



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**March 20, 2021**  
**Via ZOOM**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order on Saturday, March 20, 2021, at 1:06 PM by Co-President Leslie Tourigny. The meeting was conducted via Zoom because of the continuing pandemic. Recording Secretary Deborah Dodd took roll. A list of board members in attendance will be distributed via email. **(Enclosure 1)**

The minutes of the January 12, 2021, Board of Directors meeting were distributed electronically by Deborah. **(Enclosure 2)** They were approved as distributed.

Prior to the meeting, Co-Presidents Suzanne Rothwell and Leslie Tourigny requested that Deborah ask the board to vote electronically on two proposals:

- To allow the co-presidents to send an email on behalf of the AAUW-VA Board to Virginia state members recommending that they vote in favor of the open membership amendment. Pursuant to an email dated January 21, 2021, the board voted electronically, and the proposal was approved with 11 “yes” votes and 4 “no” votes. **(Enclosure 3)** Suzanne gave an update on the decision to send the email. She and Leslie decided to wait to send the email recommending open membership to all AAUW of Virginia branch members until the week before the voting begins on this matter on April 7.
- to revise the AAUW of Virginia 2020-2021 state budget to add an additional \$100 to allow the board to reward the branches that maintained at least 90% membership retention rate over the previous year with \$25 each. Pursuant to an email dated February 18, 2021, the board voted electronically, and the revision was approved unanimously. **(Enclosure 4)** VP for Finance Marsha Melkonian said that all checks are ready to be sent.

**Co-Presidents' Report**

The Co-Presidents' Report was distributed electronically. **(Enclosure 5)**

Anita Aymer and Nadine James were named to the reading committee for the minutes from this meeting.

Suzanne reported on the New Member Town Hall that was recommended by the board to be held via Zoom prior to the State Conference. There were 67 new members who were contacted three times. None of them attended. Nine members, who were not new members, registered, but only six attended.

Suzanne thanked and congratulated the AAUW of Virginia board members who received Recognition Awards at the Annual Business Meeting:

- Susan Burk and Denise Murden – Co-Vice Presidents for Public Policy
- Cyndi Shanahan – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair
- Barbara Woodlee – College/University Relations Chair

## **2021 State Conference Review**

Suzanne distributed the Board of Directors Report (**Enclosure 6**) and the Survey Results for Day 1, Day 2, and Day 3 of the Conference electronically. (**Enclosure 7**) She encouraged feedback from the board.

- There was disappointment in the attendance at the New Member Town Hall. It was suggested that too many days of activities associated with the conference might be too much. Another suggestion was that perhaps a meeting for new members should be held at a separate time not associated with the State Conference. It might be held as a social hour rather than a town hall.
- Attendance at the Annual Business Meeting and the conference programs was impressive. The use of Zoom makes the meetings accessible to more members, however, there was concern about future hybrid meetings attracting sufficient numbers of in-person attendees if members can still attend virtually. A hybrid approach might be appropriate, using a mix of Zoom and in-person activities. The business meeting should be free and available to all members.
- Sherry Warren said that hotel contracts might be more flexible in the future due to COVID experiences and the use of Zoom.
- Registration seemed to increase with the use of Mail Chimp to advertise the conference to all branch members, Virginia National members, and C/U reps.

Suzanne said that the responses from members to the conference evaluation were excellent. She shared some of the comments and suggestions for future Zoom meetings:

- Members missed being together in-person.
- The quality and variety of speakers were complimented.
- There should be a five-minute break between sessions.
- Members should be admitted from the waiting room 5-10 minutes before the start of the meeting.
- Conference programs should not be held on Monday.
- The Annual Business Meeting procedure, which seems scripted and complicated, could be streamlined.

Thanks were extended to VP for Program Nadine James, Zoom manager Marsha Melkonian, Conference Treasurer Tammie Mullins-Rice, and Conference Program Book Editors Mary Anne Graham and Bianca Daugherty. Patsy Quick, who chose the cover art for the conference program, was complimented. She explained how she found the artwork on a free website and added the conference title to produce the cover design which conveyed the conference theme so well. Board members suggested that perhaps the design could be used on tote bags, coffee mugs, or notecards to be used for fundraising.

Conference Treasurer Tammie Mullins-Rice reported that total; revenue for ads that were included in the conference program book totaled \$1,290. There were 11 full page ads, 7 half- page ads, and 2 quarter-page ads purchased. She will send the spreadsheet of the list to Deborah. (**Enclosure 8**)

Plans for the 2021-2022 State Conference were discussed. The Northwest District will host the conference in March 2022 in Harrisonburg, VA. Northwest District Representative Sylvia Rogers, Nadine, and the planning committee will meet and will return to the board with more information.

### **Branch Liaison Reports**

The Liaison Reports from the 24 AAUW of Virginia Branches (**Enclosure 9**) and the Liaison Assessments for AAUW-VA Branches for 2020-2021. (**Enclosure 10**) were distributed electronically. Leslie noted that the liaison report for Fairfax City with a Green rating should be added to the Liaison Assessment chart.

The rating scale for assessing the status of the branches has been green, yellow, or red. After reviewing the results of the Liaison Assessments, Leslie noted that they indicated that a broader rating scale might more accurately assess the status of the branches. After a discussion, it was decided that a 1 – 5 rating scale would allow for that. **Carol Dabbs made a motion that we change the rating scale for branch liaison reports from red-yellow-green to a 1 to 5 scale, as defined earlier by Suzanne Rothwell: 5 Excellent, 4 Very Good, 3 Good, 2 Fair, 1 Poor.** The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Cheryl Spohnholtz agreed to coordinate with Suzanne to develop the number scale with a related explanation for Liaison Assessment Guidelines.

Leslie shared some observations after reviewing the liaison reports.

- 7 of the 8 branches that have received stars in the 5-Star Recognition Program are in the Northern District.
- Some branches collaborate with the public libraries for their programs.
- Fundraising seems not to have been affected as adversely anticipated.
- Attracting new members seems to be an issue with many branches.

A discussion continued regarding membership challenges. Merging branches was mentioned as an option. Branches should be encouraged to share programs with other branches on Zoom.

Cheryl will organize an approach for coordinating with branch liaisons regarding challenged branches. She will also establish a strategic team with branch vice presidents for membership, if elimination of the membership degree requirement is approved, to help them use it in the recruitment of new members.

### **State Named Honorees Committee Report**

State Named Honorees Committee Chair Caroline Pickens distributed the State Named Honorees Committee report electronically. (**Enclosure 11**) She said that the word “members” should be added to the report after “branch presidents” in the second bullet under “Process” for clarification in the criteria for soliciting nominees.

The pilot program was successful. Caroline was applauded for her work in spearheading this program. The three deserving women who received the awards at the Annual Business Meeting were pleasantly surprised. **Caroline Pickens made a motion**

**to approve the establishment of the State Named Honorees Committee as a standing committee.** The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Carol Dabbs will present a proposal at the July board meeting to amend the AAUW Handbook to add to the description of the AAUW Funds Chair and reflect the establishment of the AAUW Funds Standing Committee.

### **Mini-Grant Program**

Susan Burk reported on the status of the mini-grant program. The success of the program was reported in the Winter/Spring *Vision* and in the conference program book. In the past, the allocation for mini-grants has been \$1,500 and there has always been a need to ask for more. **Susan made a motion to increase the budget for 2021-22 mini-grants from \$1,500 to \$2,000.** The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

### **BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

#### **Finance**

VP for Finance Marsha Melkonian distributed the Finance Report as of March 16, 2021 electronically. **(Enclosure 12)** She reviewed the 2020-2021 budget.

There were two votes taken to increase the budget. In the future, Marsha will be included in discussions about any changes so that the budget can be adjusted.

Marsha requested that board members email her their budget line-item requests for the 2021-2022 budget by April 30. Leslie mentioned that there is excess money in the accounts because the pandemic caused the cancellation of many activities that the money would have funded. She asked board members to send ideas for what should be done with the excess funds to Marsha, Leslie, and Suzanne by June 1 for consideration at the July meeting. Suzanne said that there are approximately \$10,000 in excess funds. Marsha suggested keeping at least between \$5,000 and \$7,000 in the accounts. Caroline noted that in the past, excess money was given as grants to branches to encourage them to attend the conference.

Suzanne discussed the 2020-2021 contributions to NCCWSL and AAUW Funds. The 2020-2021 budget includes \$1,500 for NCCWSL, which is the standard state contribution. This year NCCWSL will be held virtually, with a registration fee of \$125. Kim Churches indicated that she expects 400+ attendees. It was suggested that it would be appropriate to contribute \$1,000 to NCCWSL. **Caroline Pickens made a motion that in the 2020-2021 budget we send \$1,000 to NCCWSL.** The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Then there was a suggestion for a contribution to the AAUW Greatest Needs Fund. **Tammie Mullins-Rice made a motion that AAUW of Virginia make a contribution in the amount of \$2,790 to AAUW Greatest Needs Fund, which shall be composed of:**

- 1. \$1,290 of income from ads in the Conference Program Book;**
- 2. \$500 moved from the NCCWSL budget item of \$1,500; and**
- 3. \$1,000 moved from State Board Spring Meeting budget item of \$3,000.**

The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Caroline said that she would personally contribute \$10 to make it a total contribution of \$2,800.

### **Membership**

VP for Membership Cheryl Spohnholtz distributed the Membership Report electronically. **(Enclosure 13)** Cheryl reported that there are three new paid lifetime members: Susan Bardenhagen from the Woodbridge Branch, Jane Hobbs from the Reston-Herndon Area Branch, and Tammie Mullins-Rice from the Virginia Beach Branch. Cheryl commended the Alexandria Branch whose member, Sandra Grady, was the first person to renew for 2021-2022. Cheryl said that last year branches with 100% or more retention received awards. This year branches with at 90% or more retention received awards. She asked members to consider if those branches with 90% or more retention should continue to receive awards. There was general agreement that they should continue to be awarded.

### **Communications**

VP for Communications Patsy Quick distributed the Communications Report electronically. **(Enclosure 14)** She shared her concerns that many of the 31 copies of the Winter/Spring *Vision* that were mailed by the printer to members who do not have email addresses were not received. The cost to mail them is more than \$2.00 each. She questioned whether they should continue to be mailed in the future and, if not, how those members could receive their copies. Caroline pointed out that the *Vision* is an entitlement of state membership. Mary Anne Graham will contact the presidents of branches whose members receive their copies by mail to determine whether the copies were received and, if not, whether the member wishes to receive copies in the future.

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I)**

DE&I Chair Cyndi Shanahan distributed the DE&I report electronically. **(Enclosure 15)** She has been asked to be on an AAUW of Colorado panel to describe what is being done with DE&I in Virginia. There are currently 17 AAUW states that have DE&I chairs. She will write to all the other AAUW branch presidents across the country to encourage them to appoint a DE&I chair and describe why DE&I is so impactful in Virginia. The letter will be reviewed by Leslie and Suzanne and AAUW National before it is sent out. She will also have a discussion with the DE&I points of contact throughout the state of Virginia to determine how they are using the DE&I page on our website and how they are using the DE&I toolkit.

### **Southeast District Report**

The Southeast District report was distributed electronically. **(Enclosure 16)** District Representative Tammie Mullins-Rice said that there was nothing to add.

### **Northern District Report**

The Northern District report was distributed electronically. **(Enclosure 17)** District Co-Representatives Sandy Lawrence and Sara Anderson said that there was nothing to add.

### **Northwest District Report**

The Northwest District report was distributed electronically. **(Enclosure 18)** District Representative Sylvia Rogers said that there was nothing to add.

### **Southwest District Report**

The Southwest District report was distributed electronically. **(Enclosure 19)** District Representative Anita Aymer said that there was nothing to add.

### **Public Policy**

Co-VP for Public Policy Susan Burk distributed the Public Policy Report electronically. **(Enclosure 20)** She said that she and Co-VP Denise Murden organized a Zoom meeting with interested members that was held after the close of the General Assembly. They reviewed the results of the session. They will convene quarterly public policy meetings. The next one will be in June. They are planning for next year by drafting a legislative agenda for the 2022 legislative session and identifying like-minded organizations to perhaps work with them on issues. They will pursue the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace. They will put together a blueprint for the future to send out to the board.

### **Bylaws/Resolutions**

Bylaws/Resolutions Chair Carol Dabbs distributed the Bylaws/Resolutions Report electronically. **(Enclosure 21)** She had nothing to add.

### **AAUW Funds**

AAUW Funds Chair Caroline Pickens distributed the AAUW Funds Report electronically. **(Enclosure 22)** She said that the branches had 111 Named Honorees. She suggested that the board earmark at least \$500 in future budgets to ensure that at least one State Named Honoree can be awarded. She has been serving on an AAUW Governance Committee sub-committee giving branches ideas on alternative branch structures. A final report with recommendations will be presented to the AAUW National Board in June.

### **Historian**

Historian Kathy Batkin distributed the Historian Report electronically. **(Enclosure 23)** She had nothing to add. Marsha mentioned that the Smith Mountain Branch has assembled a time capsule having to do with the pandemic. It will be opened in 2040. Until then it will be held in the archives in the library at the University of Virginia.

### **College/University Report (C/U)**

College/University Relations Chair Barbara Woodlee distributed the College/University (C/U) Report electronically. **(Enclosure 24)** She said that Donna Curley from Lynchburg had sent her many AAUW brochures and other materials from the past. Barbara will contact AAUW Member Relations Manager Angela Cooper to ask whether AAUW will be contacting those c/u partners whose memberships have expired and how she, as the C/U Relations Chair, can help. She is personally researching colleges and universities who have been partners in the past.

## **Program**

VP for Program Nadine James distributed the Program Report electronically.  
**(Enclosure 25)**

## **Summer Leadership Meeting**

Leslie and Suzanne proposed that the Summer Leadership Meeting scheduled for July at Sweet Briar be totally canceled because of the pandemic and the fact that it would come so soon after the three-day conference. There is precedent for not having a Summer Leadership Meeting. There will be a virtual board meeting in July.

**Cheryl Spohnholtz made a motion to cancel the 2021 Summer Leadership Meeting. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.**

Leslie shared general observations about past Summer Leadership Meetings. Attendance has been low for various reasons. Planning for the meeting is difficult for board members who begin their terms in July.

Nadine asked board members for ideas on how to develop programs for the future. There were several suggestions:

- Learn from the branches, asking what interests them and what issues they would like to have covered in meetings.
- Do a Google survey.
- Do a cost benefit analysis to determine if in-person meetings are worthwhile or if webinars would be a better choice.
- Rather than a full meeting, position-specific meetings could be held.

Nadine will meet with program vice presidents around the state to get their ideas. There was general agreement that it is time for new ideas and it is not necessary to continue to do the same things in the same ways.

## **Voting and Elections Process**

Voting and Elections Chair Sandy Lawrence distributed the Voting and Elections Report electronically. **(Enclosure 26)** She said that the ballot for the AAUW election, which will take place from April 12 through May 3, 2021, is set. Voting reminders will be sent out to members before the election.

## **Summer Vision**

The list of articles for the summer *Vision* was distributed electronically. **(Enclosure 27)**  
The deadline for articles is May 15.

## **Review Action Items**

Suzanne will send a list of the Action Items electronically. **(Enclosure 28)**

## **Upcoming Meetings**

- July 31 & August 1, 2021 Virtual Board Meeting
- November 6 & 7, 2021 In-Person Board Meeting in Richmond

Leslie adjourned the meeting at 4:52 PM.

Deborah Dodd  
Recording Secretary  
AAUW of Virginia