

Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 5, 2017
St. John's Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie, NY

Members present: Margaret Nijhuis, Kathy Friedman, Diane Jablonski, Barbara Hugo, Eileen Hayden, Cathy Kinn, Barbara Lemberger, Barbara Van Itallie, Betty Harrel, Susie Blecker, Mary Anne Hogarty, Monique Jones, Bonnie Auchincloss, and Maria DeWald. Guest: Mary Lou Davis.

The meeting was called to order by President Maria DeWald at 7:05 pm.

The minutes from August 31 were approved as corrected.

President's Report

- Diane and Betty met with Kim Churches, CEO of AAUW. They reported that they were impressed with her ideas. She is looking for ways to beef up the membership, especially for ways to encourage younger women to join. Since she is traveling around the country at this time they are trying to get her to speak at the New York State AAUW convention, and possibly come to speak at our branch.
- Maria shared the letter that she sent to Dr. Pamela Eddington offering her an honorary branch membership.
- Maria reminded the board of the thank you note guidelines that have been added to the working rules. She displayed a copy of the thank you note that contains the language required by law. This note, or a personal note using the same required language, must be sent by regular mail to every donor. A copy of the note is on our website under About Us/Policies and Procedures.
- Barbara Van Itallie has a list of 88 members from the database who said that they would be willing to provide refreshments for general membership meetings. She will send out an email to all 88 members requesting refreshments for the monthly meetings, choosing the first group to answer and hoping others will volunteer the next month.
- Maria passed around the new "rack cards" that we are using to inform people about our organization. She is looking for suggestions for other tabling materials. It was suggested that the new logo used on our alerts would be a colorful and attractive addition to our materials.
- Maria reported that she has printouts of the lists of the many members who have shown interest in volunteering for various branch activities. Please consult these lists when looking for help with tasks or committees.

Treasurer's Report

Diane Jablonski reported that the taxes have been completed and that there are no issues with our finances at this time. Scholarship funds for the EOF are not shown because most of those funds are taken out of the general fund where most of our donations are directed.

Programs

Monique Jones reported on the upcoming Programs:

October – Next week's program on using resources wisely will be at the Vassar Barn.

November – Sabeeha Rehman will speak on being Muslim in America.

January – Cybersecurity

May – Monique is working on booking a "History at Play" performance, perhaps on Women in World War II. Maria suggested that the program be held at the Wallace Center at the FDR library.

Publicity

Cathy Kinn shared a message alert that Vassar sent out about our upcoming event at Vassar Barn.

Membership

- Susie Blecker reported that 30 prospective members attended our open house. Many did not sign up during the open house because we do not take credit cards, but signed up afterwards. So far, we have 19 new members. Susie thanked Barbara Lemberger, Margaret Nijhuis, Mary Anne Hogarty, Mary Coiteux, and Pat Luczai for their help with this and with the new member reception.
- Board members who signed up are reminded to bring deserts to the new member reception on October 12.
- Claudette Hennessy is setting a deadline of October 15 for directory information. Frank Mazzella of Printing & Graphic Concepts has stated that he will not retain any of the information after the directory is printed. We can include thumbnail pictures of board members listed in the directory at an additional cost of \$40 and the consensus was that we should do it.

Membership Treasurer

Mary Ann Hogarty reported the branch has 333 members at this time.

Development

- Mary Lou Davis reported that we have chosen and are contacting two writers for the Writers' Tea.
- We only have 21 registered for the Woman of the Year luncheon at this time. We are hoping for 50-60.

Communications

- Bonnie Auchincloss asked that those board members who have not had their pictures taken for the directory should find Pat Luczai who will be taking pictures at the membership meeting.
- Margaret Nijhuis reported that a Facebook page has been started for Days for Girls. We should ask them to link their page to our branch page, since it is our policy to keep the pages for all our activities together.

Community Services

- The Diversity/Inclusion initiative has planned three meetings:
November 16 – The African Immigrant
March 23 – The Pakistani Immigrant
April 26 – The Latina Immigrant
- It was suggested that we collect supplies for women and girls at our meeting, the way we have been doing for the Grace Smith House at our December meetings. Suggested recipients were “The Closet” at Poughkeepsie High and “Days for Girls.” We should get a list of needed supplies from each organization.
- Barbara Hugo reported that 27 women signed up for initiatives and 8 signed up for board committees during the open house. Many new members are interested in STEM but we do not have much in the way of programs that they can walk into.

Interest Groups

Barbara Lemberger reported that group leaders are reaching out to new members who showed interest in their groups at the open house. Ediss is working to expand to a second group to accommodate interested members. Barbara reminded members that when interest groups change their dates they must work through her to assure that they don't conflict with other branch activities.

Awards

Betty Harrel showed the board AAUW pens that can be purchased at 50 for 57 cents apiece.

Public Policy

The Candidates Forum, moderated by Ellie Charwat, will be held on October 10 at the Unitarian church. Two candidates for the Supreme Court will take part as well as a candidate for comptroller. The issue of the constitutional convention will be presented. Maria shared the League of Women Voters brochure and reminded the board that, by law, our organization cannot take a position of the issues.

Additional Reports

- State/National Liaison Mary Lou Davis suggested that we need to be positive about the things that National does, the materials it produces, and about its new leadership in order to help sell the \$10 increase in dues to the membership.

- Historian Eileen Hayden thanked the members who responded to her article in the Poughkeepsie Journal. She and Barbara Hespineide are completing the year of Newsletter columns, "Perusing our Past." Maria suggested another topic of interest could be Women in World War II.

Old Business

- Margaret suggested that the people who met with President Churches write an article about her for the newsletter.
- Diane reported that we need to get a grant for the cost of the Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory for the district conference.

Announcements

- The New Member Reception will be at Vassar Barns on October 12. Program to follow.
- The District IV Conference is on October 21 at the Poughkeepsie Underwear Factory, 9:00-1:30.
- The Woman of the Year Luncheon is on Sunday, October 29 at the Beekman Arms.
- The Girls Conference is November 4 at DCC.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Friedman
Secretary