

AAUW Poughkeepsie Branch, Inc.  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, May 29, 2014

Members Present: Susie Blecker, Jeanette Cantwell, Mary Coiteux, Mary Lou Davis, Kathy Friedman, Jackie Goffe-McNish, Betty Harrel, Diane Jablonski, Cathy Kinn, Margaret Nijhuis, Linda Roberts, Kay Saderholm, and Barbara VanItallie. Guests: Lula Allen, Peggy Kelland, Kim Pollard (AAUW State Organizer), Anthula Natsoulas.

The meeting was called to order by Jackie Goffe-McNish, president, at 9:30 am. It was held at the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck. The agenda was amended and workshop changes were announced.

Chair's Remarks: Dutchess Community College was thanked for providing each member with a tote bag and materials for the conference. A get-to-know you activity was followed by a tribute to Maya Angelou.

Board Assessment: Each member was asked to give an assessment of her area including goals, achievements, and suggestions for future activities.

- a. Tea and fundraising - Lula Allen and Linda Roberts: The goal was to meet or exceed last year's profits. Attendance and profits were slightly down. A member survey was completed by 14% and the following suggestions were made: change the date to late April, keep the same venue, change the menu, have 2 rather than 3 presenters, allow time for Q & A with the speakers, and limit the number and type of auction items. It was also suggested that the annual meeting be moved to June, that articles are placed in The Branch throughout the year, and that postcard invitations should be mailed. Lula and Linda were thanked for their commitment and hard work.
- b. Woman of the Year – Mary Lou Davis: The goals for the year were met. In the future, it is recommended that one person from the community and one from AAUW be honored each year. It will be held on October 25. Guidelines will be placed in the working rules. It is not a fundraiser, although sometimes money is made on the event.
- c. District Conference – Jackie Goffe-McNish: Last fall it was held at Dutchess Community College and was very successful. Future suggestions include more branch officer training, counterpart time, and leadership development. A planning meeting will be held in June, and the conference will be held in October in the Albany area.
- d. Interest groups – Cathy Kinn: There are currently 19 groups, and they are often the reason members join and continue in AAUW. Information should go through the chair and she can ask group coordinators to help fill specific volunteer jobs. The leaders are made aware of the connection with other AAUW activities.
- e. Community initiatives – Jackie Goffe-McNish: Since most people attending the Personal and Professional Development meetings were Dutchess Community College staff, the project has been put on hold for the time being. Leading to Reading has continued to grow and has a great deal of community support as well as outside funding. Let's Do Math workshops are scheduled for the fall in partnership with Marist College. The Health Care initiative moved to the Family Partnership center and is seeking grants for transportation. The Extending Girls' Horizons has been reaching a number of girls and is expanding. The International Women's Day event was

very successful. The Girls' Conference is again scheduled for the fall. A Diversity agenda has been introduced and activities are planned on a monthly basis.

- f. Board meetings and composition – Jackie Goffe-McNish: A brief discussion was held on whether to have an Executive Committee for decisions needed quickly. No final decision was made, but free conference calls for the full board were suggested as an alternative. Board meetings should focus on action items and have time for discussion. Venues for next year's meetings are being investigated.
- g. Funding activities – Barbara VanItallie: A specific process has been defined for applying for funding and this year's recommendations will be presented at the June board meeting. Needs must be assessed and budgets developed for the projects, as some items can be obtained as donations or require no funding.
- h. Open house and recruitment – Kay Saderholm and Jeanette Cantwell: The Open House will be held at the Hellenic Center, if the date can be confirmed there, with each interest group and initiative having a display table. The new member reception will be the night of the October general program. Those who haven't renewed will be called after the June 30. A reminder email will be sent to those who haven't yet renewed. Calls can be made by board members as well as the membership committee members. It was felt that an orientation program (program in a box) should be developed, particularly for those who join in the spring and don't have the opportunity to attend the fall Open House. Personal contact with new members is important to help them feel welcome and answer any questions.

#### Open Forum:

- a. Margaret Nijhuis: The summer leadership conference will be held at Cazenovia College on July 25-27. It is \$100 and includes 2 nights and 6 meals. A focus will be on campus connections and counterpart interactions.
- b. Mary Coiteux: A June general program was added this year and will feature Music of the Holocaust. Other organizations such as Hadassah are encouraging attendance. Many of our programs can be joint initiatives with other organizations.
- c. Cathy Kinn: Ways to provide board oversight should be discussed at the June board meeting. We already have a number of controls built in but we need to ensure that proper procedures are being followed.
- d. Jackie Goffe-McNish: Those who are leading the Omega workshops during the board retreat were thanked.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Betty Harrel*

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Secretary