

**AARP Blacksburg Chapter
Minutes**

June 1, 2020

Meeting held by Zoom Video Conference

Attendees:

Don Creamer, Chuck Burress, Leslie Pendleton, Pat Ballard, Sally Anna Stapleton, Judith Jones, Ben Crawford, Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, Doug Feuerbach, Terry Wildman, Isabel Berney, Carolyn Rude, Hugh VanLandingham, Wendy Baldwin, Joy Herbert, Jeananne Dixon-Bame, Joy Herbert, Linda Correll, Terry Wildman

President Don Creamer opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes of May 5, 2020 board meeting were approved.

Treasurer Report:

- Pat Ballard reports that she re-issued check to Warm Hearth for Christmas (original check was lost by recipient.)
- Two membership checks arrived for new members.
- Received form to re-register with State Commission.

Monthly Programs Options:

- Judith Jones reports that speakers are scheduled to present online via Zoom for Chapter through December 2020.
- Curt Laub will be the first online speaker on June 16, 2020. His presentation is titled: "Bugs and Us: Insects and Our Culture"
- Additional scheduled online presentations will take place in June, July, September, October and December 2020.
- November program is the Veteran's program.

Annual Picnic Plans:

- Tentative date/time for Annual Picnic is August 4, 2020 from 5:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at Terry's farm.
- Don Creamer will poll chapter members to gauge their interest in attending a picnic this year during COVID.
- It was noted that AARP Virginia has strict orders to NOT allow any type of in-person meeting at this time, per Brian Jacks. This AARP order is currently set to expire on July 1, 2020.
- Per Ben Crawford - AARP Giles county is offering a car-side social. Their chapter provides lunch, but members stay in car and wear a mask. Ben will provide feedback regarding the success of this style of gathering.

Care Committee:

- Leslie Pendleton reports that the Community Challenge Grant Proposal is being reworked to focus on virtual events because of COVID restrictions on public gatherings.

Updated initiative covers three areas:

1. **Virtual Engagement** (Veteran's profiles, story-telling and photography; bluegrass virtual concerts – partner with the Floyd Country Store; drive-in movie – Starlight Drive-in Movie with goody-bags, provide cost of admission and food/drink package)
2. **Access to Food and Necessities** (Vittles for Vets – donations of gift cards; Lending Library book box in front of VFW building)
3. **Access to Services and Economic Activities** (Marketing Materials for Veterans Resource Fair for November; Mary Lou Summers for the Veteran's Cemetery to purchase wreaths for December wreath laying \$2795 budget) Community Challenge Grant to be matched by State

Response to Community Challenge Grant application is expected by the end of June 2020.

- Discussed idea of Care Committee initiative to establish a call campaign to “check-in” with our chapter members.
- Decided that too many scam calls prevent many members from answering.
- Chapter will communicate frequently with members, but we will not have a special “call brigade” by the Care Committee.

Additional Community Challenge Grant:

- Wendy Baldwin is exploring 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.
- Response to Community Challenge Grant application is expected by the end of June 2020.

Spring Celebration for Seniors:

- Wendy Baldwin is exploring idea of organizing an event “Spring Celebration for Seniors” to be held at the 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”
- Don Creamer asked Wendy to consider fund raising activities during this event.
- Wendy will proceed with exploration, planning and report progress to chapter board.

Give Local NRV 2020:

- Request for continued \$500 sponsorship contribution was made.
- Board agreed to continue support of “Give Local NRV 2020”
- The cost will be split between AARP Blacksburg Chapter and LLI funds.

LLI Update:

- LLI is transitioning to online courses and events for Fall 2020.
- Recruited 22 volunteers to be virtual assistants to support members and instructors.
- 26 online courses planned at this time.

Newsletter:

- Carolyn Rude reports that early September/October Newsletter is next scheduled issue.

State and Chapter Awards:

- Chuck Burress reported status of current State and Chapter Award proposals.
- Andrus Award nominee is Jerry Niles for his successful and tireless work to “improve the quality of life for seniors in our community”
- Carolyn Rude will draft the nomination document with Don Creamer and Pat Hyer.
- Deadline for nomination is July 1, 2020.

Leadership Development:

- Jerry Niles reports that leadership development activities have been interrupted by COVID.
- He has experienced difficulty recruiting new members and developing new leadership during lock-down.
- Jerry requested help from board members to identify people with talents and interest to serve through our AARP Chapter.
- Open positions include new Board Members, Secretary and Vice President of AARP Chapter.

Legislative Update:

Doug Feuerbach reports that there has been no news on Rx cost control.
Current focus is on COVID.

Food Drives:

No report.

Stepping Out:

Cancelled.

Leadership Development:

- Leslie Pendleton suggested that chapter develops a training program for leadership positions.
- Judith Jones offered to share established procedures that are successfully used by other organizations.
- Don Creamer reports that AARP chapter documents already exist on our Chapter website and suggests that we use existing documentation as springboard for development.

- Jerry Niles will review all sources.
- An article in the September/October chapter newsletter will discuss Leadership Development topic.

AARP Liaison Report:

- Ben Crawford reports that Virginia has a new AARP State President, Joyce Williams from Roanoke area.
- “Joyce brings to this position decades of experience in service and leadership. She spent her career as an educator, including time as a teacher, assistant principal, and ultimately principal. Since retiring, Joyce has been an active volunteer with AARP Virginia – both as a member of the Roanoke Area AARP Leadership Team and as an officer of Southwest Roanoke AARP Chapter #4652. More recently, she served as AARP Virginia’s Southwest Bureau Chief of the Virtual Volunteer Newsroom.”

Gerrymandering Update:

- Ben Crawford reports that the General Assembly passed the proposed constitutional amendment bill for the second time in January.
- Citizens need to approve the amendment in November.
- Chapter plans to encourage our members to vote YES on this amendment in November election, and will send MailChimp message regarding this topic.
- Pat Hyer urged that directions for obtaining an absentee ballot for November election be featured in the newsletter and email at appropriate times.

Pat Hyer Resignation:

- Pressing priorities of LLI responsibilities and Community Foundation obligations requires Pat to discontinue chapter Secretarial activities at this time.
- Lisa Moose will cover Secretarial functions for chapter during Don Creamer’s Presidency in 2020.

Meeting adjourned at 11:52.

Minutes prepared by Lisa Moose and Pat Hyer, June 2, 2020.