

Blacksburg AARP Chapter #2613



*AARP Chapters are separately
incorporated affiliates of AARP.*

Standing Rules¹ Chapter Operations and Committee Responsibilities

¹ Standing Rules are supplemental regulations established by the chapter to define procedures for operations specified by chapter by-laws. They may be changed at any time by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Name and Address

The name of this chapter is Blacksburg AARP Chapter 2613.

The official address of this chapter is that of the current President or the Post Office Box 10082, Blacksburg VA 24062.

Members and Dues

The maximum number of members, including associate members, is unlimited.

Annual dues are \$15 for a single or for a couple in the same household. Dues are free for members 90 years or older. Dues are free for members who purchased a Lifetime membership. Associate members' dues are \$15.

Persons joining the chapter in the last half of a calendar year also are members in good standing through the following year.

Members of other AARP chapters may also join Blacksburg AARP Chapter 2613.

Meetings

Chapter member meetings are held in-person on the third Tuesday of each month at 11:30am except in July and August or when otherwise communicated with members for special occasions. June normally designated as a social event such as a picnic and December normally is designated a celebratory month such as a holiday luncheon. All regular meetings are held at the Blacksburg Community Center, 725 Patrick Henry Drive, Blacksburg, VA and are open to the public.

Chapter meetings may be held virtually if needed and announced to the membership.

The official annual meeting as required by the chapter designation as a 501©4 organization is held in the month of November.

The chapter Board of Directors are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 10:00am at the Blacksburg Community Center, 725 Patrick Henry Drive, Blacksburg, VA and are open to all members.

The chapter is in recess during the months of July and August.

Cancellation of in-person member meetings due to inclement weather or other emergency events will follow the Montgomery County School System's closing schedule. Cancellation of Board of Director's meeting will be determined by the discretion of the current President.

Officers

This chapter may elect additional officers as needed and approved by the Board of Directors. Such additional officers shall serve on the Board of Directors.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors consists of the elected officers and Board members, and the committee chairs and members. Officers are elected to serve one-year terms. Board members are elected to serve three-year terms. Terms of service may be extended at the discretion of the current Board of Directors.

Nominating Committee

The Leadership Development committee serves as the Nominating Committee for this chapter.

Checks and Money

Checks of Blacksburg AARP Chapter 2613 may be signed by the Treasurer and the President.

An annual budget shall be prepared by the Financial Review Committee and approved by the Board of Directors.

Unbudgeted expenses shall be approved by the Executive Committee.

Liaisons and Partners

The chapter maintains regular liaison with AARP Virginia, the Town of Blacksburg Community Center, the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech, and the Virginia Tech Retires Association.

Partnership with other organizations is formed regularly when needed to accomplish mutually held goals. In recent years, the following partnerships have been formed: Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech, NRV Timebank, the Center for Gerontology at Virginia Tech, the Community Foundation of the NRV, Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, Warm Hearth Village Retirement Center, Virginia Tech Retirees Association, the YMCA at Virginia Tech, AARP Virginia, the New River Valley Agency on Aging, Blacksburg Community Center, Town of Blacksburg, AARP National, Virginia Tech Continuing and Professional Education, Christiansburg Recreation Center, Micah's Soup for Seniors, Montgomery County Christmas Store, Southwest Veterans Cemetery, Veterans Administration (Salem, VA), the Veterans Administration (Beckley, WV), and Volunteer Montgomery,

Committees

The standing committees and liaisons and their responsibilities include the following:

Awards Committee

The Chapter Awards Committee is responsible for seeking nominations for all awards, internal and external to the Chapter, and then selecting recipients for these awards. Two internal Chapter awards are given each year—the *Chapter Service Award*, and the *Community Spirit Award*.

The chapter may also nominate persons for the *New River Valley Leading Lights Award*, various awards from AARP Virginia, and awards from AARP national.

Care Committee

The Care Committee provides comfort and cheer to members who are ill or otherwise in need. The committee chair will receive notifications of members who have lost a loved one and will offer condolences to that family on behalf of the Chapter. Cards appropriate to the situation are mailed to members who may be ill or in recovery. The same action is taken for extending condolences on the Chapter's behalf. Occasionally the committee chair will make phone calls or notify members who may wish to make the phone calls due to personal associations.

Chaplin

The Chaplain provides spiritual guidance for the chapter and delivers a short devotional message at each of the Chapter's monthly public meetings.

The Chaplain also prepares and delivers a short memorial presentation for members who have passed during a calendar year. This presentation takes place in January during the first public meeting of the year.

Community Service Committee

The community service committee's primary goal is to seek out and coordinate board approved community service projects that reflect the organization's goals to support the local community, especially the senior community.

Financial Review Committee

This committee establishes financial procedures and planning for the chapter. It reviews the Treasurer's records and reports results at the February Board Meeting. It also prepares an annual budget for the Chapter, in collaboration with the treasurer, that is presented for approval at the February board meeting.

Health and Wellness Committee

The Planning Committee plans for and conducts a biennial Health and Wellness Fair in partnership with the Town of Christiansburg and the Christiansburg Recreation Center. The Committee seeks participation of sponsors/exhibitors, including local healthcare providers, recreation centers, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and other organizations.

Hospitality Committee

The Hospitality Committee exists to provide a welcoming environment for monthly chapter meetings. Additionally, this committee plans and facilitates the annual June picnic, and the December holiday luncheon.

Leadership Development Committee

The Committee serves as a Nomination Committee for the chapter and is responsible to present a slate of future officers and Board members to the Board and to assist the President in recruiting chairs and members for key committees.

Legislative Committee

This committee provides information and recommendations to the Board and Chapter Members about legislative proposals, decisions, and issues at the local, county, state, and federal levels that may affect the lives of older persons in any significant way.

Membership Committee

This Committee maintains an accurate record of membership of the chapter and seeks new members through active efforts.

Member Communication Committee

This committee designs and maintains the Chapter website. The site is constructed to enable storage of all pertinent chapter documents such as minutes, newsletters, bylaws, manuals, photos, business forms, membership applications, and other relevant digital artifacts. The Committee provides frequent communication to the membership via a mass email system such as Mailchimp.

Newsletter Committee

This committee prepares and publishes issues of the chapter newsletter and distributes each issue to active members and others as determined by the Board of Directors.

Program Committee

The Program Committee plans and executes programs for the public in person either or virtual meetings of the chapter. The programs may be of general interest or focused on current chapter initiatives.

Chapter Liaisons

Relationships with certain community organizations is granted formal status. The following liaisons have achieved this status.

AARP Tax Aide Liaison

This Committee conducts the AARP Tax-Aide program for seniors of Southwest Virginia.

Lifelong Learning Institute Liaison

This Committee seeks to maintain on-going communication with LLI at VT including but not limited to describing activities in each organization and act as a catalyst for the generation of possible areas of collaboration in programming and social activities.

Virginia Tech Retirees Association (VTRA) Liaison

This liaison is maintained generally by a member of both Blacksburg AARP Chapter 2613 and VTRA Boards. The purpose is to ensure accurate information about both organizations is shared.

AARP Virginia Liaison

This liaison seeks to provide information that will assist in strengthening and maintaining a positive, productive relationship between the chapter and AARP, resulting in better service to seniors and the communities in which they reside.

Appendix 1²

AARP Chapters: Good for Seniors; Good for the Community

Don Creamer

AARP chapters are organizations devoted to service to the community in which they reside. They are chartered by AARP and embraced by their respective state offices. They operate according to bylaws, some of which are prescribed by AARP. They are composed of seniors, citizens 50+ years of age, and adhere to the motto of the founder of AARP, Ethel Percy Andrus: "To serve, not to be served."

There are more than 800 AARP chapters chartered in the United States and Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands. Almost 40 of these exist in Virginia. They range in size from a very few to hundreds of members depending on their location and the culture of those communities.

Chapter viability depends on leadership of the organization and its compatibility with the prevailing cultures of the community. Inevitably, organizational health depends on its relationships with other entities in the community.

The principal goal of AARP chapters is enhancing the quality of life as we age. Successful aging, then, is the dominant operational guideline for local chapters. Whatever contributes to enjoyment, health, well-being, and enlightenment of members represents a viable activity for chapters.

Essential Components of Successful AARP Chapters

² *Note: This paper was prepared for discussion by the Virginia Chapter Advisory Committee, chaired by Joyce Williams, President, AARP Virginia. It is included as an appendix to this document because it addresses aspirational goals for chapter success and was adopted by AARP Blacksburg to aid in chapter evaluation.*

Leadership is the key to successful chapters! Leaders make things happen and may override other key factors in organization success; however, successful chapters are likely to be characterized by certain commonalities:

- Significant relationships with other community organizations
- Responsive system of governance
- Renewing membership
- Regular, meaningful programs to enlighten members and spark interest
- Consequential projects and activities that allow member involvement and reward
- Frequent communication with members containing crucial information for successful aging

Significant relationships with other community organizations

AARP chapters exist in a community composed of multiple entities ranging from governments, churches, families, non-profit organizations, civic organizations, and personal interest groups. Taken as a whole, enormous energy is expended through these groups that tends to attract persons of similar interests and who want to be a part of something vital to an expressive community. Successful AARP chapters must fit in the fabric of these cultures and must contribute substantive value that enriches the environments for all.

Responsive system of governance

Governance is a system by which an organization operates. Essential elements of governance include a policy making body, often called a board of directors, officers authorized to carry out organization policies, and committees normally expected to conduct the business of the organization. Responsive governance is a system sensitive to its external and internal cultures and reacts to them positively in an ethical and legal manner.

Renewing membership

Membership of an organization must be renewable to survive in the long term. New members not only bring diversity of ideas that invigorate current operations but provide sustainability of the chapter itself. Natural attrition of members must be countered with replacement.

Regular, meaningful programs to enlighten members and spark interest

A principal obligation of an organization is to nurture its members by responding to their needs. One of the most pervasive needs of seniors is enlightenment; that is, constant learning about their environments and feeding their thirst for understanding their world. Organizations can and should provide ongoing educational opportunities open to all members that enriches lives through experience and knowledge.

Consequential projects and activities that allow member involvement and reward

To feel connected to an organization; that is, to feel rewarded for being part of the group, members must experience its essence by physical, mental, and emotional involvement in communal activities. This involvement can be manifest by simple awareness through reading or talking with others on the one hand to leadership roles that shape the character of the organization on the other. Examples of meaningful involvement include reading newsletters, attending social events, participating in meetings, joining discussion groups, listening to speakers at program events, membership in the policy making groups, holding officer positions, and planning events are examples of meaningful involvement.

Frequent communication with members containing crucial information for successful aging

Constituent meetings, newsletters, blogs, websites, and email messages are mechanisms available to all organizations to enable regular messaging to members. Employing each of these devices offers another meaningful form of involvement of members who must write or design these tools. To be effective, these messaging tools must be used reliably and frequently.

Summary

AARP chapters composed of these essential elements can succeed in communities of energetic persons who want to be involved in something larger than themselves. Inquisitive minds invariably seek new understanding of the world in which they live. AARP chapters can play a vital role in this quest.