

Ashland AAUW Board Meeting
November 25, 2024

Present: Regina Ayars, Diane Toth, Susan Hollandsworth, Penny Little, Sandra Coyner, Gail Engblom, Lisa Verner, Bessie Azari, Leslie Nilson

Meeting called to order by Regina at 4:00 p.m.

Guest: Marilyn Hawkins

Marilyn joined the meeting to share her thoughts about ways to increase and retain membership and clarifying our message about who we are as an organization. She stressed higher education as an important part of our mission.

Bessie also mentioned that advocacy in the area of public policy is an important part of what we do.

- Action: Look at the Ashland AAUW brochure and determine if it would benefit from updating. The Membership Committee will look at it and bring suggestions, if any, to the January Board meeting.

Marilyn departed the meeting.

HOLIDAY PARTY: Regina

The holiday party will not be happening this year due to multiple factors.

OCTOBER MINUTES:

The minutes were approved.

DEBRIEF BRANCH MEETING:

- The reaction was positive re: changing the order of the meeting, allowing the guest speaker to present after some short announcements at the beginning of the meeting, and then following with any other business or Branch activities.
- There was much enthusiasm for Betty LaDuke's presentation.

BUDGET: Gail Engblom

- There is no change in budget shortfall. This year's bills have been paid for space rental and insurance.
- Gail will provide a monthly report at board meetings and inform the Board if there is any deviation from the approved budget.
- There was a discussion about a possible dues increase. Sandra suggested that the members need to know about the budget shortfall for operations.

- A Table Talk at the February branch meeting was suggested to present a proposal to the members about the need for a dues increase and to obtain member input.
- Action: Lisa offered to work with Gail to work up a proposal regarding this to present to the board at the meeting in January.
- Other operations fundraising:
 - A Spring Gallery Event will be held again, with the date and details still to be determined.
 - Regina spoke with Jessica Sage at Rogue Theater Company about holding a fundraising event at one of their Fall theater offerings.

DEI: All

- An Equity Lens will become an established tool to be used in decision-making for the organization.
- Susan Hollandsworth agreed to help guide the board through this process as decisions are made.

NCCWSL: Regina

- It is not in the budget at this time to participate in sending a student to the conference.

BREAKING BARRIERS: Regina

- There was a reminder from Oregon AAUW about nominating someone from the community for this award.
- Since applications are due on January 10, 2025 it is too late to begin this process but in the future it could be presented to the membership to consider.
- It was suggested that it could be an agenda item for the April 2025 meeting.

UPDATES:

- Public Policy: Lisa Verner
 - Public Policy traditionally sponsors the January Branch meeting and invited local elected officials to speak. This year we have Mayor Tonya Graham, City Councilor Gina DuQuenne and City Manager Sabrina Cotta coming.
 - In April, Public Policy Team will host a Candidates Forum for Ashland School Board candidates in advance of the election in May.
 - The State Public Policy group has chosen Education and Health Care as critical topics and will focus on and follow 3 or 4 bills.

- Lisa mentioned the State Public Policy newsletter “IN Touch. Tuned In. On Time” Anyone not already receiving it can let Lisa know if they would like to be added to the email list.
- Membership: Leslie Nilson
 - There have been a few new members
 - Since there are not enough new members for a New Member Social the Membership Committee is trying to extend a personal welcome by meeting for coffee, etc, if there is interest.
- Scholarships: Susan Hollandsworth
 - Susan distributed a copy of the Fall Scholarship report.
 - Current total scholarship contributions for 2024 is \$36,820.
- Communications: Penny Little
 - Beth Rubin has had to withdraw as co-editor of the vision.
 - Penny is managing the Vision alone for the time being but would like a co-editor eventually.

Meeting adjourned by Regina at 5:40 p.m.