



FINAL MINUTES

Wheaton-Glen Ellyn AAUW Board Meeting

September 9, 2020

IN ATTENDANCE (via Zoom): Janet Arden, Donna Jean Simon, Maureen Sheehan, Frankie Robinson, Tracy Kline, Jean Lindsey, Nancy Possinger, Ewa Bacon, Mary Sue Brown, Suzanne Gagner, Fran Kravitz, Kathleen McCullough, Carolyn Oesterle, Jane Palmer, Patricia Spence, and Patricia Bernhold

CALL TO ORDER

Co-President Donna Jean Simon called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. She also informed everyone that the meeting would be recorded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Co-President Simon asked if everyone had a chance to review the August 2020 Board minutes. Jean Lindsey moved to approve the minutes as written. Patricia Spence seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

OFFICER AND CHAIR REPORTS

Treasurer Maureen Sheehan shared that August had not been an active month in terms of financial transactions. She stated that seven additional members had renewed their dues. The main expenses incurred related to locker rentals. Co-President Janet Arden shared that she would be sending out a survey to the Branch membership to have them vote on whether to accept the proposed budget. Jane Palmer asked whether an audit, which is typically done on an annual basis, should be waived in light of the pandemic. After much discussion, it was agreed that the bylaws need to be reviewed in reference to this topic before any decisions are made. Jane offered to conduct this review. This topic will be placed on the October 2020 Board agenda.

Membership Co-Vice President Nancy Possinger shared that the Branch currently has 109 members. She also shared that she and Membership Co-Vice President Jean Lindsey have followed up with members who still have not paid their dues for this year. However, she has not

heard back from many of these members. Most of the members who have not paid their dues are new members. Membership Co-Vice President Possinger is going to work with Kathy McCullough in order to cross-check her list of members with the list of members who receive *Twigs*. This will help her and Membership Co-Vice President Lindsey determine who should still continue to receive *Twigs* and how long they should receive *Twigs* in the event they have not paid their dues.

Program Vice President Frankie Robinson reported that the September Branch meeting guest speaker, Gwen Henry, donated her honorarium to the EOF. She also shared that she is continuing to work on obtaining a speaker for April. Program Vice President Robinson reported that she is still waiting to hear back from the current prospective speaker, who was going to provide a presentation related to LGBTQ rights. Co-Presidents Arden and Simon reported that, according to the survey that was distributed, the September Branch meeting was positively received. Co-President Arden stated that the links to the two webinars that will be the subject of the October Branch meeting will be listed in *Twigs*. She stated that they are looking for five people to host no more than six people each in an outdoor setting at their homes. The groups will discuss the two webinars. A Zoom discussion option will also be provided. Co-President Simon shared that a discussion guide will be provided to the discussion leader who will not be the same person as the host. Program Vice President Robinson shared that the webinars are already available on You Tube and that she will send the links for You Tube viewing. It was shared that Mary Callow has already volunteered to be a host for this event. Co-President Arden stated that the hosts will have no other duties other than to provide a space for the meeting. Attendees should bring their own beverages/food and a chair. Hosts should be prepared to allow attendees to use their bathrooms, if needed. In the case of inclement weather, all discussions will be via Zoom. The date of this October Branch meeting will be October 10, 2020. Mary Sue Brown and Patricia Spence volunteered to host discussion groups. Co-President Arden asked other members to email her or Co-President Simon if they are interested in hosting or know someone who is interested in hosting.

Book Sale Committee Chair Ewa Bacon reported that there will be no Book Sale in October. This is due to current COVID-19 positivity rates and because the host church is closed for all events- probably through the fall. Book Sale Committee Chair Bacon shared that she has notified the appraiser and Carlson Movers about the cancellation of the Book Sale. She is currently exploring other options related to future book sale events.

Community Relations Chair Mary Sue Brown reported that she had no new information to report.

Fundraising Walk Chair Carolyn Oesterle reported that this year's Walk will be on September 11, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. at Hidden Lake in Glen Ellyn. Fifteen members have signed up to participate in this event. If it rains, the event will be postponed or cancelled. If it is drizzling, it may still be conducted. Fundraising Walk Chair Oesterle is planning to have participants pose for pictures with suffragette paraphernalia.

Co-President Simon reported on behalf of Educational Opportunity Funds Chair Susan Levy-Creed and stated that there no updates to share.

LunaFest Coordinator Suzanne Gagner reported that LunaFest is scheduled for May 1, 2021 at Center Stage in Naperville and that everything is all set.

Newsletter Editor Kathleen McCullough reminded members that the deadline for submitting information to the next issue of *Twigs* is September 15, 2020 by 5:00 p.m. She also requested that if a member, who regularly submits an article to *Twigs*, is not going to do so for a particular issue that the member let her know that an article is not going to be submitted. She encouraged members to consult guidelines if there are questions about submitting articles.

Public Policy Chair Patricia Spence reported that all is well at the moment. However, she did share that there was an alert from the AAUW Illinois Public Policy Chairs that indicated that AAUW Illinois was supporting a graduated tax. Public Policy Chair Spence stated that she “pushed back” on this because the mandate was not attached to any public policy priority.

STEM Coordinator Fran Kravitz reported that the second “Science Girls on the Go” kit was distributed on September 8, 2020. The topic of the second kit is kaleidoscopes. STEM Coordinator Kravitz also shared that she is working on the third kit. The third kit will focus on a crystal tree activity. She reported that the AAUW Branch in Downers Grove requested a copy of the blueprints that were used to make the science “houses”. Jean said that her husband could forward the blueprint information. Nancy confirmed that membership brochures have been included in the houses.

Website Chair Jane Palmer thanked everyone who had copied her on information that they had sent to *Twigs*. She shared that she is currently working on adding a STEM page to the website. She is also thinking of listing the Branch’s interest groups and contact information for these groups to the home page for a centralized sign-up opportunity so that members can email the appropriate people if they want more information about a particular group.

Suzanne suggested that the Public Policy email be sent to all members because the information it contains is so valuable.

OLD BUSINESS

Directory updates were discussed, and specifically, members discussed which parts could possibly be deleted or moved. After much discussion, Frankie moved to transfer the neighborhood, legislative, and book sale information to the website. Jean seconded this motion. Discussion on this motion was conducted. Jane stated that it would be difficult to put the neighborhood information on the website. Jane amended the motion and moved that just the legislative and book sale information be transferred to the website. Maureen seconded this motion. Discussion was conducted. Ewa stated that she thought that the legislative information should be included on the website and in the Directory. Co-President Simon moved that the neighborhood information and book sale information be removed from the Directory. Frankie withdrew her motion. Jane withdrew her amended motion. Ewa moved to simplify the

Directory. Frankie seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously. It was then clarified that Maureen would have the discretion to simplify the Directory as she sees fit.

Co-President Simon reported that the Branch has received its third star and that an additional star is “in the works”. There were questions about the meaning of the stars, and Co-President Simon said that she would send a link regarding this information.

Fran shared that she thought the RBG presentation through the Illinois Holocaust Museum was excellent, and she recommended it as a possible program feature. Frankie shared that she had already done research on the RBG presentation and that it is too expensive to serve as a Branch program offering. However, she has listed information regarding the presentation in *Twigs* and said that members can access the presentation individually or in small groups.

NEW BUSINESS

Co-President Arden opened up discussion regarding recruiting and retaining members. Jean and Nancy reported that the Wheaton-Glen Ellyn AAUW Branch is the second largest in Illinois. Nancy proposed that each Board member recruit 1-2 new members. In terms of enticing new members to join, members felt that AAUW’s mission and interest groups are the most significant draws. Fran suggested that members be able to give memberships as gifts. However, she also stated that she has been told in the past that this is not allowed. Fran also suggested that potential younger members could be allowed to form their own “sub-group” in order to discuss topics that are more relevant to their current life experiences. Nancy suggested that presentations focused on salary negotiations would be of particular interest to younger women. Co-President Simon and Jane felt that local libraries could be used to promote AAUW programs and provide outreach. Jane reminded members that several current members had been recruited as national members who were not yet a member of a local Branch. Ewa emphasized that trying to determine what is of most interest to younger women is very challenging for those not in the same age group. She suggested consulting with younger family members to obtain a better sense of the priorities of younger women. Carolyn wondered how our association with COD could be used to recruit new members. Co-President Arden said that she can talk to COD about expanding their partnership with our Branch. Fran suggested that our Branch increase our presence at local events and festivals. Ewa feels that it is a disservice that AAUW is simply known as its acronym instead of representing the name “American Association of University Women”. Patricia Spence shared that the national organization is using the full phrase again. Fran thought that “up and coming” women featured in news articles should be contacted for possible membership. Fran and Jean felt that issues like voting rights, women’s rights, causes, and social justice are of particular interest to younger women. Fran suggested that our Branch develop our own Linked In page. Patricia Spence suggested that a Publicity Chair be appointed to help publicize news about the Branch. Co-President Simon said that the Branch is working on doing just that. Fran reported that Amanda Borneman may be available to be the Publicity Chair. Co-President Arden shared that she or Co-President Simon can follow-up with former members and ask them to rejoin. Patricia Spence reported that the League of Women Voters sends postcards and makes targeted phone calls to members to encourage them to attend meetings. Jean suggested that buddies be assigned to new members in order to keep them

engaged. Co-President Arden suggested that a list of prospective members be invited to watch webinars. Jane shared that National is proposing a dues increase and that she would like to respond to this proposal. Co-President Simon shared that the dues increase is to make up for ten years of poor management. However, she is fine with the Branch crafting a response or with individuals creating a response to the proposal. Jane and Carolyn will work together to develop a response. Nancy and Jean will review the membership ideas that were discussed tonight and will develop a plan of action.

Frankie emphasized that she would like to know who is hosting the October Branch discussion groups before the newsletter is distributed.

Mary Sue moved to adjourn the meeting. Carolyn seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Next Board Meeting: October 14, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom