

AARP Blacksburg Chapter Minutes

September 6, 2022

Attendees:

Don Creamer, Leslie Pendleton, Ben Crawford, Jerry Niles, Terry Wildman, Susan Terwilliger, Nola Elliott, Fred Piercy, Pat Ballard, Linda Correll, Pam Knox, Wilma Dotson, Beth Grabau

President Leslie Pendleton called the meeting to order at 10:00am. With new Board Members Pam Knox and Wilma Dotson being present for the first time, each member briefly introduced themselves.

The minutes from the May meeting were considered and approved.

Pat Ballard reported a quiet summer regarding the budget and funds movement. We currently have about \$7600 available funds in the bank.

Letter regarding the AARP Blacksburg website. Don Creamer shared a letter he received from Margot Reyes at the Fuller Library (location of this library not given). Margot wrote to congratulate our Chapter for the website section located at: [https://blacksburgaarp.org/successful aging](https://blacksburgaarp.org/successful%20aging). Margo explained that this material was helpful in planning for a class that she and library had held for seniors and their families.

Christiansburg Benefits and Wellness Fair. Leslie reported that members of the Blacksburg AARP Chapter are invited to exhibit at the Town of Christiansburg 2022 Benefits and Wellness Fair, Thursday, September 29, 8:30-11:30, at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. Leslie asked for volunteers to staff a table for the Chapter at this event. Don Creamer and John Burton agreed to staff the table.

Health and Wellness Fair Update. Leslie and Fair committee members provided information regarding volunteer roles and assignments for the upcoming fair on September 21. Volunteers assisting with parking and exhibitor check-in will begin at 10am and others will provide assistance throughout the Fair in different roles. Leslie reported that approximately 80 exhibitors will be participating, somewhat fewer than in previous fairs, but encouraging given the recent disruptions caused by the pandemic. Leslie also noted on behalf of the committee that the fewer exhibits did not reflect less work by the committee. Masks are encouraged at the event but not required.

Newsletter Update. Beth Grabau and Susan Terwilliger reported that the next newsletter is expected out by November 1. Material for this newsletter will be needed by the first week of October, and that a summary of the Health and Wellness Fair should be included. Notice and registration for the Holiday Luncheon on December 13 will be included as well.

Chapter Programs. Linda Correll reported that programs for the remainder of the year are set. Linda mentioned that she will be stepping down as program chair but will continue working toward securing a program for January.

Dr. Michael Freidlander, Executive Director of the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute will be speaking at the September meeting, and because of possible larger attendance the meeting will be held in the large meeting room near the entrance of Blacksburg Recreation Center.

Dr. Matthew Wright, veterans services representative of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services will be the October speaker, and Dr. David Ayares, our November speaker, will talk on the topic of heart transplants and solutions for overcoming the organ shortage crisis.

Awards. John Burton provided a handout showing previous recipients of the Chapter Service Award, and the Community Spirit Award. For the current year, John suggested that we set a deadline of October 5 for candidates to be proposed so that an awards committee would have several weeks to consider candidates.

John asked the board to authorize him to form a committee to consider candidates. The request was approved by the board, as well as the October 5 deadline. Don Creamer will send a Mailchimp message to Chapter members asking for nominations to be sent to John or Chuck Burress.

Chapter Board Meeting Change. Leslie asked if the Board would consider moving the October Board Meeting from October 4 to October 11 due to a conflict with her schedule. This change was agreeable to the Board.

Meeting with Congressman Griffith. Ben Crawford reported that he and David DeBiasi from the State AARP office had met with David Michaels, policy advisor to Morgan Griffith. Their discussion ranged across a variety of topics related to the State AARP Office and the Blacksburg Chapter, including the Health and Wellness Fair, and the Chapter's success in working with the Blacksburg Regional Art Association to win one of two Community Challenge Grants. This grant involved creating a large mural at the corner of College Avenue and Draper Road in Blacksburg.

Community Service. With Judith Jones still in Italy, Leslie reported that AARP Virginia is conducting a statewide "Hunger Month" food drive this September. The Chapter at this point has collected \$250 toward the food drive, with the donations having been received at Chapter meetings. Leslie asked where we might donate these funds, or some portion of them in September. Ben Crawford suggested we consider donating to the Salvation Army which has a post in Southwest Virginia. No conclusion was reached at this point.

Leslie mentioned that Judith will be here to resume food drive collections at our next Chapter meeting.

Standing Rules Update. Linda Correll reported that the project to update standing rules will be completed by January.

Community Challenge Grants. Leslie referred our attention to the recent newsletter article describing how two local organizations, *Literacy Volunteers of the New River Valley*, and the *Blacksburg Regional Art Association*, had recently been awarded grants from AARP's Community Challenge grants program. Details of these awards are described in the Chapter's September-October newsletter. Leslie reminded the Board that the unveiling of the mural created at the corner of Draper Road and College Avenue (the product of the Blacksburg Regional Art Association project) will be held on October 21 at 3:00pm. A reception will follow at the Lyric Theater.

Committee Reports. Don Creamer and Jerry Niles reported that the Leadership Development committee has been meeting with several folks who may be interested in assuming leadership positions in the Chapter. They noted that we are currently looking for someone to assume the positions of Vice President, Secretary, and Newsletter Editor.

Jerry Niles reported that LLI is ready to go with the Fall 2022 program. Jerry mentioned that he will be looking to see if there may be an uptick in memberships compared to activity seen during the Covid pandemic years.

Jerry also mentioned that the LLI annual fund had received \$27000 and had 6-8 major sponsors. He reported also that a staff position had been filled following a long search.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59am

Submitted by Terry Wildman, Chapter Secretary