

AARP Blacksburg Chapter
Minutes
April 2, 2019
Blacksburg Recreation Center

Attendees: Jerry Niles, Don Creamer, Terry Wildman, Sally Anna Stapleton, Joy Herbert, Isabel Berney, Doug Feuerbach, Leslie Pendleton, Hugh VanLandingham, Tamara Hodsden, Jim Montgomery, Pat Ballard, Ben Crawford, Wendy Baldwin, Tom Ryan, Pat Hyer, Val Coluni, Judith Jones

Minutes for March 5, 2019 board meeting were approved.

Future leadership for the chapter:

Don Creamer led a discussion about recruiting future leaders and officers for the chapter. Recruitment for officer/board positions is usually done in the fall – a nominating committee is appointed in September with a slate presented to the membership at the November meeting. Might there be a better way? Recruitment seems like something that we need to pay attention to all year long. Isabel Berney found no particular issue with presenting a non-competitive slate to the full membership, allowing candidates to be introduced and offering members an opportunity to suggest an alternative if desired. Tamara Hodsden suggested that we share info on committee roles with the membership periodically so they might find a way to get involved. Jim Montgomery commented that the strength of organization lies in the board. Bringing on new members is essential for our vitality, but we depend heavily on key experienced board members to keep the work of the chapter going smoothly. Judith Jones offered a model from another organization. They developed a leadership development committee and invited identified members to attend board meetings to learn about the organization. They found it successful to say to such members “we want YOU to participate.” We don’t necessarily invite them with automatic expectation of serving on the board; leadership could be in another role. Judith urged informal meetings with such folks outside of the board meeting to orient them, engage them, and listen to their ideas. New arrivals in NRV are a source of potential leadership we should cultivate and tap.

Don Creamer reminded the board that the President has the authority to appoint committees and chairs annually. We shouldn’t let the bylaws be a stumbling block. We should decide what is right to do and then fix the bylaws accordingly. There was some discussion about whether inviting members to a “leadership” development experience would be off-putting; others felt that some members would be responsive to being identified for greater involvement. Don urged all board members to get involved in this membership/leadership identification and not just rely on a small committee.

Jerry will be appointing a standing leadership development committee that will recruit and develop potential leaders for the chapter throughout the year as well as serving as the official nominating committee for preparation of a slate.

Treasurer’s Report:

Pat Ballard shared the LLI finance report with Pat Hyer and asked about possible chapter liability since invoices for LLI-related travel may run through chapter. Liability is not expected to be a problem since LLI activities would be covered by university liability insurance.

Committee Leadership Needs:

June Schmidt has managed the audit function for many years, however she has asked to step down because of health issues. In fact all of the finance committee members would like to be replaced. Jerry has talked to Doug Feuerbach who has agreed to be part of the solution. Pat Ballard reminded everyone that the responsibility of the committee is really a “review” rather than a standard legal audit. Ballard and Feuerbach will meet and flesh out plans to address the membership needs of the finance committee. Pat submits an annual financial report to the national office, which then submits appropriate federal paperwork.

April meeting plans:

Jerry and Leslie Pendleton have developed a conversation guide for the April 16 meeting. We will break into small conversation groups of six people. Leslie and Jerry will be the overall facilitators. The proposed guide contains questions and ratings. Table facilitators will encourage participants to go through the questions in stages and urge everyone in the group to participate (if they wish). Leslie and Jerry will summarize sticky note suggestions. This is a chance for the board and committee members to listen to what members are saying. Don asked if there a way to solicit feedback from those who DON'T attend our meetings. More thought will be given to this later. Doug remarked that these group discussions could be the first step in our leadership identification; facilitators could note people who are especially engaged in the conversation.

Reports:

AARP Virginia Liaison: Ben Crawford drew attention to the senior games hosted by local counties. The City of Radford is hosting events this year. If you are interested in participating, call Audrey Caldwell at the Radford Rec Center. The AARP speakers' bureau has volunteer speakers ready to talk on: 5 pillars of brain health, homefit workshop, caregiving 101, Medicare 101, Social Security, and Protecting Yourself from Fraud and Identity Theft. Ben distributed the Giles monthly newsletter and Sally Anna Stapleton passed around the Roanoke chapter newsletter so board members might see what other chapters were doing.

Awards: Tamara announced award deadlines for state awards and invited anyone with a suggested nominee to contact her.

Community Service: Sally Anna will use the May meeting to conduct the Mother's Day food drive. She recently attended a meeting to help launch a program to collect and distribute supplies for seniors in Floyd. There is also a new program coming together to distribute food to children in summer time when school is not in session; she is following this initiative.

Community Foundation/Livability Initiative: Aging in Place Task Force is working on a train-the-trainer package with video prompts and a trainer's guide.

DBI: Sally Anna will work on the volunteer list for the Steppin Out booth in August. We should receive a form to sign up for space.

Finance: The board shared its genuine gratitude to June Schmidt for many years of service on the Finance and Audit committee.

Health Fair: Leslie Pendleton reported that the committee will ramp up until the fall. She has already been working on exhibitors and has been in touch with previous committee members to get them involved once again. She wants 6-8 people. They will start working on materials earlier. The Virginia AARP provides small grants to chapters – we could look at this for the Health Fair next year. Wendy received a small grant last time for Health Fair.

Hospitality: Appreciation was extended to Terry Wildman for handling the donuts for last meeting. Terry and Don are meeting with the Virginia Tech Retirees today to discuss possible joint social activities.

Programs: Judith Jones reported that all is progressing on the program front.

Legislative report: Val Coluni shared his legislative report including news on I-81 corridor issues and an appeal to the Supreme Court re gerrymandering.

No other reports.

Minutes prepared by Pat Hyer and submitted April 2, 2019.