

AAUW Board Meeting Minutes

May 2, 2024

Zoom Meeting

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

Non-Voting members: Cindy Emmer

President **Celia Serotsky** called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. She welcomed **Cindy Emmer**, who is the nominee for Secretary for 2024-2026.

Secretary **Beth DeFiglio** had distributed the April Board meeting minutes. The Board approved them as distributed.

President's Report

Celia Serotsky noted that **Cyd Averill** has volunteered to continue as Newsletter Editor, which the Board approved. Celia reminded the Board that Annual Reports are due May 15 to **Beth DeFiglio**. **Barbara Van Itallie** is involved with the Hudson Valley Symphony, and has asked that a notice be sent to members about its concert on May 18. The Board approved this on a one-time basis. The Board discussed again the possibility of an in-person Board meeting with old and new members, but decided to have this later as a Strategic Plan review with the Board. Celia also emphasized the need to vote in the National AAUW election about the membership change, and has sent out a special reminder note.

Treasurer's Report

Diane Jablonski noted that finances are in good shape. All the consultant's fees have been paid, and are listed under "Professional Services" in her report. She also noted that the Woman of the Year event made money.

Program

Program VPs **Kay Saderholm** and **Gail Sisti** reported that the last program is next Thursday, May 9, and that there will be a Program Planning meeting for next year on May 17 at 10am via Zoom.

Celia noted that there have been technical glitches the past two meetings, which have been very frustrating. The Board agreed that the following process will likely solve most of the problems:

1) ask speakers to send their presentation ahead and, as a backup, also bring it on a flash drive, 2) always bring the AAUW computer to meetings and use it rather than a speaker's computer, and 3) ensure the computer is updated and ready to go ahead of time.

Membership

Beth DeFiglio reported for Membership VP **Bonnie Auchincloss** that **Margaret Nijhuis** has sent out e-mails for July 1 membership renewals. A few people so far have not renewed because they are away much of the year. Celia noted that the donation letter has also gone out.

Membership Treasurer

Kathy Friedman reported that there have been four renewals since the letter went out. She also noted that a member with a renewal date of July 1 will keep that date even if they renew late, but still in 2024. People who have been members for over 40 years do not need to pay the \$16 local dues, but only one member has asked about this. Kathy will ask **Margaret Nijhuis** how this was handled in the past.

Development Vice President

Betty Harrel presented her proposal for a fund drive that would run from October 2024 to October 2025. \$16,000 is needed to establish an endowment. See Appendix B for complete proposal. **Betty moved that we implement a fund drive to establish a second endowment for a scholarship at Dutchess Community College. An anonymous member donor has agreed to match funds up to \$20,000. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Honors & Awards

Barbara Hespenheide thanked **Cyd Averill** for all the coverage of the 2024 named funds winners and emerging leader. The cornerstone award is ordered but not ready yet.

Communications VP - Barbara Durniak – Nothing to report

Centennial Committee – Barbara Durniak and Cyd Averill

Cyd Averill reported that the Committee has initiated discussion, which is exciting, and the next meeting will be May 13 at 4pm. A few extra people, in addition to each member of the committee, will take a decade to research. More researchers will be needed. The Committee plans to get a six-month subscription to the Poughkeepsie Journal to provide access to the archives.

Community Service Initiatives Liaison

Mary Ann Boylan summarized her written report. (See Appendix A)

Interest Groups Liaison – Linnea Masson – No report

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Gwen Higgins - No report

International Relations

Jackie Vierno reported that **Celia, Diane, and herself** attended various sessions of the UN CSW, and provided information for an article in The Branch.

Public Policy – Patricia DeLeo – No report

Nominating Committee Chair

Pat Luczai reported that new and returning officers will be installed at the Annual Meeting. Nominees have been published in The Branch.

Newsletter Editor

Cyd Averill reminded members that the deadline for the newsletter is May 10.

Historian - Marge Barton – No report

Old Business

The AAUW-NYS Annual Meeting will be at the Poughkeepsie Grand (now Doubletree by Hilton) on Friday evening, June 28 (social time) and Saturday morning, June 29 (business meeting). **Beth DeFiglio** is no longer able to be a delegate, but **Gwen Higgins** and **Pat Luczai** volunteered. The other four voting delegates are **Celia Serotsky, Diane Jablonski, Barbara Van Itallie,** and **Jackie Goffe-McNish**. Celia will try to find out whether AAUW members who are not delegates may attend the Friday night non-business meeting.

No New Business

No Announcements

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth DeFiglio, Secretary

Appendix A: Community Service Report from Mary Ann Boylan

Ann Pinna – Court Watch

Court Watch is still in the process of potentially training two new monitors. Next month, Liz Graham and I will be joining Cindy Emmer and Nancy Marrine at Family Court to observe Judge MacKenzie's morning court session. After several observations, Cindy and Nancy may be ready to proceed with more detailed training and become part of our Court Watch team. Fingers crossed!

Sabashnee Govender/Judy Longacre – Days for Girls

Days for Girls Team made a donation Friday of 30 kits which will be distributed in Cameroon and Chad in the coming months. We are partnering with the Shrewsbury, MA team along with a number of other MA and CT teams to reach a 2000 kit goal. Things are finally opening up once again after having been closed down during the pandemic, such that individual effort can be made to have qualified people travel to locations and both distribute the kits and provide the education Days for Girls includes as part of their program.

We were also able to give an additional 15 drawstring bags, 10 transport pouches, and 22 pair of underwear. The handoff occurred in the Danbury Trader Joe's parking lot and was made to the Leader of the New Milford CT Team, a very gracious, competent woman who I was happy to meet and partner with.

Our effort to find someone to take on additional responsibility so that this aging leader can step down is ongoing. We can't celebrate much success at this point, but are continuing to work on the transition. I have made it known that I am not disappearing, but it is a wise planning move to do this now so that this Initiative is in good stead to continue.

Peggy Kelland – Expanding Girls Horizons

No report submitted

Betty Harrel – Leading to Reading

Leading to Reading is continuing to meet and distribute book kits. We'll have a table at the Dutchess outreach food giveaway event on May 17.

Barbara Van Itallie – STEM

Nothing new for Math Buddies. We're all moving along nicely.

Appendix B: Proposal for second DCC scholarship endowment by Betty Harrel

In honor of our branch centennial, we propose to build on our long tradition of support for Dutchess Community College (DCC). Our branch currently has one DCC endowment and donates additional funds so that two \$600 AAUW scholarships are presented each year.

An anonymous member donor has offered a matching grant for an additional DCC endowment up to \$20,000. Members will be asked to donate between October, 2024 and October, 2025. In honor of our 100th year of community support, a suggested donation will be \$100 with all donations gratefully accepted. The impact of each donation will be doubled through the generosity of the matching grant. Once funds have been collected, a presentation will be made to the DCC Foundation at the end of 2025.

The scholarship will be designated for a woman student entering a four-year college in a non-traditional field such as a STEM career or skilled trade. If sufficient funds are raised, the current AAUW endowment will also be increased so that both scholarships will have a significant impact on women's education.

This proposal has the support of the Centennial Committee and would be implemented as a Development project.

Motion: I move that we implement a fund drive to establish a second endowment for a scholarship at Dutchess Community College. An anonymous member donor has agreed to match funds up to \$20,000.