

Minutes
AARP Blacksburg Board
September 3, 2024
Blacksburg Recreation Center

Attendees: Don Creamer, Terry Wildman, Pat Ballard, Jerry Niles, Jackie Jones, Deborah Martin, John Burton, Pat Hipkins, Jamie McReynolds, Joy Herbert, Wilma Dotson.

Co-President Don Creamer called the meeting to order at 10:04 AM.

The Minutes: The minutes from the June 2024 board meeting were considered and **approved**.

Finances: Pat Ballard reported that, after expenses, we had some \$5,500.00 in our checking account mostly from the Health and Wellness Fair revenues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS-

Health & Wellness Fair: Jerry Niles reported that the planning for the Fair is going very well. The chair of the Health & Wellness Fair committee, Susan Magliaro, has arranged for busses to reach across the NRV into Pulaski, Giles, and Floyd and transport interested seniors to the fair. Jackie Jones has solicited over 50 Door prizes from local businesses and organizations. In addition, the Fair will have some new features such as a bloodmobile and a featured speaker, Michael Friedlander from the Carillion Research Institute. As of the report, we had one Platinum, seven Gold, eight Silver and 25 Bronze Sponsors as well as some 66 paid non-profits. Jerry said that volunteers to help the day before the Fair to set up and a couple hours after the Fair to take down, would be appreciated. Our goal for attendance up to 300 participants.

Leadership Development: Jerry announced a repeat of last year's luncheon to recruit new leaders. He also made a pitch for board members to step up to leadership positions.

Jackie Jones' New Role: Don announced that Jackie will be our representative to the Virginia State Advocacy Committee. The State group would like to meet with representatives from groups such as ours to get input and feedback. The state committee's focus is on the cost of prescription drugs, caregiver support and nursing home reform.

Pat Ballard's New Role: Don announced that Pat (lifetime treasurer may she live forever) will be joining the VTRA Board (Pat Hipkins is already there).

Chapter Logo: Don announced that he had made a minor change in our logo to bring us into compliance with the State and National AARP.

AARP Driver Education: Don reported that there was no update from Judith Jones on the issue.

Andrus Award: Don reported that there was no response to his request for information about the Andrus Award and/or our candidate for the award.

Chapter Awareness Grant: Don reported that we got our proposal approved.

Christiansburg Employee Benefits and Wellness Fair: Don reported that we will have a table at the **Christiansburg Employee Benefits and Wellness Fair** (26 September 9, 2024, at 8:30 to 11:30) and is looking for volunteers to help. Members are encouraged to contact Don or Jerry if you are interested and available.

Update on SNAP Involvement of the Chapter: Don reported that we are involved at the early stage of research.

Virginia Navigator Focus Group: Don and Wilma attended the focus group meeting which was centered on making the website more friendly and useful for seniors. All agree that there is some “good stuff” on the website if you can find it. They are soliciting input from members that have accessed or use the site.

Hunger Action Month: Don announced Common Ingredients NRV will host a food drive at the South Main Kroger on 22 September. They are looking for volunteers. Contact Leslie Pendleton if you can help that day.

ACTIONS-

VTRA Request: VTRA has requested that our support move to \$300. A motion to increase our existing funding to VTRA by \$50.00 was **approved**.

NAACP Freedom Fund: Don reported that Judith had suggested that Blacksburg AARP support the NAACP Freedom Fund with a donation. The Board discussed the role of the two organizations, particularly our emphasis on seniors. A motion to show our support by funding two of our members at the designation of the Membership Chair was **Approved**.

Chapter PO: We currently share a PO box and there have been some suggestions that we get our own box. Pat suggested that since it works and it would be more expensive to have our own, we follow the “if it ain’t broke don’t fix it maxim.” We **Decided** to leave it alone.

COMMITTEE REPORTS-

Program. Pat reported that she and Wendy Baldwin have compiled the numbers from their program interest survey of the membership. The top six are:

1. Recycling plastic waste
1. Senior scams
- 3 NRV Agency on Aging
- 4 Driver Assistance Technology
- 5 VCOM and services for Rural Seniors (including spiffy new diagnostic technology.
- 6 Nutrition and Aging.

AARP Virginia. Ben Crawford reported from the AARP Virginia meeting. The big issues are Social Security and Food Security. Nationally, for some 65 million seniors, Social Security is their largest source of income. In Virginia, 44% of seniors rely on Social Security for 50% or more of their income. For 25%, Social Security account for 90% or more of their income. Food Insecurity is a major problem for many seniors. Within Montgomery County alone, there are about 20 organizations that provide food assistance as well as organizations throughout the NRV.

AARP Advocacy. Jackie reported that the top priorities for this year are prescription drugs, caregiver support, and nursing home reform.

LLI. Jerry reported that LLI has enrolled some 342 students for the upcoming session.

Don **Adjourned** the meeting at 11:40