

## **AARP Blacksburg Chapter**

### **Minutes**

January 4, 2022

Meeting held by Zoom Conference

#### **Attendees:**

Don Creamer, Leslie Pendleton, Todd Solberg, Chuck Burress, Ben Crawford, Jerry Niles, Terry Wildman, Wendy Baldwin, Pat Ballard, Linda Correll, John Burton, Judy Jones, Sue Hossack, Susan Terwilliger

President Leslie Pendleton called the meeting to order at 10:01am.

The minutes for December were considered and approved.

**Treasurer's Report.** Pat Ballard reported that the annual budget report is being prepared. She mentioned that thank-you notes have been received from all the entities to whom we gave donations in December. Pat also mentioned that the fee for bulk mailing of our newsletters is coming up soon. Pat will pay this when it comes due. In this context Leslie explained that there are currently issues with the bulk mailing process that she is working to resolve.

**Google Drive Documents.** Sue Hossack reported that the Chapter's membership list has been uploaded as a Google drive document, and that a few other folders have already been set up for the Chapter. Leslie Pendleton mentioned that she is uploading prior health fair documents dating to 2014.

Don Creamer and Wendy Baldwin asked Sue some technical questions about using Google document "groups" and sharing documents from Google drive. Sue briefly provided explanations and a brief tutorial on accessing "shared with me" documents.

**Committee Assignments.** Leslie Pendleton noted that a number of Chapter committees currently have vacancies. A short discussion followed in which several committee assignments were resolved. Chuck Burress agreed to continue leading the Awards Committee while serving in his current role as Chapter Vice President. John Burton volunteered to assist Chuck on the Awards Committee.

Leslie reported that Tom Hohenshil has left the Board and is no longer chairing the Service Committee. It was pointed out that this committee has mostly dealt with the one or two food drives the Chapter does each year; however, Don Creamer suggested that the committee's work could actually be larger in scope. Leslie reminded the Board that the Books for Vets project led by Tom in 2021 fits within the Community Service category. Judy Jones volunteered to lead this committee

The Legislative Committee is currently vacant, but no resolution was reached during this discussion. Ben Crawford mentioned that Ron (former Blacksburg Mayor) and Mary Rordam may be interested in joining the Chapter. He also suggested that Ron would be a logical chair of the Legislative Committee.

The previously named Audit Committee, currently renamed as the Finance Committee will be led by Jerry Niles. The renaming was due to the fact the Chapter conducts annually a review of the Chapter budget but not technically an audit.

**State-level Awards.** Leslie Pendleton reported that AARP Virginia released deadlines for the “2021 AARP Virginia Volunteer Awards” by email on Thursday, December 30. A brief discussion followed as Leslie read the description of each award. Leslie said that she will inquire about the stated January 9 awards deadline. Terry Wildman asked if there was a particular definition of the designation “volunteer” as many of the awards recognize “a volunteer” who has made particular kinds of contributions during the previous year. Leslie will inquire about this.

The document conveying awards information also reported that State Director Jim Dau will provide an overview of the 2022 State Plan at an on-line conference originally scheduled for January 13 and postponed to January 20. Leslie and several other Board members reported they will register and attend this meeting.

**Various Chapter Related Items.** Leslie Pendleton reported that she will be meeting with Tammy Caldwell regarding a possible Health and Wellness Fair for 2022. Leslie also asked about the possibility of updating the Chapter Brochure which has not been reviewed in some time. Also, Leslie mentioned the need to reach some resolution on a form letter that can be used to welcome new members. In regard to membership Linda Correll mentioned that when we attempt to inform folks about the existence of our Chapter many are confused about the two levels of AARP membership, national and local. Leslie mentioned looking into whether the Virginia Tech retirement coordinator (Ann Cronley) might be willing and able to inform new retirees of our Chapter.

**Program Committee.** Linda Correll reported that upcoming programs for our monthly Chapter meetings can be viewed now by going to Google Drive, clicking on the “shared with me” folder and then viewing the “Programs – Working Calendar” folder. Sue Hossack provided a demo on how to find the information.

**Newsletter Update.** Susan Terwilliger reported that the January/February/March newsletter has been sent to the printer. Leslie noted that the newsletter, under Beth and Susan’s editorship, has retained the quality we have come to expect during Carolyn Rude’s tenure. Susan reported that information is currently being gathered for the April/May/June edition. Terry mentioned that Information regarding the June picnic will be forthcoming as we learn more about Covid and restrictions possibly in place at that time.

**LLI Update for Spring 2022.** Jerry Niles reported that both on-line and face-to-face classes are in place for the Spring.

**Smart Driver Classes.** Ben Crawford reported that information about AARP's Smart Driver courses can be obtained by simply "Googling" the same. Prices vary somewhat depending on AARP membership and discounts in place at any given time, but none seem more than \$24. Ben reported that for him the course was very helpful and can be taken on-line at your own pace. Insurance discounts at some level come with successful completion of the course.

**Redistricting.** Ben briefly mentioned that "non-partisan" redistricting has now been completed in Virginia, and the current maps will be in place for the next 10 years. For more on this, Ben suggested going to the lengthy article published in the Sunday, January 2, edition of the Roanoke Times.

**Ancestry Information.** Judy Jones reported that access to "ancestry.com" is free to Virginia Tech retirees (just in case some of us didn't know). Also, Judy reported that the site "family search" (Genealogical Society of Utah, <https://www.familysearch.org/en/>) is very good with a deep look at family backgrounds.

**ARPA Proposals.** This discussion centered on the 13-million-dollar allocation that Blacksburg has received from the Covid related American Recovery Program Act (ARPA). Wendy and Leslie reported that Blacksburg has likely already spent some of these funds to compensate for losses incurred during the pandemic thus far. In the meantime, Blacksburg has a process in place to receive input on projects that might receive funding under this recovery program. Wendy, Leslie and Judith reported attending a town meeting to learn procedures for submitting preliminary proposals or ideas. Following meetings of an AARP working group that Wendy and her ad-hoc ARPA Committee formed three project ideas emerged that will be submitted to the town planning committee by the January 7 deadline. The first idea is to encourage funding of public restrooms for the downtown area of Blacksburg. The second is to establish a walking tour of historic Blacksburg. The third concerns how to use the building and green space associated with the old Blacksburg police station.

An extended discussion ensued about the complexities of each of these potential projects/ideas were they to gain support. Also of interest was how each of these ideas might relate to other ideas presented by other interested groups. As to when the town might provide feedback on proposals received on January 7, Leslie will try to learn about the timeline and report back.

In the meantime, our proposals related to each of these three big ideas can be seen on Google Drive under the ARPA Proposals folder.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59am

Submitted by Terry Wildman, Chapter Secretary

