

**AARP Blacksburg Chapter  
Minutes**

September 1, 2020

Meeting held by Zoom Video Conference

**Attendees:**

Don Creamer, Chuck Burress, Sally Anna Stapleton, Judith Jones, Ben Crawford, Jerry Niles, Doug Feuerbach, Terry Wildman, Isabel Berney, Carolyn Rude, Wendy Baldwin, Joy Herbert, Linda Correll, Thais Beams, Hugh VanLandingham, Lisa Moose, Leslie Pendleton, Jeananne Dixon, Pat Ballard, Jennie Reilly, Kai Duncan

President Don Creamer opened the meeting at 10:09 a.m.

(Technical problems delayed start of meeting.)

Minutes of July 7, 2020 board meeting were approved.

**Care Committee Plans – Outreach to Chapter Members:**

- Leslie to describe and discuss proposed campaign to Board Members:
  - General Care Committee concept is to follow-up with Chapter membership to show that we care about their health and well-being.
  - Brian Jacks sent membership gifts of 200-each AARP pens, 100-each AARP USB flash-drives to distribute to our Chapter membership. Care Committee wanted to give out \$25 AARP gift cards during our Fall chapter meetings – but the AARP Visa gift cards are reserved for special volunteers. Brian suggested that we consider distributing Kroger, Amazon or some other gift cards.
  - Brian brought up topic that September is “Hunger Action Month” and suggested that in our communications that we include letter from Brian to encourage members to go to national AARP website and participate in food drive. AARP national sends food boxes that AARP members can fill and mail free of charge.
  - Possible scheduling of “AARP Chapter Coffee Talks” - virtual meetings to view TED Talks or other short videos followed by discussion.
  - Brian Jacks emphasized that Chapter must NOT encourage people to attend AARP meetings or events outside their homes.
  - Jeananne suggested a Zoom “sing-a-long” for our Chapter membership.
  - Leslie mentioned possibility of a Zoom “laughing yoga” session via “AARP Coffee Talks.”
  - Jennie Reilly suggested that during National Assisted Living week, we organize a drive-by parade. September 12 – 18, 2020 is National Assisted Living Week. English Meadows is scheduling a drive-by parade. Jennie proposed that our Chapter members join in the car parade starting at English Meadows, and extend the parade drive to include Warm Hearth locations on Friday, September 18, 2020 @1:30 p.m. Jennie will write-up article for newsletter and send to Carolyn today.

**QUESTION – Should our Chapter post scheduled Zoom meetings on Social Media/FaceBook:**

- Liz Alter of AARP Virginia has offered to post these Zoom meetings on AARP social media. **QUESTION:** would this type of exposure on FaceBook overly increase the risk of bad actors compromising our Chapter events and unnecessarily exposing our Chapter members to potential malware and other cyber-attacks?
- **DECISION:** Board agreed that this type of social media exposure would introduce a high level of unwanted risk to our AARP Chapter meetings. If someone outside our Chapter wants to join our meeting, they should individually request the Zoom link. We will not publish the link on social media. Chapter will continue to invite Brian Jacks to selectively extend invitations to non-Chapter members to join our monthly programs.

**State and Chapter Awards:**

- Chuck has submitted nominations for AARP Virginia State awards, results not yet known.
- Andrus Award nominee is Jerry Niles for his successful and tireless work to “improve the quality of life for seniors in our community.” Submitted.
- AARP State Chapter Advocacy Award nominee is our Chapter #2613 because of Ben Crawford’s leadership supporting the “OneVirginia” campaign. Submitted.
- Community Spirit and Chapter Service Awards are typically discussed in September and recommendations are made in October Board Meeting.
  - Terry proposed that we create a special circumstance award and plaque for First Responders and Medical Personnel in the Blacksburg area. Award would go to group and be publicly displayed in area (such as Emergency Room Waiting Area, Town Hall or other.)
  - Ben agreed that Terry’s idea should be developed as a new award.
  - Linda suggested that we ask our Chapter membership to make the organization award nomination.
  - Chuck has received nominations for the Chapter Spirit Award.
  - Ben noted that AARP Virginia is moving forward with current 2020 nominations. November 18, 2020 AARP Virginia is holding an online “celebration” instead of the traditional in-person event.
  - Leslie has recommended creating this new award that we can continue in the future.
  - Terry will draft text for the newly proposed community award plaque.
  - Don suggested that we plan online celebration in December in addition to or along with scheduled December Chapter program. (Need to add this as a new agenda item for October meeting.)
  - **DECISION:** Awards will move forward with current 2020 Chapter awards and new “First Responders” community award. Chuck will develop process for new award, and vote will be held in October meeting following normal award procedures.
  - Ben, Sally Anna, Linda and Chuck will form the 2020 Chapter award committee.
  - Chapter monetary awards financial decision for distribution of donation funds to non-profits/community organizations in 2020 will be discussed in October

meeting. Pat, Sally Anna, and Linda will constitute committee and make proposal to Board.

- Jerry suggested that Board also considers using money from AARP/LLI fund.

**Community Challenge Grant – Blacksburg Benches:**

- No new information discussed during this meeting.
- Wendy Baldwin is developing Challenge Grant opportunity to enhance Senior Access to Downtown Blacksburg.
- Proposing installation of 10 benches in downtown Blacksburg for Seniors.
- Cost estimate is \$11,000 for 10 benches.

**“Cinco de Mayo Seniors Day” – Spring Celebration for Seniors:**

- No new information discussed during this meeting.
- Wendy Baldwin and Joy Herbert are continuing to explore and develop the idea of organizing the “Spring Celebration for Seniors” event to be held at the Blacksburg Community Center to celebrate ageing in 2021.
- Event will have exhibitors, art displays, story-telling and demonstrations for seniors.
- The Month of May is “Older Americans Month”
- No fund-raising activities will be held during this event.
- Planned event date is May 5, 2021, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Blacksburg Community Center.
- Art will be provided by LLI classes for this event per Jerry Niles.
- Joy Herbert is exploring the opportunity to advertise this event at the Senior Olympic Games which are scheduled to be held in Christiansburg at the end of April 2021.
- Judith Jones suggested the “Wilderness Road Chorus” and other musicians to perform at this event.
- “PanJammers” steel drum orchestra are exploring possibility of a demo and performance at this event.

**Community Challenge Grant – Veterans Initiative, Care Committee:**

- No new information discussed during meeting.

**Annual Cheeseburger Event:**

- CANCELLED. Pat noted that our Chapter has already received other normal benefits from this donation.

**New Program Plans by Zoom:**

- No new information discussed during meeting.
- Next scheduled 2020 online presentation will take place on September 15, 2020 (Dean Spader “Project Drawdown: 80 Viable Solutions to Climate Change”). Additional scheduled events include October (Lesa Wynn) and December (Alex Smith).
- November program is the Veteran’s program.
- Mike Madigan is on stand-by as guest speaker to present research on “Falling” in 2021.

**LLI Update:**

- Jerry reports that the LLI registration of 200 participants has happened as of today. Five of the LLI courses are nearly full. LLI special events are accepting unlimited enrollment for webinars. LLI has established a waitlist process this Fall. Work is going well for LLI.

**Newsletter:**

- Carolyn requested additional information for newsletter.

**Leadership Development:**

- Jerry discussed Lisa Moose considering acceptance of nomination for Chapter VP in 2021.
- Hugh, Isabel and Jeananne have been invited to continue as Board members after their term expiration in 2021. Jerry will follow-up with individuals on this topic.
- Tom Hohenshil and Buddy Russell have responded to our Chapter's MailChimp invitation to join Board.
- Heidi Dickens has also shown interest in becoming our Chapter Secretary.
- Don noted that October is the designated month for inviting Chapter membership to make nominations, and the vote is taken in November. This process will be completed on usual schedule via Zoom. The newsletter will have article featuring this nomination process.
- Open leadership positions include new Board Members, Secretary and Vice President of our AARP Chapter.
- An article in the September/October chapter newsletter will discuss the Leadership Development topic.
- Jerry Niles & team are brainstorming for leadership recruitment strategies.
- Jerry Niles has extended invitations for new visitors to attend our Fall Chapter Board Meetings to learn more about our Chapter and explore their interest in Chapter Board participation.
- Don Creamer has extended Chapter Board participation invitation to all current Chapter members via MailChimp communication.

**AARP Chapter Logo:**

- Electronic versions of AARP Chapter Logo been sent to Karen Nelson of Warm Hearth, Mandy Hayes of RSVP, Tina King at Agency on Ageing, LLI and other organizations have been sent.
- Don Creamer to follow-up on AARP Chapter Banner and AARP Chapter Brochure that will be modified in the future to include the authorized Chapter logo for forthcoming activities.

**Committee/Liaison Reports/Other:**

- Ben reported Zoom meeting with Governor Mark Warner and AARP talking about Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and Broadband.

- Ben is writing a book titled: Volunteer Development and Leadership.  
CONGRATULATIONS BEN!!!!
- Gerrymandering is on the ballot! Vote YES! Virginia is the only state in the entire nation that has this on the ballot. THANK YOU BEN FOR ALL OF YOUR WORK DEDICATED TO MAKE THIS POSSIBLE!!!!
- Terry asked about yard signs for OneVirginia Vote.
- Carolyn has written newsletter article for voting locations for 2020.
- If you have already ordered mail-in ballot, take it with you to early voting station.

Meeting adjourned at 11:38.

Minutes prepared by Lisa Moose.