

Minutes of the AAUW B-C Board meeting, September 1, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Co-President Sage Taber, welcoming us and leading the group with the AAUW Mission Statement and welcoming us to our first meeting of the 2022-2023 year. Minutes of the May Board meeting were approved. Jean Elliott, chair for Fall Brunch, said there are close to 80 people signed up; food arrangements are completed; the event starts at 10, with lunch at 11:30. There will be fun and games, and everyone can go home by 1:00.

Co-President Sandy Brody reminded us of a full agenda and introduced Karen Francis, President of the Missouri State AAUW, who led us in an Inclusion Fusion exercise. Since the vision for AAUW is *Equity for All*, the discussion at state level was, "What does equity for all really mean in our lives?" Karen led us in the resulting exercise which asked us, in five small groups, to quickly discuss where we see inequity in our community. Ideas to stimulate discussion were diversity of School Board or City Council; handicapped accessible sidewalks/curbs; banking hours, either lobby or drive through hours. Divided into small groups, we had five minutes to talk about the topic, with one person taking notes; then the note-taker would share briefly with the total board what the result was. The reported groups covered a wide range of thoughts – Rockwood school board; not enough handicapped parking at polling places; size and design of bathroom stalls; no Saturday afternoon banking hours; physical access to DMV sites; where improvements have been made such as sidewalk curb cuts; lack of access to voting information because of technology gaps - showing that the equity isn't always evident. At the end, Karen promised that we would do this exercise in our monthly meetings, and commented that at the State meeting, the topic that generated the most discussion was lack of equity in handicap-accessible bathrooms! Karen will also be writing a monthly newsletter on the topic of Equity for All.

Pat Shores, outgoing Finance Officer, introduced Jean Light, the new Finance Officer, who told us that asset reports would be available the first week of September. Pat also introduced the budget committee, then presented the line-by-line review of the proposed budget for the 2022-2023 year. Pat's view is that as a 501c organization, we are a charity and should be sharing the assets entrusted to us instead of holding on. However, as the counter view, Mary Jermak reminded us that we have a responsibility to make sure that the sharing is judicious and that we have enough to maintain the important ongoing work of the Branch. The amount of \$200 per speaker is still appropriate. Although there is no formal written guidance on how much to hold in reserve, the practice is to make sure there is enough to cover the essentials, like rent and insurance. Discussion on the amount budgeted for our annual branch donation to the AAUW Fund led to agreement to pay less than half the budgeted amount by December, and then decide, based on review of finances, how much of the remainder to send to National. The Board approved the Budget Committee's motion that the 2022-2023 Proposed Budget as corrected.

Michele Mangnall and April Walgren, Co-Chairs of Membership, explained the later-than-usual influx of dues in August as the result of difficulties accessing the new national system for paying on-line. The committee didn't start calling unpaid members until August 1, when there were 44 unpaid; they are down to 3 no responses. We have lost 12 members since last year; including the unpaid, we now have

152 members. It's clear that we need to increase membership. The group agreed to the idea of advertising our speakers in the West News magazine.

Marcia Block and Janet Sloey, Programs co-chairs, reported that all speakers for the year are scheduled; the list is provided in the new directory. The first speaker is from the International Institute, who will discuss how St. Louis is absorbing the influx of immigrants from Afghanistan and Ukraine.

Funds co-chairs Karen Francis and Suzanne Couch reminded us that National's Fund year runs from July 1-June 30; tax deductible donations run on the Jan 1-Dec 31 tax year. \$64 of our dues this year is deductible; the other \$3 goes to the Action Fund and is non-deductible. Our branch donated \$12,914 this past year, \$6,914 of which was in individual giving to the Greatest Needs Fund. Not one person in the state gave to the old EOF fund; the \$6 million that was distributed by National this year in grants and scholarships came from interest on the fund. The committee goal is to have at least 50% of our membership donate to the Greatest Needs Fund; the donation can be any amount, even \$5; the goal ties to the percentage of giving, not the amount. They concluded with a reminder that dues pay for less than 20% of the organization's expenses.

Public Policy co-chairs Marian Bauer and Angie Janik: the committee met 8/16 to review priorities. To eliminate overlap, they created a focus for September through November – Get Out the Vote. They will call all registered members to encourage them to vote. Angie did all the paperwork necessary and is now an official voter registrar. Marian is concerned about the effects of MO bill 1878 which appears to suppress voting rather than control voting, its stated purpose. This bill has not received the same news coverage as others.

Sandy Brody reported for past-President Jan Horner on the IBC annual Spring Fling. There is an organizational document available to help each year's group to organize the event. This year it is Ballwin-Chesterfield's turn to host. Jan is already looking for another venue for the event that has better parking and facilities than our current meeting site.

Ann-Patrice O'Shaughnessy, Directory chair: last year the Directory team provided a new digital copy of the directory as the update instead of just a single sheet print-out of changes; the group agreed that is a good practice to continue. 89 members still want print copies. The directory will be available at the September Branch meeting. The co-director has resigned; Ann-Patrice is looking for a person who likes to do research, send e-mails, etc. It is not a tech-heavy job; August is the heaviest workload month.

Dollars for Scholars – Nancy Pearson, co-chair, is excited for this coming year. We did 8 events last year, plus tip jar and honor roll donations to raise money for scholarships. The emphasis for the committee is to get members to sponsor events. The handout at the September branch meeting will have a list of prior events printed on the back to trigger ideas for this year; many things are worth doing again. There are 4 events coming up, the 2 jazz events already publicized; a Daniel Boone house and winery tour on 10/19; and another Roz Marx event – *Into the Woods* at Edison Theater.

Hospitality – Joan Hewitt and Jane Hemer, co chairs, passed around sign-up sheets for October and November branch meetings; they need coordinating hostesses as well as people to bring food. The

building is open at 9 before the 9:30 meeting; they will arrange for someone to help open the door for those bringing in food. Water only will be provided; members will need to bring their own coffee.

Newsletter – Mary Jermak asked if single item reminders could be provided so they don't get lost in the length of the Friday reminders.

Winter Fundraising: Marcia Block said there will be entertainment and food, but no raffle tickets this year. The committee will be asking for different levels of donations throughout the year to supplement dues as a source of income for the branch.

STEM – Marcia Block, co-chair, justified the budget request by reminding us that we now have 5 girls at 3 schools (the committee is holding off on adding a 4th school), with Expanding Your Horizons and Science Fair expenses. They are looking at a junior program to start at the elementary level.

Spring Luncheon – Susan Fenwick and Yvonne Ward, co-chairs: we had 80 attendees in May and collected \$184 on the raffle. Susan, Yvonne and Jane Hemer met to kick off planning; they picked a theme so Jane could start on the art work. Luncheon will again be at Whitmore Country Club, May 11, 2023. They have already been warned by staff that because of inflation, the price will increase but the amount is not settled. The committee will have an October 20 first meeting; they need new members.

Sue Shriver and Lorna Anderson, Co-chairs of University Liaison, said they met August 30. Four scholarships have been distributed for the fall semester. Sue met one of the recipients at a December event and would like her to speak to us if they can agree on a schedule. Book sales will resume in October and November; bean soup and Panera or Starbucks cards are on hold. Give opinions to either Lorna or Sue. The biggest job with the soup is hauling the beans to the meeting. Pat said she has people would help.

Sandy took care of administrative duties – who needs tables for the brunch meeting, and how many and where for lunch after this meeting – and then the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Wier, Secretary/Archivist