

AAUW BRANCH BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at 1 pm

at the home of Kathy Wagenknecht, Bennington, Vermont

Present: Board members Claudia Dalton, Beth Hardesty, Gudrun Hutchins, Madeline Kennedy, Suzanne Kirkpatrick, Julie Mackaman, Norma McShane, Judy Murphy, Dawn Rodrigues, Kathy Wagenknecht; previous past president Ruth Botzow.

Call to Order and Approval of Minutes. President Wagenknecht called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. Hutchins moved, Kennedy seconded that the minutes of the June 10, 2019 board meeting be approved; motion carried.

Finances. Treasurer McShane distributed a FY2019 report. Additionally, she distributed a detailed report of deposits and expenses for the first two months of the current fiscal year, July and August 2019, along with a YTD summary as of September 30, 2019. Murphy moved, Kirkpatrick seconded that the financial report be accepted; motion carried. (See Financial Report, attached.)

Committee Reports

- **Programs.** Mackaman and Rodrigues reported on this year's Suffragist Centennial theme, ranging from a special book group discussion of *The Women's Hour* by Elaine Weiss (September) and a Suffragist Transcribe-a-thon with the Bennington Free Library (November) to collaborations with Oldcastle Theatre for a live performance and possible film screenings (2020). Sheila Mullineaux (absent), the committee's point person, will staff a voter registration table at meetings in 2019-20.
- **Membership.** Dalton referred to the membership figures in the treasurer's financial report (update: the AAUW database shows that our branch has 61 national members; three local members bring the total to 64 members); and to the link for joining on our new branch website. Dalton and Hutchins agreed to collaborate on an update of the membership brochure.
- **Theater Fundraiser.** Kennedy reported that we sold 33 tickets to the Oldcastle production of *Water, Water Everywhere*, netting \$19 per ticket. With net ticket sales of \$627 and donations of \$239, the event generated \$866 (a \$194 increase over last year) toward our local scholarship fund.
- **Member Concerns.** Hardesty reported on the online membership survey that she, Wagenknecht and Rodrigues designed and conducted over the summer, which yielded useful planning feedback for programs and other branch activities. She added that in a recent meeting, staff of the *Bennington Banner* encouraged submission of material by the public. Murphy added that the *Banner* publishes all branch press releases and calendar listings, and that write-ups following our public events that are not covered by staff reporters (i.e., by a branch member) might be welcome.

Kirkpatrick moved, McShane seconded that the committee reports be accepted; motion carried.

Discretionary Spending/Operating Funds. Wagenknecht and Botzow suggested that with a dedicated operating reserve of \$1,000 (for current liabilities) coupled with a year-to-year carryover of approximately \$1,000 in unrestricted operating funds, we should revisit discretionary spending. Mackaman moved, Murphy seconded that McShane transfer \$500 from the operating reserve to operating funds (for discretionary spending on equipment maintenance, rentals for program venues and other branch activities); and that to yield a more accurate picture of our actual expenses,

invoices be submitted for any expense exceeding \$10, with the voluntary option of returning the reimbursement as a donation; motion carried.

Contributions to National AAUW. We discussed AAUW's National 5-Star Program, which in its Advancement Star directs branches to shift their giving by 50% from AAUW fellowships/grants and Legal Advocacy Fund to "greatest needs" or a "strategic plan focus area." We reviewed a letter submitted by Cathy McClure (absent) urging continued support of LAF/Public Policy. Murphy moved, Kirkpatrick seconded that the money we raise through the Oldcastle Theatre event be directed entirely to our local scholarship fund (instead of allocating \$250 to AAUW Education, as in the past); and that of the donations we collect through the Social Lunch, 50% go to LAF and 50% to Public Policy; motion carried.

Fundraising at Programs. We agreed to purchase notecards (\$2.25 each) from Meneese Wall's Women's Suffrage Centennial Artwork collection (6 different cards x 20 of each, for a total of 120 cards) to sell for \$5 at this year's programs. Wagenknecht will place the order; Kirkpatrick will ask meeting hostesses to sell the cards at or near the refreshments and voter registration tables. Proceeds will support branch activities. Following the Suffrage Centennial year, we will sell cards with original artwork by Dalton and other items.

Corresponding Secretary/College Liaison. Secretary Mackaman volunteered to relieve Wagenknecht from writing cards on behalf of the board to members in special circumstances (e.g., congratulations, health issues, bereavement), thereby adding correspondence to her recording secretary duties. We postponed a discussion about formalizing a college liaison position until a later meeting with McClure in attendance, as she has been cultivating a relationship with Bennington College.

Northshire Carpooling to Bennington Events. Hardesty commented on the stalwart branch members living in the Northshire, the distance of which often precludes their participation in branch events held in Bennington. She offered to contact two Northshire-based members who have indicated a willingness to be carpool drivers, and arrange a process to connect riders and drivers.

Adjournment. Kirkpatrick moved, Kennedy seconded that the meeting be adjourned; motion carried, meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Mackaman
Secretary

Attachments: Financial Report