8 as International Women's Day in New York and Gov. Hochul signed it. Diane asked Cyd to include something about it in the Branch.

Betty Harrel shared that Mary Lou Davis will be leading the Woman of the Year Committee, which will be held in April.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth DeFiglio, Secretary