

Minutes  
AARP Blacksburg Chapter  
March 14, 2017  
Blacksburg Community Center

Present: Wendy Baldwin, Don Creamer, Tamara Hodsdon, Jerry Niles, Thais Beams, Val Colouni, Peter Magolda, Lisa Moose, Sally Anna Stapleton, Jim Montgomery, Carolyn Rude, Pat Hyer, Pat Ballard

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Wendy Baldwin at 10:00 a.m.

**Approval of February Board Minutes:** Minutes of the February 7, 2017 meeting were approved. Members agreed that it would be helpful if the President would redistribute the minutes with the upcoming agenda as a reminder of prior meeting discussions and actions.

**Treasurer's Report** (made later in the meeting): Pat Ballard reported on checks received for LLI-related events and reminded those involved that she would need invoices or receipts to support any expense payments. See references to this below under LLI (Lifelong Learning Institute) Report. Pat and her tax-aid team have already served 500 individuals this tax season.

**Announcements:** None

**Old and New Business:**

**Planning Retreat Report:** The board planning retreat on February 10 was well attended by board members and guest Nancy Brossoie from the Center for Gerontology. Terry Wildman summarized the discussion in detail in his email to the Board on February 11. Three ideas were discussed: hosting an educational initiative related to the Aging in Place/Livability Initiative; bringing attention and action to stop partisan gerrymandering in Virginia; and creating an event(s) that encourages sharing arts across the generations. After considering several alternatives, Don Creamer agreed to approach Jessica Wirgau of the Community Foundation about an LLI course or special event relating to aging in place to be offered in Fall 2017. Jessica is preparing a proposal that will draw on the Aging in Place leadership team. Wendy has been attending the leadership team meetings and spoke to the benefits of this partnership.

Since the chapter planning retreat, the League of Women Voters, LLI, and OneVirginia 2021 hosted a very successful panel on gerrymandering, attracting 110 people. Panelists offered several suggestions for assisting this effort including signing an online petition to stop partisan gerrymandering at <http://www.onevirginia2021.org/participate/petition/> and donating in support of litigation and education sponsored by OneVirginia2021. Ben Crawford, who championed this topic, may have additional ideas for how the chapter can contribute to a positive outcome.

Wendy Baldwin reported that an arts-across-the-generations event/project may have to wait for more propitious timing and better health.

**Steppin' Out:** Wendy Baldwin has reserved a table at Steppin' Out on behalf of the chapter; Steppin' Out is scheduled for August 4-5. Wendy will create a sign-up chart for shifts during the weekend, with 3 volunteers per two-hour timeslot (ideally). Terry Wildman and Ben Crawford are willing to collect materials and do set up. Several suggested that FEWER copies of AARP materials be provided this coming year, and consider selecting materials by the theme of "Aging in Place" instead of offering everything that AARP has available. Last year there were many more brochures than needed, and boxes of material were completely soaked by rain. Also need paper weights and canopy. Feature LLI flyers and TimeBank if possible.

**Annual Picnic:** Terry Wildman offered his home again for the annual chapter picnic. Members suggested Thursday, June 15 (or Wednesday the 14th or Friday the 16<sup>th</sup>) for consideration by the hosts.

#### **Reports:**

**AARP Virginia Liaison:** Ben Crawford put his report on the website. Val Colouni raised a concern about possible changes to social security and Medicare under the new Trump administration; AARP is still pushing for no changes to these programs. Consider putting AARP info on this subject at Steppin' Out (Val will share suggestion with Ben).

**Health and Wellness Fair:** Wendy Baldwin, Jenny Reilly, and Angela Little will meet later this week. Need to recruit leadership for 2018 event and expand the number of people involved. Brian Jacks shared his observation that our health fair is among the best managed and most successful in the state. He strongly encourages us to continue with this biennial project.

**Hospitality:** Thais Beam will explore the possibility of the Christmas luncheon for Tuesday, December 12 at Warm Hearth Village. The board authorized her to negotiate an alternate date if needed and report back.

**Legislative:** Val reminded members that the legislative report was included in the latest newsletter. The General Assembly did not act on bills to create more transparency for subcommittee votes. He reported on a push in several states to eliminate tenure or curtail tenure for new faculty; not yet in Virginia but worrisome trend. Airbnb regulations were considered by Town of Blacksburg; those who wish to do short-term rentals of their condos or home will need to register or face a penalty. Other AARP-backed bills were not successful in this session of the General Assembly, for example Work and Save, Ombudsman program, and reimbursement levels for CareGivers.

**LLI:** Pat Hyer reported on the successful co-sponsored Gerrymandering event (see discussion under Planning Retreat above). Jerry Niles reminded board members that AARP is accepting payments for LLI events that would otherwise be cost-prohibitive to participants because of

extra fees required to process payments through CPE. The partnership with AARP chapter is much appreciated. Ruth Anne Niles is assisting the treasurer, Pat Ballard, with check deposits and receipts for two events, All Aboard field trip to Roanoke and Appalachian luncheon. Invoices related to these field trips will be submitted to the chapter treasurer for payment. Don checked about this relationship in advance with state AARP; he is happy to negotiate any issues with state or national AARP if questions are raised.

**Community Foundation:** Pat Hyer reported on the recent annual update on Livability Initiative which was attended by several AARP chapter members and Brian Jacks.

**Mass email:** Don reported that Mail Chimp has made some changes; he is coping.

**Membership:** Ryan Martin previously distributed the membership report electronically. According to the report, we mail 50 copies to other AARP chapters. A question was raised as to whether this was worthwhile since only one or two (?) reciprocate. It may be possible to send the newsletter electronically to other chapters if there really is interest in continuing this one-way exchange. Board members would like the President and Membership Chair to look at this issue.

Lisa Moose suggested that we should have a welcome letter for new members who send in their check for membership. Wendy will draft such a letter that the Membership Chair (or Treasurer?) could send upon receipt of payment.

**Newsletter:** No suggestions for content.

**Program:** Lisa Moose announced that Lisa Garcia will talk about the Dialogue on Race for the April program. Sally Anna suggested that we post program announcements in the New River Valley calendar section of the *Roanoke Times* as do other organizations. Don and/or Lisa to follow up.

**TimeBank:** Val reported that 50 people have registered and some exchanges are now occurring. Examples of services offered: wood cutting, window washing, garage clean up, carpentry, editing, and web development. The leadership team offers four orientation sessions per month, which have drawn a younger crowd. Don Creamer will be hosting a scotch tasting to encourage community spirit among TimeBank participants. Val shared a new, enthusiastic newsletter that is also trying to build awareness and community for the initiative.

**Website:** Don and Peter Magolda redesigned the AARP chapter website, giving it a completely new look. They carefully considered two audiences in the design and content--internal needs for the board and chapter members, but also information for the general public and prospective members. It was suggested that Don show the website at an upcoming public meeting so members not on the board might become familiar.

Don is looking for feedback on the site and content; please spend a few minutes perusing and offering suggestions. If any board member objects to having their personal email and phone number posted on the website, let him know.

**Community Service:** Sally Anna Stapleton reported that the Agency on Aging is offering a workshop for care givers this coming Saturday at NRCC. Sally Anna is hosting an AARP table at the event with the Roanoke AARP chapter.

**Other:** Wendy informed the board about funding shortages for development of the U.S. census and the American Community Surveys. Pilots must be administered in advance. Data collected by these federal initiatives are critical to federal, state and local governments and organizations of all kinds. Proposed cuts will jeopardize this very important federal data collection effort.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00.

Minutes were prepared by Pat Hyer and submitted for review on March 17, 2017.