

AARP Blacksburg Chapter

Minutes

March 2, 2021

Meeting held by Zoom Conference

Attendees:

Don Creamer, Leslie Pendleton, Linda Correll, Todd Solberg, Chuck Burress, Pat Ballard, Kai Duncan, Judith Jones, Tom Hohenshil, Ben Crawford, Jerry Niles, Jeananne Dixon, Joy Herbert, Doug Feuerbach, Terry Wildman, Lisa Moose, Hugh VanLandingham

President Leslie Pendleton called the meeting to order at 10:00am.
Minutes of February 2, 2021 Board meeting were approved.

Reports:

Book Project. Tom Hohenshil gave an extensive report on our “Blacksburg AARP Book Project for Vets” including a formal plan for the project which had been requested at the February Board meeting. Included in the progress report were the following components: Books delivered thus far to Veterans medical centers in Salem and Beckley, promotional activities conducted or in progress, possible additional pick up site locations, and a note that our chapter should decide how big we want the project to become.

The formal plan proposed for the book project was discussed in detail followed by a Board vote to approve the plan. This plan will be posted on the chapter website.

Mail box keys. Leslie Pendleton raised the question of whether extra keys to our P.O. Box might be available in the event our Treasurer would be out of town and unable to collect our mail. It was determined that we have only one key and that the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer have worked out a satisfactory arrangement to ensure that mail can be collected on a regular basis.

Newsletter. In Carolyn Rude’s absence, Leslie Pendleton asked for a brief report on our newsletter status. It was noted that we have begun a “new member” column to introduce folks who have recently joined the chapter. Also, it appears that we have sufficient content for the March/April edition, but a request was made for members to contact Carolyn with any ideas for stories or other content for the May/June edition.

Chapter Programs. Judith Jones briefly reported that programs for our March, April and May meetings have been set. Following some further discussion, it was determined not to schedule member programs during July and August which has been the Chapter’s practice except for the summer of 2020 when July and August programs were scheduled to compensate for missed programs during Covid-19 crisis during the spring months of 2020. All member programs have been and will continue to be conducted remotely while Covid restrictions are in place.

Chapter Picnic. Terry Wildman raised the question of whether the Chapter might be able to schedule our June picnic this year given the pace of vaccinations and other possible circumstances related to possible easing of the Covid crisis. Following some discussion, the Board decided to tentatively plan for an outdoor picnic event to be held on the Wildman/Magliaro property at noon on June 15. It was noted that given the ages of our members it would almost certainly be the case that all would have received vaccinations well prior to June and thus be potentially able to comfortably participate in the picnic if held outdoors. However, it was also noted that AARP Virginia has thus far declined to support or endorse any “in-person” event associated with AARP during the Covid crisis. It was decided that Terry would report on possibilities for conducting the picnic at the April meeting, and that we would raise the question of appropriateness with the AARP Virginia Office.

Chapter Audit/Finance Review. Jerry Niles, along with Kai Duncan, presented a written financial review for 2020 as required by the Blacksburg Chapter Bylaws. The main finding was that the Chapter financial records have been managed and kept in impeccable order, and that commendations and expressions of gratitude were in order for our Chapter Treasurer Pat Ballard.

Jerry Niles also recommended that the Chapter discontinue using the word “audit” to describe our annual review of the chapter books and to use the term “financial review” instead. The reason for this change is that the word “audit” has a technical meaning that is not consistent with the practice we have been following. This distinction will be addressed in the context of our ongoing review of Chapter Bylaws. Jerry’s report will be appended to these minutes.

One further note on Chapter finances is that the LLI/AARP account currently has a balance of over \$8,000, which is quite large given the diminished activities during the 2020 year. Jerry proposes working this amount down over the coming year.

Budget Report. Pat Ballard presented a “Budget versus expenditures report for 2020” including a proposed budget for 2021. One key result for 2020 is that actual Chapter expenses were about half of the budgeted expenses of \$10,860.00, due to reductions in activity during the Covid crisis.

The Board voted to approve the proposed budget for 2021.

Coffee Talks. Leslie Pendleton reported that a small number of folks have been participating in this event and the activity seems to be going well. Leslie also wants to try an “afternoon tea” talk. The first one is scheduled for March 23 at 4pm.

AARP Community Challenge Grants. Leslie Pendleton reported that the grant call is now out for 2021. The deadline for submission is April 15, 2021. Leslie mentioned several grant proposal possibilities including asking for support for the “self-care guide” described and discussed at the

February Board Meeting. Don Creamer noted that given the extensive effort involved in creating the *guide* some extra resources would be very helpful.

Self-Care Guide. Leslie Pendleton reported that members were currently being recruited to participate in creating the *Guide*, as it represents a large amount of work. Based on current planning the *Guide* would be rolled out the week of September 13-17 which is our scheduled “health and wellness week.” Further details about this work will be discussed at subsequent Board meetings.

Stepping Out. Jerry Niles led a brief discussion of our Chapter’s past participation in Blacksburg’s annual *Steppin’ Out* event. Our most recent participation was as a sponsor of the “Themed Senior Section” at the event. After some discussion, the Board reached the conclusion that our participation over the years has been mostly unsuccessful in terms of achieving our main goal of attracting new members to the Chapter. The Board voted to not participate in the 2021 event.

Membership Committee. Leslie Pendleton and Todd Solberg led a brief discussion raising several questions about membership including whether this committee should be more active, what is our ideal number of members, and how we can best communicate with members. It was pointed out that regardless of overall number of members, which are down slightly at the present time, we tend to get the same number of member (30-40) coming to chapter meetings. Todd raised the point that in future email notices to members we should be using the “bcc” feature so as to conceal members’ email addresses. Also mentioned was the possibility of having a Zoom component to Chapter meetings once we return to in-person events.

Chapter Bylaws. Linda Correll presented two documents for review. One is a draft Bylaws document which has been under review by Linda Correll, Don Creamer, Ben Crawford, Kai Duncan, and Judith Jones. Linda asked that Board members review this document in detail and provide feedback as needed. The revised document will be presented to the Board for approval when the review is done.

The second document is a draft version of the Chapter “Operation Guidelines Manual” which describes in detail how the Chapter functions, including responsibilities of officers, board members, and committees. Linda asks that all committee chairs review the document with an eye towards their own committee functions and responsibilities and provide feedback as needed. Linda will send out a “must review date” to keep progress going on this effort.

The Board also discussed the question of “who owns these documents” which is really the question of who will be responsible for maintaining and updating the Bylaws and Operations Manual over time. After some discussion Ben Crawford proposed that the Chapter Vice President assume this responsibility. No definite conclusion was reached at this meeting.

Committee Reports. No specific committee reports were given at this point.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 am
Submitted by Terry Wildman, Secretary