

Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 2, 2016
17 Croft Road, Poughkeepsie, NY

Members Present: Barbara Van Itallie, Kathy Friedman, Diane Jablonski, Susie Blecker, Margaret Nijhuis, Maria DeWald, Barbara Lemberger, Bonnie Auchincloss, Linda Roberts, Barbara Hugo, Eileen Hayden, Janna Whearty, Mary Ann Hogarty, Cathy Kinn, Sandy Goldberg, Betsy Kopstien-Stuts, Jacqueline Goffe-McNish, Betty Harrel. Guests: Sheila Zweifler, Lula Allen, Lauren Coons.

The meeting was called to order by Barbara Van Itallie at 7:10 PM. The May minutes were approved as corrected.

President

Barbara Van Itallie reported that she attended the DCC convocation to give out scholarships. We give out two \$600 scholarships each year. One is funded from our endowment and we provide funds from our budget for the second scholarship. The convocation program erroneously stated that we give out a \$600 and a \$500 scholarship.

Barbara thanked all the board members for working with her and led a round of introductions. Maria DeWald mention that we have created a new board position. Mary Lou Davis is the new National and State Liaison.

Treasurer

Diane Jablonski reported that we are on target with our expenses, and we have done well with collection of dues this spring, with \$21,000 already collected so far. The Writers' Tea has netted \$8,397 and our donations have increased because of the donation link on our website membership form. We can allocate the \$733 undesignated contributions to EOF which leaves more proceeds from the Tea free for our initiatives.

Diane moved that we allocate the money from the Writers' Tea as listed in her report. The motion passed.

Membership

Susie Blecker is getting names recommended for invitations to the Open House in September. Please email any names of prospective members that you want invited to Betsy or Sheila Zweifler. Anthula is talking to Gus at the Helenic center, but has not yet pinned down a date. Our usual second Thursday is unavailable, but the consensus was to find another date rather than change venues. We hope to get September 15, the third Thursday.

Membership Treasurer

Mary Ann Hogarty reported that we have 248 membership renewals to date, and only three non-renewals. This is a very good response so far.

Programs

Betsy Kopstein-Stuts and Sandy Goldberg have met with the program committee and they have generated a lot of good ideas.

- Sue McClane will be presenting her program “Utopia” on October 13. We are hoping to get the Boardman Road library for this presentation.
- Stu Shinske, executive editor of the Poughkeepsie Journal will be a speaker.
- In December a “Holiday Refresh,” which will be about stress relief, yoga, and meditation.
- The Diversity initiative will present a speaker about Islamic life.
- An Environmental program to take place at Vassar College, inviting Vassar students. We can include a speaker about recycling and perhaps a tour of the science building.
- Rehab through the Arts
- For our concluding program we can have a presentation by Judith Kalaora for the 100th anniversary of Women’s Voting in New York State. The presenter fee will be \$450 which is more that we usually spend for speakers.

Sandy Goldberg moved that we approve spending up to \$450 out of the budget, if needed, to bring in Judith Kalaora for our final meeting in 2017. The motion passed.

Community Liaison

Maria DeWald reported that our many initiatives are very active and in good shape.

Healthcare Initiative

Lula Allen reported that the Mothers Group has been meeting once a month for 3 years. Eight to ten mothers, with their babies, enjoy speakers, support, and lively discussion. The group has been very successful and now there is a need for more space than they can get at the Family Partnership. They are looking at space in the Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory building, and are trying to get a grant to help with the rent. Anyone interested in volunteering to help out with the program should email Lula or Kay Bishop.

Girls’ Conference

Diana Babington, along with Lori Scolaro, is co-chair for the Girls’ Conference. They now have 15-20 members who are active with the initiative. Diana reported that the biggest problem has been recruitment of girls, and they are working hard on that. They are trying to get corporate sponsorship from Jo-Ann Fabrics or Michaels. This year’s Conference will be on November 5 at DCC.

Old Business

Sheila Zweifler reported that the Annual dinner will be Thursday, June 9. We will have 75-80 attendees. That number is less than usual, probably because the Tea was held such a short time ago.

Planning Session

Meetings

We will continue meeting on the first Thursday, starting in September, at least for the first part of the term. Maria suggested that we try to do a conference call or use GoToMeeting once during the winter months.

100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in New York State

We are planning a program about this for one of our monthly programs, but we want to plan more activities. The following ideas were presented.

- We have a limited edition copy of Susan B. Anthony's purse which we can raffle off. It was suggested that we have the bag displayed at every meeting, selling raffle tickets for a drawing at our last meeting.
- Susan Lewis is working on a women's suffrage program with the FDR Library. We should connect with her.
- We should also connect with Ellie Charwat, who is thinking about programs with the League of Women Voters.
- The Diversity initiative enjoyed a trip to Seneca Falls a few years ago. We might plan another trip for the branch in honor of the anniversary.
- We can ask some of the interest groups, perhaps Soleil, Cuisine, or book groups, to plan an activity in honor of the anniversary.
- Rita Alterman would be a good person to do a presentation
- Kathleen Durham, of Val-Kill would be a good speaker for the annual meeting.
- There are a number of good movies about women's suffrage that we could show at the Boardman Road Library.
- We should partner with other organizations such as the Woman's Leadership Alliance to develop programs. Janna could get the Bar Association involved.
- Cathy Kinn should work to use newspapers to publicize our programs. Small local papers like the Southern Dutchess News are usually cooperative in listing our activities.

Partnering with Other Organizations

We want to have more activities in conjunction with other organizations and increase our visibility in the community.

- Friends of the Poughkeepsie Public Library District have agreed to share their table with us for International Women's Day.
- We can make better use of social media. It was suggested that we have a short presentation about how to "like" on Facebook or how to use Instagram. It was decided that we need to discuss this issue in committee.
- We could work on a community volunteer activity, perhaps volunteering as a branch to serve a meal once a month at the Lunch Box or the Hudson River Housing shelter. This could be a new community initiative.

Becoming more involved with local colleges and college students

- Sandy Goldberg pointed out that programs that we have had at college venues have drawn students, so we should plan to do that more often.
- National AAUW has a \$tart\$mart program, a workshop that helps college students learn about salary negotiation. There is LAF money for campus action. We can ask Sherre to contact colleges to see if they are interested in such a program, and, if so, arrange it.

Education Chair

This is a new position which is as yet unfilled. The Education Chair's purpose is to keep the membership up to date about issues in education. She would need to communicate with the various initiative and program leaders about issues and report to the membership. If Maria finds someone who is interested she may fill the position, but it can be left unfilled if there is no interest.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Friedman
Secretary