Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 5, 2020
Christ Episcopal Church, Poughkeepsie

Members present: Diane Jablonski, Sheila Zweifler, Marti Madory, Bonnie Auchincloss, Linnea Masson, Monique Jones, Betty Harrel, Pat Luczai, Kathy Friedman, Cyd Averill, Sandy Lash, and Ruth Sheets

Guests: Mary Lou Davis

The meeting was called to order by President Diane Jablonski at 7:01 p.m.

The Board meeting minutes of Feb. 10, 2020 were approved as submitted.

President’s Report – Diane Jablonski

Equal Pay Day (March 31, 2020) proposal will be considered by the Dutchess County Legislature on March 9. There was a Southern Dutchess News article in the March 4, 2020 edition, about the road to equality for women, written by Leah Bishop of the Women’s Professional Network (WPN), which refers to the work of Poughkeepsie AAUW in getting the 2019 Equal Pay Day declared by the Legislature last year.

Plans for Annual Dinner continues to be worked on. The speaker (Joan Mandel) is committed. Diane is exploring possible activities to go along with the “road to equality” theme. Diane plans to focus her annual report on the work of the Initiatives.

Convention – Diane would like more delegates from our branch. Mary Lou Davis, Betty Harrel, Marti Madory, Margaret Nijhuis and Maria DeWald are signed up for at least part of the weekend which includes the business meeting. If interested, please let Diane know.

Diane has sent the public policy statement regarding the ERA that the board passed in February to Janet Forbes. The board agreed that we grant permission for her to send the statement on the NYS AAUW. Cyd Averill will send the article on Equal Pay Day written by Diane to Betty Preble, requesting that it be published on the NYS-AAUW website.

Treasurer’s Report – Pat Luczai

As of March 1, 2020, total assets are $56,068.13. For the current fiscal year, total expenditures are $26,843.74 and revenues are $14,698.17. Pat needs the Program and Membership VPs to submit their budget input by March 23. The board needs to approve the budget in April to be printed in the May Branch. Input for the Initiatives will be submitted to a committee for review and approval in May. Initiative spending is not part of the operational budget.

Sheila Zweifler discussed the need for having small group new member receptions in October in members’ homes instead of one big reception, and budgeting for it, accordingly.
Program - Monique Jones reminded the board that the March 12 program meeting will be on the “Local Path to Women’s Suffrage on its 100th Anniversary”, presented by Bill Jeffway and Melodye Moore from the Dutchess County Historical Society. Also, as previously announced, the April 2020 program meeting will be on April 16, to avoid meeting during Passover.

Membership - Sheila Zweifler announced that our branch has a total of 31 new members this year. It was decided that a free membership for the general membership would not be offered through a raffle, as in previous years. Sheila will not change the renewal / membership form regarding the information that goes into the membership directory, but she will discuss the value of membership directory with the new members so they understand that their contact information will be included. Any issues that the new member raises will be handled on an individual basis.

Development – Diane reported that she heard from Lula Allen that in April, Carol Menken will be holding another planning meeting for “A Novel Affair” which will be held October 18. It was suggested that the interest groups begin to determine what they can offer for the auction, and individuals need to be identified who are able to provide auction items. Carol wants to have more stations to process purchases at the end of the event, and wants to identify those who are willing to help with this task.

Kathy Friedman reported on discussions with Colette Tours. More research needs to be done, including approaching other tour companies. Kathy will be seeking people to join a committee to work on this.

Communications – Bonnie Auchincloss noted that the Amazon cloud has changed to a new 2 part authorization procedure. After a discussion, it was decided that we can continue to use the Amazon cloud even with this authorization procedure.

Community Services - Kathy Friedman will contact Maria DeWald regarding Careers & Leadership to determine their status as an initiative.

Interest Groups - Linnea Masson reported that the interest groups are all doing well and meeting regularly. Soleil is now under Terry Jackrel’s leadership. Linnea will ask Terry to send all Soleil members a schedule of the planned events that have been approved for 2020 and early 2021, with the understanding that the dates, etc. may change.

International Relations and Diversity - Marti Madory had sent a written report to all board members. She encouraged us to visit the “Mexican Muralists” exhibit currently at the Whitney Museum, to help become informed about Oaxaca and its role in the history of the United Mexican States.

Here are some highlights from Marti’s written report and related emails to the board:

The entire UN Commission on Status of Women event has been cancelled because of the coronavirus concerns.

Days for Girls will hold its usual workshop on March 21.

Norma Vazquez will host the Global Friends Sharing Circle at her home on Wednesday, April 22, 6 PM.
The International Diversity Committee has discussed ways in which to support the efforts of the Poughkeepsie/Oaxaca Friendship Committee to organize a follow-up exchange that will bring Mexican teachers from Oaxaca to Dutchess County. Discussions are still preliminary, but the meeting arranged by City of Poughkeepsie Mayor Rolison for March 19 includes the new school superintendent of Poughkeepsie, Eric Rosser. The attendees will be exploring ways in which the program might be part of the district's initiatives in the community. Ellie Charwat plans to attend and report back to Marti. Marti’s committee has brainstormed for ideas for desirable activities for the visiting delegation.

Mentoring efforts for teenagers is still evolving. Marti is working on requesting time and space at Adriance Library to assist teenagers in applying for the ERVK program, scholarships, and other enrichment programs.

Timing for film screening(s) of “Period. End of Sentence.” is still a challenge, and an appropriate follow-up speaker still needs to be identified.

AAUW membership was represented at the first Hudson Valley Gospel Festival held last month.

Committee on Teaching about UN (CTA) was attended by Marti, Gwen Higgins, Marcine Humphrey, and Mary Lou Davis on Feb. 28.

Marti attended a forum sponsored by the Board of Directors of Monumental Women where the author of Suffrage: Women’s Long Battle for the Vote, Ellen Carol Dubois, discussed and sold her book as part of a fundraiser for a new monument of Central Park’s mall honoring Sojourner Truth, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The monument is to be unveiled at the Women’s Suffrage Centennial on Aug. 26. Marti suggested that we might want to recognize this observance in our own Branch programs, particularly since Sojourner Truth was born in our area.

Nominating - Betty Harrel – no report.

Newsletter - Cyd Averill reminded us that the deadline for the April newsletter is March 10.

Old Business – None.

New Business – None.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth Sheets, Secretary