

**AAUW OF VIRGINIA
96th ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM
March 13, 2021, 4:00 p.m.**

Call to Order and Welcome (page 4) **

The 96th Annual Business Meeting was convened at 4:07 p.m. by Co-President Leslie Tourigny. The meeting was held as a virtual meeting using Zoom. The coronavirus pandemic once again made it impossible to have an in-person meeting. Leslie explained that a conference program book was distributed electronically to all members prior to the meeting. **(Enclosure 1)** She directed members to the business agenda on page 9. She thanked all those who contributed content for the program book and extended special thanks to Bianca Daugherty and Mary Anne Graham, who were the editors of the program book. She praised the board and branch members for continuing to advance equity for women and girls despite all the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Co-President Suzanne Rothwell outlined the procedures and rules for the meeting including the use of Zoom features during the meeting.

Roll Call of Branches

AAUW of VA Recording Secretary Deborah Dodd called the roll of branches in attendance. **(Enclosure 2)**

Appointments

Leslie introduced the members who would help the meeting move smoothly:

- Zoom Manager and Page – Marsha Melkonian (Smith Mountain Branch) was the official Zoom manager for the meeting and, among other duties, monitored the Chat for technical questions and the Q&A for questions.
- Minutes Review Committee – Readers were chosen to review the minutes. Kathy Batkin (Portsmouth Branch) and Kristin Moyer (Vienna Area Branch) joined Deborah Dodd on this committee.
- Timekeeper – Patsy Quick (Mt. Vernon Branch) was the official timekeeper for the discussion of any motion.
- Teller – Lane Stone (Alexandria Branch) was the teller for counting votes.
- Parliamentarian – Caroline Pickens (McLean Area Branch) was the Parliamentarian to answer any procedural questions.

Adoption of Registration Report

The Recording Secretary Deborah Dodd reported that there were 111 members in attendance, representing 22 branches. The Greater Manassas and Lynchburg Branches were not represented. Deborah made a motion for the adoption of the report. The Registration Report was adopted. Suzanne declared the presence of a quorum.

** Page numbers referenced in the minutes refer to Enclosure 1, Conference Program Book.

Adoption of the Rules of the Annual Business Meeting (page 11)

The Recording Secretary moved for adoption of the Standing Rules of the 96th Annual Business Meeting of AAUW of Virginia. They were adopted by the membership.

Adoption of the Annual Business Meeting Agenda (pages 9-10)

Nadine James, Vice President for Program, presented the Annual Business Meeting Agenda. She moved for its adoption, with the chair reserving the right to make further changes with the approval of the assembly. The Annual Business Meeting Agenda was adopted.

With the establishment of a quorum and the approval of the Standing Rules and the Agenda for the Annual Business Meeting, Suzanne declared the 96th Annual Business Meeting of the American Association of University Women of Virginia officially organized for conducting business.

Minutes of the 2020 Annual Business Meeting (pages 12-13)

The State Board, at its summer 2020 meeting, approved the minutes of the 2020 Annual Business Meeting.

2021 Annual Business Meeting Official Minutes

The Recording Secretary took the minutes of this meeting. Because there was no objection, the minutes of this 2021 Annual Business Meeting will be referred to the State Board for approval at its July 31, 2021 summer meeting.

Report of the Vice President for Finance (pages 14-16)

Vice President for Finance Marsha Melkonian reported that as of February 1, 2021, our total assets were \$49,308.20, comprised of \$45,370.21 in our checking account and \$3,937.99 in our conference account. She explained that due to the impact of the pandemic, our actual expenses for this year have been lower than usual. Our usual expenses are between \$15,000 and \$30,000, depending on whether we hold an in-person state conference and Summer Leadership Meeting, among other things. The report of the VP for Finance will be submitted for financial review.

Reports of the Officers

Co-Presidents (pages 17-18)

Leslie thanked the AAUW of VA members for allowing Suzanne and her to serve as co-presidents for the 2020-2022 term.

Suzanne announced that in December AAUW of Virginia was notified by AAUW National that we are the first state to receive 5 stars in the 5-Star Recognition Program. She congratulated the branches who had earned stars. At the time of the meeting, those receiving 5 stars were Virginia Beach, Reston-Herndon, Woodbridge, and Springfield-Annandale. Those receiving 4 stars were Alexandria, Vienna Area, and Mt. Vernon, and the Fairfax City Branch received 1 star.

Vice President for Program (page 19)

Vice President for Program Nadine James noted that the branch Program VPs have been successful in planning mission-based programs that align with the AAUW of Virginia State Strategic Plan. Because the pandemic programs have been virtual, it has been possible for them to be shared with branches throughout the state. She promised to work with all branch Program VPs to share ideas and help with branch programming.

Vice President for Membership (page 20)

Vice President for Membership Cheryl Spohnholtz reported that total membership for 2020-2021 is 1052; which is a decrease of approximately 99 members from 2019-2020. There are 16 branches that have achieved a 90% or more retention rate. Among those, 6 had 100% or more retention. Woodbridge was #1 with a retention rate of 120% with the recruitment of 11 new members. Woodbridge VP for Membership Susan Bardenhagen will conduct virtual training on how to increase membership on April 24.

Vice President for Communications (page 21)

Vice President for Communications Patsy Quick thanked the entire communications team. Cheryl Spohnholtz maintains the Facebook page and Patsy manages the AAUW of Virginia website. Mary Anne Graham and Bianca Daugherty are editors of the *Vision*, the outstanding AAUW of Virginia newsletter. Patsy announced one addition to the conference report in the program book. A Mail Chimp email account was opened so that AAUW of Virginia can email branch members directly, which was not feasible before. It is still important for members to check their email address in the Member Services Database (MSD) to be sure that it is correct because the MSD is the source of the member email list used by the state to communicate individually with members.

Co-Vice Presidents for Public Policy (pages 22-23)

Co- Vice Presidents for Public Policy Susan Burk introduced herself and Co-Vice President Denise Murden. Denise reported that AAUW of Virginia had an impact on policy development associated with the policy goals of economic security for women and families, education, and voting as a foundational right. She highlighted some of their efforts:

- They supported FairMapsVa by distributing voter education materials that encouraged historic voter turnout and promoting successful voter approval of a redistricting amendment to the Virginia Constitution.
- They communicated with state legislators in the 2021 General Assembly session through various means, including virtually, to advocate for legislation focused on paid sick and family leave and equal pay.
- They supported draft legislation to improve computer science education opportunities and to ease restrictions on public access to virtual meetings, both of which passed.
- They built relationships, becoming a member organization of FairMapsVA and the Coalition of Virginians for Paid Sick Leave, and continuing their association with the League of Women Voters.

Denise highlighted the Virginia General Assembly's passage of a limited paid sick leave bill that sets a precedent for future advocacy efforts to advance gender equity. Denise thanked the dedicated members who supported and were actively engaged in advocating for this and the other public policy issues.

AAUW of Virginia Elections

Leslie said that members would have the opportunity to hear about and discuss the upcoming AAUW of Virginia on-line elections that will take place from April 12 -May 3. Sandy Lawrence is Voting and Elections Chair. Members will be voting to fill three officer positions and on a proposed bylaws amendment.

Standing Committee Reports

Nominating Committee (pages 24-25)

Nominating Committee Chair Anita Aymer thanked the members of the nominating committee: District Representatives Tammie Mullins-Rice, Sara Anderson, Sandy Lawrence, and Sylvia Rogers, along with her predecessor as Nominating Committee Chair, Carol Stephens. Anita referred members to pages 24-25 of the program book to view the report and biographies of the slate of officers that will be voted on in the election starting on April 12, 2021, and ending May 3 at 11:45 pm. The slate of officers will serve 2-year terms from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2023. The slate of officers for board positions to be voted on are:

- Marsha Melkonian for Vice President for Finance;
- Cheryl Spohnholtz for Vice President for Membership and Branch Development; and
- Sherry Warren for Recording Secretary.

Marsha and Cheryl are currently serving in these positions on the board. Sherry Warren, who was unable to attend the Annual Business Meeting, has served on the state board previously.

Bylaws and Resolutions Chair Report and Proposed Bylaws Amendment (pages 26-27)

Bylaws and Resolutions Chair Carol Dabbs reported that, as recommended by the State Board, members are being asked to vote on whether to amend the board appointed position of diversity, equity, and inclusion chair with a membership-elected position of vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion. The board believes that this board position should be elevated from an appointed to an elected position to reflect the importance of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion principles within AAUW of Virginia and the community as a whole. Carol read the wording of the motion to be voted on as it will appear on the ballot. "Shall the AAUW of Virginia Bylaws be Amended to Establish the Elected Position of Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and to Eliminate the Appointed Position of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair?"

There were no questions or discussion, and no motions were received on the proposed bylaws amendment.

Suzanne announced that the slate of officers and the bylaws amendment as proposed will appear on the ballot.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) Chair (page 28)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair Cyndi Shanahan reported that AAUW National posted on the AAUW website their DE&I Toolkit, and that she has gathered groups of state DE&I chairs and branch DE&I contacts to have periodic discussions of DE&I progress. At the state and district levels there have been multiple programs dealing with DE&I. She extended special praise for the DE&I programming that is happening at the branch level.

College/University (C/U) Relations Chair (page 29)

College/University Relations Chair Barbara Woodlee reported that due to the pandemic the number of C/U partners has dropped from 20 to 10. She has met with C/U branch representatives to form a committee to determine how to reconnect with the colleges and universities and to share ideas. She is creating an inventory of what it being done.

AAUW Funds Chair (pages 30-31)

AAUW Funds Chair Caroline Pickens reported that because of the continuing pandemic it was another challenging year for fundraising. The state total contributions to AAUW Funds for 2020 was \$71,100, which was less than the \$86,451 contributed in 2019. The good news is that 14 of the 24 branches contributed more in 2020 than in 2019. There are 111 branch Named Honorees for 2020.

The First AAUW of Virginia Named Honorees

Caroline Pickens, chair of the newly-formed AAUW of Virginia State Named Honoree Committee, thanked committee members Sherry Warren, Laura Wimmer, Deborah Dodd, and Leslie Tourigny. She reported that she learned that AAUW of Virginia could name state honorees based on the amount of money contributed by the state board to AAUW Funds. A nominee must be an AAUW of Virginia member whose actions have had broad impact in furthering AAUW of Virginia's mission and priorities in Virginia and, thereby, has provided outstanding or exceptional service to AAUW of Virginia itself beyond a branch. Nominees were solicited from branch presidents and past state board members. The honorees were chosen by the committee and approved by the state board. The first AAUW of Virginia Named Honorees are:

- **Marion Stillson** – Marion, a member of the Reston-Herndon Branch, has been an AAUW leader since 1992, serving in numerous branch, state, and national board positions. She has had a statewide impact by enhancing and publicizing AAUW of Virginia's image and focus on diversity and equity, especially for individuals with disabilities. She initiated a suit under the Americans with Disabilities Act after finding that the Homestead Resort, in Hot Springs, Virginia, which was being considered as a possible AAUW convention site, was inaccessible to individuals using wheelchairs. The resort remodeled their facilities to make them accessible for all. As State Board President, 1994-1996, Marion assembled a diverse board in both ethnicity and age. At the AAUW National level, Marion served as a diversity trainer and was appointed twice by the membership as Public Policy Chair on the AAUW Board of Directors.

- **Trish Wallace** – Trish is a member of the Greater Richmond Branch. Her contributions to the success of getting the ERA ratified by the Virginia legislature are significant. The ratification of the ERA was an AAUW of Virginia public policy goal. She was the head legal researcher for VaRatifyERA and part of their strategy and implementation team. During the ratification process she offered AAUW of Virginia advice and arranged for the strategic coordination of the publication of ERA letters to the editor and op-eds by newspapers around the state. When the Archivist of the United States refused to certify the ERA ratifications of Virginia, Illinois, and Nevada, those states sued the Archivist by filing a complaint in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Trish's work has continued as she has been providing pro bono legal services by representing a group that included AAUW of Virginia to submit an *amicus curiae* brief in the case.
- **Neola Waller** – Neola, a member of the Virginia Beach Branch, has been an AAUW member for 47 years. This is truly a lifetime achievement award for her distinguished service to AAUW. She has held seven different state board positions, including state president, serving on the board from 1991-2002 and 2009 to 2020. During those years, her leadership was evident at all levels of the organization. While president, Neola spearheaded Virginia's Diamond Donor Project, raising \$78,000 in less than 18 months in honor of AAUW of Virginia's 75th anniversary. Her final position on the state board was Historian, during which she did extensive research of AAUW of Virginia archival materials and wrote *The History of the American Association of University Women of Virginia, 1925-2010*.

Recognition of Outgoing State Board Members

AAUW of Virginia Recording Secretary Deborah Dodd, who is leaving the board, was recognized by Leslie for her exceptional service.

Recognition Awards

Suzanne presented three AAUW of Virginia Recognition Awards to four members in appreciation of the exceptional work they have done as AAUW of Virginia board members:

- Susan Burk and Denise Murden, AAUW of Virginia Co-VPs for Public Policy
- Cyndi Shanahan, AAUW of Virginia Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair
- Barbara Woodlee, AAUW of Virginia College/University Chair.

Legacy Circle (page 36)

AAUW Legacy Circle Liaison Kristin Moyer spoke about the members and friends who have become Legacy Circle members to show their commitment to the future of AAUW by making a planned gift. Currently there are 686 members nationwide. She shared a slide showing the names of the 46 Legacy Circle members from Virginia and the pin that comes with membership. There were 19 Legacy Circle members in attendance. She encouraged everyone to join and offered to talk to anyone who would like more information. Kristin acknowledged, with sorrow, the passing of Denise Decker, who was a Legacy Circle member from the Arlington Branch.

New Business

There was no new business.

Door Prizes

Leslie and Suzanne awarded five door prizes to members in attendance. The prizes included two Amazon gift cards, a Michael's gift card, and notecards and coasters from Late Bloomers Designs, which were donated by Mt. Vernon Branch member Joanne Clark.

Adjournment

Leslie declared the 96th Annual Business Meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

Deborah Dodd
Recording Secretary
AAUW of Virginia