



FINAL MINUTES

Wheaton-Glen Ellyn AAUW Board Meeting

March 10, 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, Fran Kravitz, Susan Levy-Creed, Kathleen McCullough, Carolyn Oesterle, Jane Palmer, Patricia Spence, and Patricia Bernhold

CALL TO ORDER

Co-President Janet Arden called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Co-President Arden shared that Co-President Donna Jean Simon conducted a phone meeting with 40 state Branch presidents two weeks ago. Both Co-Presidents stated that several Branches have been struggling with membership and with conducting meetings virtually during the pandemic. Co-Presidents Arden and Simon shared that they feel fortunate for the talents of the Wheaton-Glen Ellyn Branch and are impressed by the level of engagement by our members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Carolyn Oesterle moved to approve the February 2021 Board minutes as written. Susan Levy-Creed seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

OFFICER AND CHAIR REPORTS

Membership Co- Vice President Nancy Possinger thanked Jane Palmer for her work on the membership forms. She also shared that the Branch has one prospective member, Connie Canaday Howard, who works at COD and is the artistic director for the Buffalo Theatre Ensemble. Membership Co-Vice Presidents Jean Lindsey and Possinger will follow-up with Connie. They also shared that the Branch currently has 112 members.

Program Vice President Frankie Robinson shared that 37 members were present at the beginning of the March Branch meeting at which guest speaker, Jennifer Kelley, provided a presentation on racial equity. Thirty-four members were in attendance at the conclusion of the

meeting. She also stated that several members complimented Ms. Kelley's presentation and that Ms. Kelley was happy to share Powerpoint slides from the presentation with Branch members. These slides were forwarded from Program Vice President Robinson to Co-President Simon, and it was agreed that the slides will be added to the members' side of the Branch website. An honorarium check of \$100 was sent to Ms. Kelley. Program Vice President Robinson stated that she has spoken to the speaker who will present at April's Branch meeting and that the speaker is looking forward to the meeting. The topic of the presentation will be "Ten Easy Ways to be LGBTQ-Friendly and Why it Matters." Patricia Spence mentioned that she was very interested in the anti-racist grading policies that Ms. Kelley had described in her presentation. Program Vice President Robinson said that she has met with next year's Program officers and that they are excited to begin their work in their new roles. Co-President Simon wondered if teachers should be invited to April's presentation given the topic of the presentation. Members agreed that that would be a good idea.

Book Sale Committee Chair Ewa Bacon shared that on February 17, 2021, she met with Jean Lindsey, Marilyn Mayer-Wiedemann, Suzanne Gagner, Jane Palmer, and Karen Bondy to discuss the Book Sale. Many ideas were generated at this meeting, but the committee felt that two of the ideas should be presented to the Board: 1) Friends of Book Sale give donations in lieu of books. Karen and Jane composed a letter that could be used to invite the Friends to donate money in order to support the Branch's endeavor to raise money for scholarships. The letter contains a proposal in which Friends who donate \$50 or more can receive a coupon that would be worth a 30% discount at the Glen Ellyn Book Store. Book Sale Committee Chair Bacon asked if anyone had a connection with someone at the Glen Ellyn Book Store. 2) Later in the year, the Branch could supervise a table at local events like Taste of Glen Ellyn in order to sell books and collectibles. The committee's hope was that this type of activity at a local event would help reconnect the Branch's presence with community members. However, the committee was not sure if Taste of Glen Ellyn is being held this year. If it is not, then the Branch could participate in future events, and/or participate in Wheaton community events. Book Sale Committee Chair Bacon stated that the books sold at this activity would come from members' homes; there would be no mass collection of books as has been done in the past for the traditional Book Sale. Book Sale Committee Chair Bacon said that there are two questions to be answered: 1) Does the Board want to have a virtual Book Sale? 2) Does the Board want the letter to reference the 30% coupon idea? Several members shared that other local book stores could also be approached regarding the coupon idea. Carolyn stated that she liked the idea of tables at Taste of Glen Ellyn and Cream of Wheaton. She believes that it will cost approximately \$300 to rent space at these events. Co-President Arden said that she believes that the virtual Book Sale is a "no brainer". She also asked why 30% was determined to be the amount of the coupon. Jane stated that Karen came up with the 30% number. She also shared that Karen feels comfortable going to the Glen Ellyn Book Store and discussing the coupon idea with them. She would like either an outgoing or incoming Branch president to accompany her when she goes to the book store. Additionally, Jane said that Karen is considering the 30% number as her starting point when negotiating with the book store. As an incoming Branch president, Carolyn said that she would accompany Karen when visiting the book store. Jane said that she was planning on sending the letter via email to Friends of the Book Sale within the

next month or two. She wants to make sure that the sending of the letter does not conflict with LunaFest. Suzanne shared that she was going to propose moving the date of LunaFest to September so there should not be a conflict. Book Sale Committee Chair Bacon asked how and when there should be an announcement in *Twigs* regarding the virtual Book Sale. Frankie moved that the virtual Book Sale be conducted in May. Patricia Spence seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously. Book Sale Committee Chair Bacon stated that she would provide a general announcement regarding the virtual Book Sale in the April issue of *Twigs* and a more detailed announcement regarding the virtual Book Sale in the May issue of *Twigs*. Jane shared that Karen will not be back in town until after March 30, 2021 at which point she would be able to negotiate with the book store about the coupon. Book Sale Committee Chair Bacon said that she would also provide information for *Twigs* regarding the idea to conduct smaller book sales at the aforementioned community events like Taste of Glen Ellyn. Additionally, she shared that the committee also discussed the idea of conducting “pop-up” book sales that could occur in the future. Co-President Arden thanked the committee for their efforts. Suzanne said that she would be happy to work on obtaining support for the coupon proposal.

LunaFest Chair Suzanne Gagner shared that she felt that it would be better to conduct LunaFest in the fall when there is more information about viable locations. She also stated that tickets would be sold for site viewings or for the ability to stream the event. She is thinking of asking members to host small group site viewings at their homes. An amount of \$900 was allotted for snacks, and this money could be used to help purchase refreshments served at the various sites. She also suggested that a committee member could be placed at each site in order to facilitate the hosting of the event. LunaFest Chair Gagner shared that the national LunaFest organization is planning a virtual viewing event for this year. She also said that the event cannot take place in a setting like Center Stage. Additionally, she explained that she wanted LunaFest to be a fundraiser. However, the current pandemic-related conditions have significantly and adversely affected her ability to reach out to sponsorships. Nancy agreed that a September date offers more viewing possibilities. LunaFest Chair Gagner stated that there is a lot of planning to be done and that she is looking forward to it.

Treasurer Maureen Sheehan stated that there was not a lot of financial activity during the previous month. A \$200 contribution was made to LunaFest,. A \$200 honorarium was paid. An amount of \$30 was forwarded to the Branch through Amazon Smiles. An account maintenance fee of \$20 was also incurred. The current balance is \$30,974. Several members said that they are aware of banks or credit unions who do not charge a maintenance fee- even for business accounts. Treasurer Sheehan said that she would follow-up with the Branch’s current bank, Glen Ellyn Bank and Trust and ask them about the fees that are being charged. Carolyn asked about the balance of money in the Operations Account, and she wondered when the \$8,000 worth of scholarships would be distributed. Susan Levy-Creed explained that this typically occurs in June or July.

Public Policy Chair Patricia Spence reported that she has concerns about national’s proposed public policies. She has noted that there is an emphasis on issues like anti-racism and transgender rights, but she has sensed that there is not also a concentration on issues that

have been emphasized in the past. After doing additional research, she found that economic security will continue to be a focal point of AAUW's public policy, but she could not find any mention of the ERA. She reported that the last time that national made an official statement that mentioned the ERA was in February of 2020. Public Policy Chair Spence shared that she will forward a link to a letter that national sent to Congress and a link to Lisa Cherry's town hall meeting to *Twigs*. Co-President Simon stated that 40 volunteer women lobby Congress on a weekly basis in order to inform them of AAUW policies and priorities.

STEM Coordinator Fran Kravitz thanked Patricia Spence for the Facebook information that she posted. She also shared that she has a few more bottles to fill for the next experiment for Science Girls on the Go. She expects to be able to distribute these experiments next weekend. Patricia Spence said that Marilyn told her that the science house that is on her property has many experiments that are left over in the house. She said that Peggy Connolly also has extras in the science house on her property. STEM Coordinator Kravitz is aware of these situations and has cleared materials from the house on Peggy's property. She also stated that if the Branch erects another science house, she will use the left-over kits in that house. STEM Coordinator Kravitz also suggested that the extra kits could be distributed at the book sale tables that were discussed earlier in the meeting. Suzanne offered to speak to her nephew, who just moved to a house on Main Street in Glen Ellyn, about erecting another science house on his property.

Community Relations Committee Chair Mary Sue Brown had no report to deliver.

Newsletter Editor Kathleen McCullough reminded members that the deadline for submittals for the April issue of *Twigs* is March 15, 2021. She also reminded members to let her know if they are not going to submit an article for the upcoming issue of *Twigs*.

Educational Opportunity Funds Chair Susan Levy-Creed reported that letters to all four high school counselor contacts have been sent and that she has heard back from two of the counselors. She asked if a Spring Banquet date had been set. She was told that a date had not been set. Educational Opportunity Funds Chair Levy-Creed said that she would tell the counselors that she needed final information back from them as soon as possible after May 1, 2021. Members agreed that this was a good plan.

Website Chair Jane Palmer reported that she is updating book lists and that everything is moving along.

Mary Sue shared that there will be an event related to the Frida Kahlo exhibit and that there is a possibility that our Branch can participate in this event with the Lombard Branch. Co-President Arden said that Peggy was approached by someone about this cultural event that will occur in April on the same date as the Branch's next Board meeting. Suzanne moved to switch the date of the May Board meeting to May 5th. Carolyn seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. However, it was then pointed out that a May Board meeting had not been originally scheduled. Jean mentioned that she hoped everyone would be fully vaccinated by

May. Co-President Arden suggested that a May event could be used as an incoming Board-outgoing Board gathering.

OLD BUSINESS

Jane reminded members that they still needed to make a decision about the \$5 membership fee for student memberships. The February minutes were consulted, and it was confirmed that the Board had unanimously agreed to provide two-year Branch memberships for scholarship recipients. Co-President Simon stated that COD has let its AAUW membership lapse. Carolyn moved that the issue of a \$5 membership fee for students be re-evaluated in a year. Suzanne seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.

Co-President Simon asked if Patricia Spence had contacted Claudia Finley about her possible interest in serving as Public Policy Chair. Patricia stated that she had not contacted her yet but would be doing so soon. Co-President Simon also asked Maureen about her friend who was possibly interested serving as the Website Chair. Maureen said that she would be following through on this soon.

NEW BUSINESS

Co-President Simon shared that she would be contacting the Executive Committee to discuss an issue with them. She would then present the results of the discussion to the Board.

Co-President Arden shared that she was approached by representative of School District 41 regarding whether the Branch was interested in being a sponsor of a Dolly Parton literacy program. Co-President Arden said the sponsorship would cost something, but she was not sure of the amount. She stated that she was concerned because this sponsorship would benefit only District 41 (Glen Ellyn) students instead of all students within the Branch's area (i.e. Glen Ellyn, Warrenville, and Wheaton). She shared that they already have a corporate sponsor who is funding \$5,000. There were several concerns about whether it is permissible for the Branch to participate in this type of sponsorship. Jane stated that the Branch does not participate in sponsoring grants- aside from the funding of our own scholarships. Co-President Simon said that they would review the proposal against the by-laws. If the by-laws indicate that the Branch should not participate in this type of program, Lynn Bruno will be contacted to let her know that the Branch cannot support the program.

A Zoom meeting format for April's Board meeting was confirmed.

There was a suggestion that the Board hold off on conducting an event in May due to uncertainty regarding everyone's vaccination status at that time.

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

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

Next Board Meeting: April 14, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom