

AARP Blacksburg Chapter 2613  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
December 6, 2016

Attending: Wendy Baldwin, Thais Beams, Val Calouni, Don Creamer, Ben Crawford, Joy Herbert, Pat Hyer, Peter Magolda, Ryan Martin, Lisa Moose, Jerry Niles, Shirley Peterson, Carolyn Rude, June Schmidt, Terry Wildman

**Approval of November Board Minutes:** Minutes of the November meeting were approved with corrections from Pat Hyer noted.

**Reports and announcements from Don Creamer:**

Lisa Moose was introduced. She will serve as co-chair of the Program Committee and has been invited to attend board meetings.

Ryan Martin has volunteered to be chair of membership committee. Tom Alston and Jim Wightman will continue to serve on the committee. Tom Alston's report showed 195 family units and 295 members (some complimentary and some lifetime).

**Old and New Business:**

**All Volunteer Banquet Report:** Don Creamer, Ben and Carole Crawford, Wendy Baldwin, and Karen Roberto recently attended the AARP All Volunteer Banquet event in Richmond. The Blacksburg Chapter received the Chapter Education Award and Don Creamer received the Andrus Award. Ben Crawford was the first recipient of the Andrus award in 2007. Carl McDaniels and Virgil Cooke also received the award (4 total for our chapter). Bob Blancato, now on the national AARP board, will attend our Holiday Luncheon to re-present Andrus Award to Don and install officers.

**Holiday Luncheon:** Thais Beams reported that 83 people were expected including 8 or so non-paying guests. Several additional members indicated their intention to attend. Decided to guarantee 85. Carolyn Rude reported on preparation of the luncheon program.

**Program Planning for 2017:** Lisa Moose reported on early ideas for 2017 public meetings. Creamer has started reaching out to possible speakers. Jessica Wirgau, Executive Director of the Community Foundation, will give an overview of the Livability Initiative in January and then return in October to discuss the Aging in Place initiative. Anne Campbell will talk about the Sojourn Center plans; Bud Jeffries has been contacted to talk about Blacksburg railroad history.

Weather policy: Joy Herbert noted that the Blacksburg Parks and Rec changed their inclement weather policy. They are now open continuously rather than following the Montgomery County Schools closings. The public is encouraged to call about possible instructor absence or specific event cancellations. The chapter follows school closures for public meetings, but not

delays. Generally, the Board will meet if schools cancel, but members can be notified if cancellation seems necessary. There are no plans to change this policy at this time.

Major Fall Event: Creamer reported on a conversation with AARP state director, Jim Dau, who suggested that Bill Thomas may return to Virginia next year for a possible event for community leaders. Creamer or Baldwin will follow up to learn details and see if there is any connection for the Blacksburg chapter. Dau also reported that our model of hosting Bill Thomas has been copied by several chapters nationwide.

**Community Foundation of the NRV:** Hyer reported on current activities of the Community Foundation Board, including development of a strategic plan to identify priorities for staff and board time and attention. She raised the issue of whether AARP Blacksburg Chapter might help sponsor the GiveBigNRV event in April with a small donation. The Foundation is looking for sponsors (of any amount) to support the costs of this major community fundraising event and to provide prizes to the non-profits who participate.

Shirley Peterson noted that multiple non-profits connected to the Community Foundation already receive money from our AARP Chapter, thus we have a vested interest in the Foundation and its fundraising activities.

Ben Crawford made a motion that the chapter provide a sponsorship for the GiveBigNRV for an amount to be determined and that we initiate a fundraising event on behalf of the Foundation in the future. After some discussion concerning the level of sponsorship, the Board voted to make a contribution between \$250 and \$500; the amount is to be finalized at January meeting with input from the Treasurer. AARP can also assist by encouraging our members to donate directly to the Community Foundation during GiveBigNRV Day.

## **Committee Reports**

**AARP Virginia Liaison:** Ben Crawford shared what he had learned at the recent state meeting. Melvin Evans is the new AARP state president. AARP Virginia plans to increase support for chapters in the coming year. They also expect to reorganize the volunteer staff. The Life Reimagined initiative will be put on strategic hold. Federal and state advocacy programs will continue as in past. State staff will work on increasing partnerships. The Healthy Living initiative will continue. There is considerable interest in Brain Health; chapters are invited to use their existing presentation to introduce the topic to members. State officials expect to focus resources on Richmond, Roanoke, Alexandria, and Virginia Beach. They are also planning a 2017 Governor's Conference on Aging. Creamer suggested that chapter representatives meet with Jim Dau and Melvin Evans to see how our chapter can connect with several of these initiatives. It may be possible to focus our fall event around one of these initiatives.

**State Advocacy:** Don Creamer reported that Ryan Martin attended training to serve in state advocacy role.

**Awards:** Shirley Peterson reported that all awardees have been selected. Awards will be presented at the Holiday Luncheon.

**Downtown Blacksburg Liaison:** Ben Crawford participated in a recent DBI event on behalf of Wendy Baldwin. He described a young crowd and an informal meeting. He noted that DBI has funding and dedicated staff. Crawford introduced the idea of a public restroom in downtown Blacksburg; all supported idea. Baldwin reported that the organization is sensitive to issues for seniors and they get things done, making it worthwhile to partner with this organization.

**Finance:** June Schmidt reported that they generally conduct the annual audit after the January meeting, and then they prepare and present the budget for the coming year at our February meeting.

**Legislative:** The full report prepared by Val Calouni is on the website. Four subjects are addressed in the report – the rise in fake news and its impact on public trust and governance; a summary of the recent conversation with Delegate Yost, who will continue his attention to mental health issues in the General Assembly; the use of eminent domain in determining the route of the proposed pipeline; and the social security increase.

**TimeBank:** Val Calouni reported on efforts to get out the word on the new TimeBank initiative. The Lifelong Learning Institute has a presentation scheduled for LLI members on Feb. 17. An aggressive schedule to orient potential new members has been set; orientation sessions are usually held at the Christiansburg Library. The \$20 fee covers the required background check. FreedomFirst gave a \$5000 grant to the project to handle some expenses of the new organization. They are still working on some software problems.

**LLI partnership:** Pat Hyer reported that they held a Spring 2017 preview event on Nov. 30; it was very well attended. The catalog will be mailed in early January; registration begins January 9.

**Newsletter:** Carolyn Rude will put together the February newsletter January 15 because of out-of-town travel. Any material for this issue must be sent to her by then.

Wendy Baldwin went to the session on federal advocacy at the Richmond meeting. She learned that social security remains an AARP federal priority, but other issues will also be at stake with the new administration, including Medicare and poor treatment of AARP representatives by the incoming administration.

Minutes prepared by Pat Hyer on behalf of Sally Anna Stapleton and submitted December 20, 2016.