

AARP Blacksburg Chapter

Minutes

June 7, 2022

Attendees:

Don Creamer, Leslie Pendleton, Ben Crawford, Jerry Niles, Terry Wildman, Susan Terwilliger, Nola Elliott, Fred Piercy, Pat Ballard, Chuck Burress

President Leslie Pendleton called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

The minutes from the May meeting were considered and approved.

Treasurer's Report. Pat Ballard provided a brief report of funds currently on hand. She reported that the total amount in the checking account is \$10,913 of which \$2,609.85 are held in various committed line items (i.e., picnic, health fair, food project and LLI) yielding \$8,303.89 in available chapter funds.

Chapter Picnic. Jerry Niles provided a brief report on preparations for the June 17 picnic. The picnic will be catered by *Bottom of the Stairs* with barbecue and fixings provided. At this point 40 persons have signed up with the expectation that a few more will likely signup.

Recruiting Event. Fred Piercy reported that he and Chuck Burress represented the Chapter at the Triad Senior care Fair, at the Christiansburg Recreation Center on May 17. The main purpose was providing information about the Chapter for the purpose of recruiting new members. Fred and Chuck reported a small amount of traffic at their table and little success in generating interest about the Chapter. One comment, often heard by others at similar recruiting events, is that while many people may be AARP National members few if any knew anything about local chapters.

Fred and Chuck also participated in the Mobile Cancer Screening event at the Christiansburg Recreation Center on May 20. They reported the need to update and enhance our recruiting materials and acquire a new AARP tablecloth.

The Board spent several more minutes discussing the viability of these recruiting efforts, what kind of SWAG works to attract interest and generally how our efforts in this regard can be upgraded. In preparation for the Health & Wellness Fair on September 21, Leslie will contact AARP Virginia to inquire about a new table cloth and giveaway items that appeal to seniors. She also recommended creating a tri-fold poster board with information about our Chapter as well as photos.

Memorial Day Event. Ben Crawford and Terry Wildman gave a brief report on the Memorial Day event at the Dublin Veteran's Cemetery. Ben reminded the Board that Terry had served as Master of Ceremony at the event.

Health and Wellness Fair. Leslie, Chuck and Fred provided a brief report on preparations for the upcoming event this Fall. Leslie reported that the committee had 4 gold level sponsorships thus far and 10 commitments for other sponsors. The committee is meeting on the second Thursday of each month. Leslie said that more work needs to be done on the budget for the fair.

The discussion then turned to consideration of organizations the Chapter would fund and award at the Holiday Luncheon in December. Leslie asked whether the Chapter might consider new sponsorships such as Habitat for Humanity and the Blacksburg Refugee Project, organizations originally brought up by Don Creamer. Don then mentioned that a committee has been formed each year to make recommendations as to which organizations we would award funds to. Don further reminded the Board that a requirement we've used is that organizations receiving funds have some type of partnership with AARP.

Inter-Chapter association in Southwest Virginia. Don Creamer reported on efforts that he has made to stimulate discussion and possibly some action aimed at getting Chapters in SW Virginia to talk to one another and pursue ways to become more effective. Currently there is little if any inter-chapter communication or collaboration among chapters in SW Virginia. Don and Leslie reported that they have been meeting with chapter leaders across Virginia in an AARP VA Chapter Advisory Team led by Joyce Williams, State AARP President. The Team meets monthly by Zoom, but participation has been minimal given the number of chapters in Virginia. Before the pandemic, Brian Jacks was holding "Chapter Summit" meeting in the SW Virginia region. Don is considering whether it might be feasible to hold a leadership conference for chapters in the Southwest region as an additional effort.

Leslie posed a question of interest. Why should the Board be interested in this? One obvious answer is that we should be at least aware of what is going on around us at the State and local efforts. Perhaps there may be something chapters could learn from one another. Ben asserted that chapters are an important part of AARP and anything we can do in this region to support chapters would be a good thing. Jerry noted that a key insight into effective chapters is just how much effort it takes to sustain momentum and keep chapters interesting and worthwhile to members.

Andrus Award. Chuck reminded the Board that the deadline for this award is August 31. He reported that the Chapter will resubmit the nomination for Carolyn Rude and will look for ways to rework the nomination package submitted the previous year. There was a brief discussion about strategy for this particular award, some noting that awardees have sometimes been up for the award several times before actually receiving this major award.

Lifelong Learning Institute. Jerry reported that programs were in place for the Fall. He also mentioned that it has been difficult to find new staff members, and that efforts continue to fill a particularly important position.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45.

Submitted by Terry Wildman, Chapter Secretary