

Poughkeepsie Branch AAUW, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 5, 2015
St. John's Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie, NY

Members present: Susie Blecker, Barbara Van Itallie, Sandy Goldberg, Linda Roberts, Betsy Kopstein-Stuts, Cathy Kinn, Janna Whearty, Diane Jablonski, Betty Harrel, and Kathy Friedman. Guest: Mary Lou Davis.

The meeting was called to order by President Barbara Van Itallie at 7:00 PM. The September minutes could not be approved because a quorum was not present.

President's Report

Barbara Van Itallie commended Diane Jablonski for her efforts in the election, and thanked her for standing up to run for County Executive.

Barbara announced that we have a new International Initiative Leader, Sabashnee Govender, who is replacing Christie VanHorne.

Barbara shared a letter we received from The Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Valkill thanking us for our participation in the Girls Leadership program, and shared their program pamphlet in which our organization is mentioned. Barbara also read a letter from Mary Lou Davis thanking us for the recognition at the Woman of the Year Luncheon.

Treasurer's Report

Diane Jablonski reported that she has filed our taxes. We still have money coming in from dues, and have already paid some expenses for the Annual Dinner and the Writers Tea. We have made an approximate profit of \$575 from the Woman of the Year Luncheon.

Membership

Susie Blecker reported that we have 368 members at this time. Susie called all the new members to invite them to the New Members Reception in October, which was well attended. She and Barbara will continue to call new members to encourage them to come to our programs. Susie thanked Cathy Kinn for encouraging our Interest Group Leaders to contact new members who have shown interest in their groups.

Susie announced that the new directories will be mailed out on or about November 17.

Programs

Sandy Goldberg and Betsy Kopstein-Stuts reported that they have had many different members at various committee meetings, and they have been very helpful with ideas for programs. Programs are now set for every month except April.

November – Women and the Automobile

December – Fun and Friends, activities presented by interest groups

January – Education in New York State

February – Sex trafficking and human trafficking

March – Women of Iran through Photography

April – Mental Health

Community

Barbara spoke of a possible new initiative. Carol Ann Kacherski, a member who is a college writing instructor, is interested in starting a program to teach writing skills in local high schools.

Barbara called a meeting to see if there is any interest and enthusiasm in continuing the Girls Conference and found that there is plenty of interest. We need a leader and a list of suggestions for workshops. It was suggested that Carol Ann Kacherski's writing skills could possibly be incorporated into the program.

Betty Harrel mentioned that AAUW New York State offers a \$500 grant that Leading to Reading was awarded last year. She is hoping that we might apply for it again this year for Leading to Reading. However Janna Whearty said that that grant could also go to a project that Sherre Wesley is interested in starting. Betty suggested that we could apply for the grant for "Equity for Life" which would cover any or all of our initiatives. The grant has been awarded to us this way in a previous year.

Janna reported that the project that Sherre is interested in is the AAUW "Start Smart" program. It is a college workshop to help college students with job applications, interviews, etc. The fee is \$650 for the first workshop and \$350 for any more workshops. It was suggested that the local colleges be contacted to find out if they would support such a program.

Janna reported that there is an Evvie Currie Fund which is part of the LAF. The money must be spent in New York State. Janna suggested that that fund could be used for screenings at local colleges of the film *It Happened Here*. The film is about how victims of sexual assault and violence on campus fought for change at their colleges. The consensus was that Janna should move forward with the idea and campus contacts were suggested – Isabel Rose at DCC and Eileen Leonard at Vassar.

Interest Groups

Cathy Kinn reported that she has sent questionnaires to Interest Group leaders about new members who have attended group meetings and how they are being encouraged. She has found that, this year, the interest group leaders have been particularly encouraging to new members who have shown interest in their groups, and the new members' participation and enthusiasm have been high.

Newsletter

Upcoming deadlines for *The Branch* will be December 10 for the January Newsletter and December 20 for the February newsletter. The early deadline is because Margaret will be away in January.

Special Committees

Linda Roberts reported that, because of a mix-up at The Links at Union Vale, the Writers' Tea date has been changed to May 15. Linda also reported that there is now a link to the Vendor's Request Letter on our website.

Old Business

Kathy Friedman and Betty Harrel reported that the Bylaws, once again, have been updated with the new changes that have been mandated by National. Since these changes are mandatory, they do not need to be put to a vote. The two changes which were approved by the Board in September, will be published in the December newsletter so that they can be approved by the membership in January. Kathy suggested a third change in the wording of Article VI, section 1c. Since there was not a quorum, this change will have to be approved at the December meeting.

Announcements

The New York State convention at Saratoga Springs, April 15-17 is looking for volunteers for Hospitality, signage, and tours.

The January Board meeting will be a brunch meeting at Barbara's on Saturday, January 9, 2016.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katherine Friedman
Secretary