



## **FINAL MINUTES**

### **Wheaton-Glen Ellyn AAUW Board Meeting**

**January 13, 2021**

**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, Susan Levy-Creed, Kathleen McCullough, Carolyn Oesterle, Jane Palmer, and Patricia Spence

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Co-President Janet Arden called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Carolyn Oesterle moved to approve the November 2020 Board minutes as written. Suzanne Gagner seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **CO-PRESIDENTS' REMARKS AND DISCUSSION**

Co-President Janet Arden commented that last week's Branch meeting was awesome and that it provided our Branch with great exposure. Ninety-nine people joined the meeting via Zoom. Patricia Spence shared that other Branches have been using Zoom to pull in more people to their events. Co-President Donna Jean Simon confirmed that she had invited the following organizations to the January Branch event: League of Women Voters, Northern District AAUW Branches, and the state AAUW committee members. Co-President Arden mentioned that the League of Women Voters sent postcards to publicize their events. She wondered if our Branch wanted to do the same thing. Several members thought that this could be useful. Other members mentioned that postcards are not always reliably received.

#### **OFFICER AND CHAIR REPORTS**

Treasurer Maureen Sheehan shared that as a result of an end-of-the-year request for contributions to the EOF, 22 members gave a total of \$2,825 to this fund. Eight thousand dollars (\$8,000) has already been set aside for this year's scholarships. The Branch paid \$150

in Zoom fees. Co-President Simon reported that the Branch will submit a grant request in the near future to request reimbursement for Zoom fees. Fifteen dollars (\$15) was paid to the Illinois Attorney General for a Charitable Trust Bureau fee. Treasurer Sheehan also reported that since July 1, 2020, the Branch's assets have increased by approximately \$5800. Co-President Simon asked if articles in *Twigs* regarding the Branch's financial statements are protected by a membership fire wall. Jane Palmer said that *Twigs* issues that are posted on the website are open to the public. Co-President Simon shared that she is concerned about the Branch becoming a target for scams if financial information is available to the public. Jane said that she will check with other Branches regarding what they post on their websites and report back to the Board with the information she collects.

Membership Co-Vice Presidents Jean Lindsey and Nancy Possinger shared that they are currently putting together a slate of candidates for the upcoming Branch elections. The slate should be completed in the next couple of days. It was confirmed that the slate needs to be ready to be submitted to *Twigs* on Friday so that it can appear in the February issue. Co-Vice Presidents Lindsey and Possinger also reported that the Branch currently has 111 members. Additionally, another member sent in a late renewal. Maureen is checking on whether this member's renewal can be reactivated instead of having to count it as a new membership. It was also shared that as of January, dues are half price.

Program Vice President Frankie Robinson reported that the January Branch meeting was well-attended. Two prospective members contacted Program Vice President Robinson, Kathy Anderson and Dee O'Neill. Program Vice President Robinson shared that Leslie Goddard will present information relating to the women's suffrage movement at February's Branch meeting. Jennifer Kelley, a COD professor, will present information regarding social justice at the March Branch meeting. Carolyn Oesterle sent a thank-you note and check to Linda Hirshman after her presentation at January's Branch meeting. Carolyn reported that Linda requested a 1099 form. Jane will look into the particulars surrounding the use and distribution of a 1099 form. Program Vice President Robinson shared that it was cumbersome to manage the responses of people who contacted her expressing interest in joining the January Branch meeting. Co-President Arden suggested that in the future, people who are interested in joining a Branch event should be told of when and how the links to the presentations will be made available instead of responding to each interested person separately.

Book Sale Committee Chair Ewa Bacon said that she will work with Jane in order to develop a book sale statement in a couple of weeks. Book Sale Committee Chair Bacon also shared that she had received an email from Julia Brown, Esq. regarding the criteria that should be used for people interested in joining AAUW. Specifically, this email described opportunities to comment and vote on whether a college degree is a requirement in order to join AAUW. Book Sale Committee Chair Bacon commented that she felt the email describing this situation was awkwardly worded. Co-President Simon shared that AAUW cannot access certain contributions because it discriminates against women who do not have a college degree. The current criteria could also adversely affect AAUW's longevity. Co-President Arden reminded members that part of AAUW's mission is to advance equity for all women. Carolyn explained that she had originally felt uncomfortable about this proposal. However, she now feels that the current criteria is, in

fact, discriminatory and that it puts AAUW in danger of losing sponsorships. Jean pointed out that when men were allowed to become members, they did not join in overwhelming numbers; she feels that opening up AAUW to women who do not have college degrees, similarly, will not result in a significant influx of women without college degrees. Patricia and Maureen emphasized the value of promoting the aspirations of women who are trying to complete a college degree.

Community Relations Committee Chair Mary Sue Brown reported that due to the ongoing pandemic, community groups are not meeting as often.

Educational Opportunity Funds Chair Susan Levy-Creed reported that she has reached out to the four counselor contacts that she has at local high schools and that they have gotten back to her expressing their interest and appreciation for the Branch's scholarships. Educational Opportunity Funds Chair Levy-Creed will reconnect with the counselors to let them know of the exact amount of the scholarships. She also commended the Branch's treasurers and Jane on their planning and management that have resulted in funds to finance four full scholarships.

Fundraising Walk Chair Carolyn Oesterle reported that she has nothing new to report. She is planning to organize another Fundraising Walk next fall.

LunaFest Committee Chair Suzanne Gagner reported that she will be submitting an article regarding LunaFest plans to *Twigs*. She will check with the LunaFest organization and Center Stage in Naperville regarding their current statuses in light of the pandemic. LunaFest Committee Chair Gagner is also considering other fundraising ideas. Members mentioned that a drive-in theater may be a suitable venue for LunaFest. LunaFest Committee Chair Gagner will follow-up with this idea.

Newsletter Editor Kathleen McCullough reminded members that January 15, 2021 is the deadline for newsletter submittals. She also reminded members to let her know if they are not going to submit an article for this month's *Twigs*.

Co-President Arden reported that STEM Coordinator Fran Kravitz would not be able to attend tonight's meeting.

Public Policy Chair Patricia Spence reported that there was considerable chatter among her public policy contacts regarding the length of time that it took for AAUW to issue a statement regarding the insurrection that occurred at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. She also mentioned that Senator Durbin is the Majority Whip and, as a result, will control the calendar for the Senate and the future of the ERA passage. This is anticipated to result in more engagement for AAUW-IL. Public Policy Chair Spence reported that an "equality clock" is being designed. She also encouraged members to comment and vote on the issues raised in Julie Brown's aforementioned email.

Website Chair Jane Palmer reported that the website is up-to-date. She shared that national wants all Branch websites to be more consistent in terms of format. A survey was sent to website chairs in order to assist with this initiative. Carolyn congratulated Jane on the structure

and maintenance of the website. Co-President Arden suggested the use of a counter that should be available through Word Press in order to assess how frequently the website is being visited. Co-President Arden and Website Chair Palmer will discuss this topic in more detail. Patricia commented that she would like to know what publications members receive automatically and what publications members have to specifically request. Co-President Simon will follow-up with this topic. Suzanne suggested that we need to “coddle” new members more by offering additional explanations of offerings available through the Branch.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Co-President Simon directed the members’ attention to two articles that were referenced in the Board meeting notice. One of the articles was written by Kim Churches, national president of AAUW, and the other article was supportively signed by many women’s groups. Both articles pertained to the insurrection that occurred at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021. Ewa commented that since President Trump was impeached today, the declaration that President Trump should be impeached- which was contained in both letters- was moot. Co-President Simon shared that the Diversity Tool Kit resources that were mentioned in Kim Churches’ letter are very well done. She reminded members that a Town Hall meeting focused on the topic of racial justice will be conducted on January 19, 2021. Co-President Simon asked how the Branch could continue the conversations that were conducted in the fall regarding racial justice. Should the Branch form a task force, study groups, etc..? Mary Sue Brown suggested that the Branch continue with the same format as was used in the fall. Co-President Arden suggested that the conversations be held in the spring when meetings could occur outside. Suzanne shared that Dan Cronin is leading a county-wide initiative regarding this topic. Jean suggested that the Branch investigate the extent to which, if any, women serve on community boards in Glen Ellyn and Wheaton. Co-President Simon shared that most of the 140,000 who lost jobs, as reflected in this month’s job report, were women. Perhaps this could be a topic for additional study. Suzanne suggested that an all-Branch email regarding the January 19<sup>th</sup> webinar and continuation of the fall discussion group should be sent. Co-Presidents Arden and Simon said that they could write an email to address this information.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Next Board Meeting: February 10, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom