

South Carolina Federation of NARFE Chapters
Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting - November 7, 2014
Lizard's Thicket Restaurant, Lexington, South Carolina

Federation President Kathryn Hensley called meeting to order at 10:03 am. She welcomed everyone to the meeting and a moment of silence was observed. She asked everyone attending the meeting to introduce themselves and give their current position and chapter affiliation.

Present:

Executive Board – Morgan Hill, Joe McCarty, Pat Whitely, Bill Nicol, Ernest Williams, Linda Kossow, Gail Peapples

Committee Persons – John Geiger, Clara Gillentine, Paul Russo, William Toney, Olivia Williams, Robert Shear

Guests – Linda Toney (Columbia), Mary Gourdine (Beaufort), Jerry Janci, the newly elected Region III Vice President and his wife, Margaret

Absent:

Executive Board – Walter Clarke, Jeanette Keepers, JudithAnne Hare

Committee persons – Margaret Baptiste, Larry Shaff, Harry Brown, Sally Depreker

Secretary Report – Pat Whitely - Minutes of May 12, 2014 Executive Board meeting – Ms. Whitely indicated that the final version May 12 meeting minutes had been emailed to EB members for review during the summer. All recommended changes were made. Ms. Whitely asked if there were any additional required changes. There were none, therefore, motion was made to accept the May 12, 2014 minutes. Motion was seconded. Minutes approved by unanimous voice vote.

Ms. Hensley asked Morgan Hill, Pat Whitely and Gail Peapples to provide a final report on the 2014 SC Federation Convention held May 12-14, 2014 in North Charleston. Each provided a summary of different aspects of the convention. Morgan Hill thanked President Hensley for her leadership, support and assistance to the convention committee. Pat Whitely provided a summary of the challenges encountered by the committee and provided an “after action” report to the 2015 Convention Chairperson with the hope that the document would assist the 2015 convention committee and a request to add to the document and pass along to the 2016 convention chairperson.

Gail Peapples provided a final Convention Treasurer’s report. He stated that the Convention checking account was moved to the NARFE Credit Union. 88 people attended but a few refunds were made to registrants who were unable to attend due to various reasons. Total income from registration fees was \$5,265.00; total income was \$9,620.95, with total expenses of \$5,850.26, leaving a final balance of \$3,770.69 in the Credit Union account. The Federation will receive 25% of the proceeds which will remain in the convention account after the \$500 seed money loan is repaid. The three host chapters, Charleston, North Charleston, and Summerville will divide the remaining 75% evenly.

Ms. Hensley provided comments on the 2014 National Convention held in Orlando, FL in August. She stated that 100% of SC chapters were represented either by delegates or proxy. There were 25 SC attendees with delegates from over ½ of the SC chapters. She stated that National officer positions were reduced from 4 to 2 by vote of delegates. Ms. Hensley stated that Jerry Janci was elected as Region III Vice President. Lots of training was provided during lunch and learn sessions. Various other attendees who were delegates at the National Convention shared their thoughts on the National Convention regarding the voting process, eNARFE chapters and legislative agenda.

Jerry Janci, Region III Vice President also shared his thoughts/comments on the National Convention. He stated that Region III had 360 delegates attend the National Convention. Mr. Janci indicated that 7 new

NEB members were elected during the convention which brings lots of new thoughts and perspective to the NEB which meets week of November 10. He stated that a Leadership Symposium for Region III is in the planning stages, however, he is not sure where or when it will be held. He also urged attendees to attend the upcoming Legislative Conference in March 2015. There will be a variety of great speakers and a variety of training topics offered.

He stated that the lame duck session of Congress will most likely not produce much work. He stated that NARFE is watching chained CPI, postal overhaul and removing postal employees from the Federal Employees Health Benefits program. He provided copies of the new organization chart for headquarters staff and discussed the changes.

Headquarters staff totals 49 employees. Hiring is currently underway for 3 vacant positions one of which will be part-time. He stated that NARFE prints every publication in house except the magazine and calendar.

Mr. Janci stated that National has changed the way rebate notifications are made. Now only the chapter treasurer will receive the notification, not the President and Treasurer.

Mr. Janci reiterated that he is our voice on the National Executive Board and welcomes our comments and questions. Kathy stated that she should receive a copy of any communication going to Mr. Janci. Mr. Janci urged everyone to use the chain of command, working through chapters to Federation to him at Region III.

Vice-President Report – Morgan Hill – Morgan stated that he had served as Chairperson for the SC Federation 2014 Convention. He attended several planning sessions with the Convention planning committee. In addition, he coordinated with the Federation President concerning matters of significance to the Federation. He also attended the National NARFE convention as a delegate and attended the NARFE-PAC breakfast held at the convention.

Treasurer Report - Joe McCarty provided financial report. Mr. McCarty reminded attendees to submit their reimbursement forms for their mileage to attend this meeting. The forms must be submitted to Ms. Hensley for approval before he can process the reimbursement checks. He stated our finances are in the “black”. Information is current as of November 4, 2014. Total income is \$5,922.84; total expenses are \$5,302.02 with current balance of \$29,497.00 in checking account and \$5.00 in savings account. Morgan Hill made motion to accept financial report as presented; Ernest Williams seconded motion. Motion unanimously carried by voice vote.

DFO and Committee Reports

DFO District 1 - Gail Peapples – Mr. Peapples stated that since elected as DFO for District 1 at the SC Federation Convention, he has received excellent mentoring from his predecessor, Barbara Bryan. He has attended all 3 district chapter meetings. In addition, soon after assuming the DFO1 duties, he felt that the District 1 chapters should have a social gathering for the purpose of getting to know each other. To this end, he solicited comments/input from members of all 3 chapters as to their interest in participating. All 3 chapters were enthusiastic and members from each chapter volunteered to assist with a picnic held in September at a central location of North Charleston’s Riverfront Park. Over 60 members from the 3 chapters attended. Mr. Peapples hopes to repeat this type social event each year.

Mr. Peapples also reported on the status of chapter Service Officers and the training each had received regarding carrying out Service Officer duties. Sally Depeker, Federation Service Officer assisted Mr. Peapples in providing up to date information to each chapter. Each of the 3 chapters has a Service Officer. He also states that since National allows two Service Officers per chapter, he has volunteered to serve as the second Service Officer for the Summerville Chapter.

Mr. Peapples stated that he met with the local Summerville Alzheimer's organization to better understand the services that can be provided to NARFE members who require assistance with care giving and other issues.

DFO District 2 – Ernest Williams – Mr. Williams stated that Columbia Chapter 87 and Aiken Chapter 934 both continue to support all NARFE's initiatives and programs. However, Orangeburg chapter 1170 continues to struggle for survival. The President does not have a computer and the secretary is the only one to contact via email. As of December 2013, the Orangeburg chapter has approximately 35 members.

Chapter 87's membership continues to decline with current membership standing at 378 as compared to last year's total membership of over 400. However, the chapter has a full slate of members who volunteered to fill elected positions for 2015. In addition, Chapter 87 has filled all appointed positions for 2015. Chapter 87's Legislative Officer and other chapter members met with Congressmen Wilson and Clyburn in August and September.

Aiken Chapter 934 President met with Congressman Wilson on 3 separate occasions.

DFO District 3 – Robbie Ann White was absent but provided the following report via email:

In 2014, two Clemson chapter meetings were cancelled due to holidays. The standing meeting location closed. The chapter will meet at the Lighthouse for January, February and March. In March chapter will vote on a new location for chapter meetings. Chapter officers for 2015 have been elected. The Clemson chapter staffed a booth for public introduction of the NARFE organization held at the Newcomer's Club.

Anderson Chapter 825 – this chapter has increased membership by two and has had good attendance for 2014. The chapter is making arrangements for staffing a booth at several community events. Chapter 825 will elect officers in December 2014.

Greenwood Chapter 920 – Ms. White continues to email those of the Greenwood chapter who have email addresses. She is waiting for Federation approval to send out postcards to those on the membership roster to have a meeting in Greenwood. She keeps them updated on political and Federation information via email.

DFO District 4 – Jeanette Keepers was absent, however, she provided an email report. Ms. Keepers stated that in spite of having interesting speakers and being centrally located in a downtown Greenville restaurant, the Greenville chapter is facing a serious crisis. No one is willing to accept the President or Vice President positions for 2015. The current President, Mitch Upton has served for 3 years and cannot continue. She has requested key members to meet with the Spartanburg chapter on November 11 when Kathy Hensley will be the chapter guest speaker. Ms. Keepers hopes to brainstorm the issue and come up with some viable options regarding meeting date and location as well as potentially combining the two chapters. She is open to any suggestions as to what might work to save the Greenville chapter.

Ms. Keepers stated that the Spartanburg chapter continues to lose members through attrition (mostly death), the sitting officers have agreed to serve another term and she will induct them at the December chapter meeting.

DFO District 5 – Judithanne Hare – Ms. Hare was absent, however, she provided an email report.

Rock Hill Chapter 1180 has a full complement of officers. The chapter averages 13-15 members in attendance at meetings. Rock Hill members look forward to 2015 and hope to welcome some new members.

Newberry Chapter 772 had 3 members attend the Federation Convention and has been working hard to recruit new members and trying to fill the President and Vice-President positions. Newberry is located in an area where there are very few government agencies which makes recruitment a continuing challenge.

Camden Chapter 2319 – Camden chapter continues to encounter problems filling officer positions. The members continue to work on this, but no resolution to issue yet. Some members have held the same officer positions for several years.

Sumter Chapter 1786 – there has been no activity with this chapter during the past year.

DFO District 6 – Linda Kossow-Pagani

Florence Chapter 960 has 125 members. Experience difficulties in connecting with chapter president.

Myrtle Beach Chapter 1015 has 232 members. Membership continues to decline although there have been some new members join. Meetings average 30 participants. All officer positions are filled except for someone to serve as Public Relations and Publicity. In October, the chapter staffed a booth at the Festiva Italia calling attention to the chapter's existence in Myrtle Beach. In January, the chapter will host a dinner dance for Alzheimer's at the Grand Stand Senior Center as well as plans to participate in the North Myrtle Beach St. Patrick's Day Parade.

Pawley's Island Chapter 1958 has 73 members with monthly attendance usually 15-25 members. The chapter plans to sponsor a family at Christmas, participate in many neighborhood events and recently held a meet and greet for local legislators. All officer positions are filled; however, the President may have to resign soon and the Treasurer must also resign. No one has come forward to fill these positions. The Chapter President has expressed concern for the chapter's future. Kathy Hensley visited the chapter recently and plans to attend the December Myrtle Beach chapter meeting.

DFO District 7 – Walter Clarke was absent and provided no report; however, Bill Nicol from Hilton Head Chapter and Mary Gourdine from Beaufort chapter provided information on their respective chapters.

Hilton Head Chapter currently has 186 members and continues to conduct the normal chapter business. Bill provided information on the chapter's field trip to Daufuskie Island in May which was well attended by chapter members and guests. The attendees enjoyed a tour of the island and lunch.

Mary Gourdine reported that Beaufort chapter does not meet in July and August.

Membership Chairperson – Clara Gillentine - Ms. Gillentine stated that during the year she has been working with chapter membership chairpersons to record correct membership information. She has requested chapter chairpersons to reach out to prospective members, however, despite the chapter chairpersons' efforts, these actions have not had the dramatic increase in membership that was hoped for. At last count, the current National special membership drive has not been very impressive; however the drive has been extended to December to step up our recruiting efforts. Below are current membership statistics from January to October 31, 2014:

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|------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|
| New Members | 36 | Reinstated Members | 94 |
| Members transferred in | 24 | Members transferred out | 74 |
| Deceased members | 73 | Prospective members | 174 |
| Dropped members | 189 | Transferred to e-chapter | 2263 |
| Total members | 2418 | e-chapter members in SC | 65 |

Meeting recessed for lunch at 12:25 pm – meeting reconvened at 1:00 pm

Legislative Chairperson – John Geiger thanked William Toney, Paul Russo, and Harry Brown for the work they have done to assist him and stated that 3 things regarding legislative initiatives are important – (1) mid-term election results; (2) lame duck Congressional session and (3) legislative advocacy.

Mid-term Elections – Republicans achieved majority in Senate and maintained control in House. Senate has protected federal employees and retirees from the House. South Carolina Legislative Delegation remains the same.

Lame Duck Congress – 113th Congress convenes November 12, 2014 and expected to adjourn week of December 15 which does not allow much time to do a lot. Congress must pass a spending bill either a continuing resolution or an Omnibus spending bill to wrap up all the spending bills to start the 114th Congress. Limited time favors a CR and let new Congress settle the spending bills. The House has already passed the National Defense Authorization Act but Senate has not. NARFE's has interest in re-employed annuitants.

NARFE opposes Postal Reform Bill.

Grassroots Advocacy – prepare for battles – the 114th will be a difficult Congress for Federal employees and retirees. Plan, outline goals, meetings with Congressmen and Senators – utilize Protect America's Heartbeat Toolkit.

State legislative activities that affect the Federal family – subscribe to your State senator's or House of Representative's newsletters.

Vice Chair for CD 1, Paul Russo, discussed letters he has written to send to Senators Scott and Graham regarding various NARFE issues. He provided copies to everyone and urged everyone to make additional copies for each chapter member to individually send via US postal service to local offices versus the DC office of the Congressional member. Do not send in bulk, send individually via USPS, not email.

Vice Chair for CD 2 and 6, William Toney, added information stating that it is important to find out who schedules the calendar for your Congress person and build a relationship with that person.

Kathy Hensley stated that there is money budgeted to pay for SC NARFE members' registration fee to attend the National Legislative Conference in March 2015. She added that she hoped the individual chapters would also contribute money to defray some of the costs for attendees. She hopes that all Congressional Districts will have a representative to attend the conference with John Geiger taking the lead for the SC attendees.

Service Officer – Sally Depreker was absent, but is available to assist any chapter or member who does not have a local Service Officer.

Website Coordinator – Paul Donahue – During the past year Paul has been busy revamping and totally reformatting the SC Federation website including 21 chapters' portions. Webpage has been added devoted to e-NARFE members. Facebook and Twitter feeds have been added. Mr. Donahue stated that website maintenance is time consuming especially at the beginning of the new year when changes occur to chapter officers and committees. The convention portion of the website will be updated soon to include registration forms and other pertinent information pertaining to the 2015 SC Federation convention. Our website does not have the capability to accept credit cards or selecting menu choice, so registrations must still be submitted via USPS. Hotel reservations must be made directly with the hotel, not through the SC Federation website.

Paul stated that if individual chapters are interested in assuming responsibility for their portion of the website to contact him. He will work with you to teach you how to post information directly to your chapter's portion of the website.

Historian – Paul Donahue Paul stated that he has nothing new to report at this time. However, he would still like to continue his project of highlighting each chapter in our Federation by writing an informal history about each chapter. Four chapters have participated in the past. If there is any interest in continuing this project, please contact Paul with the title "Chapter History" in the email subject line. Email address is: paddona@scnarfe.org.

Bylaws and Resolutions – Larry Shaff was absent and provided no report. He indicated to Kathy Hensley that he wished to be relieved of his duties. Ms. Hensley commented that Mr. Shaff has done an excellent job regarding bylaws and resolutions during the time he has served in his position.

NARFE-PAC Coordinator – Ernest Williams stated that NARFE-PAC contributions from SC Federation Chapters totaled \$8,211.00 for the reporting period of January 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014. Mr. Williams distributed a copy of the 2014 PAC contributions by chapter. Mr. Williams stated that SC Congressman Jim Clyburn, District 6 received a \$3,000.00 NARFE-PAC contribution during the recent general election campaign.

FEEA Coordinator – Margaret Baptiste – Ms. Baptiste was absent – no report provided. Kathy Hensley stated that SC has had a winner of the education scholarship every year. Ms. Hensley reiterated that no chapter funds can be used for FEEA contributions.

Alzheimer's Chairperson – Olivia Williams - Ms. Williams presented the Alzheimer's Coordinator's report. She extended a thank you to all SC chapters for a job well done last year. From April 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014, SC chapters raised a total of \$7,840.81 for Alzheimer's research. In the previous year, we raised a total of \$4,406.02. As of August 31, 2014, NARFE members contributed a total of \$10,986,136.00 for Alzheimer's research toward the \$11 million national goal. The amount raised from April 1, 2014 through October 31, 2014 and sent to National from SC chapters is \$2,405.40. Our new national goal is \$12 million by 2016. Ms. Williams stated that this year she plans to get information to the chapters soon regarding the 50/50 raffle for Alzheimer's at the 2015 convention. She extended a special thank you to Nellie Bodenhamer and Betty Wessinger for their assistance and support during the past year especially during the convention as well as to chapter Alzheimer's coordinators.

Ms. Williams thanked chapters for donations. She reminded chapters that if they donate to a local Alzheimer's group, they should get the donation information on the organization's letterhead stationery and submit it to her.

Ms. Williams stated that grants are available from the Council of Aging which can be used for respite care and other caregiver needs.

Newsletter Chairperson – Robert Shear – Mr. Shear stated that the electronic version of the Federation newsletter will be published in November with a paper version mailed in January/February timeframe to all SC NARFE members.

Old Business - Discussion held regarding mileage rate approval for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016. National has changed the way mileage is computed. Our current mileage rate is 44.4 cents per mile. Kathy Hensley proposed a flat rate of 40 cents per mile. Bill Nicol made motion that mileage rate should be set at 40 cents per mile and that the Executive Board could make future changes in the rate as might be required. Joe McCarty seconded motion. Motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Discussion held regarding the mechanics of selecting the winner of the Judy Kemp award. Kathy

Hensley stated we have selected a winner of this award for 3 years. Bill Nicol chaired the committee this year. Kathy stated we need to review the award criteria and she suggested that the EB would be the selection committee in 2015. The Judy Kemp award winner receives registration fee paid, lodging paid and an award at the convention. Kathy will put something about the criteria to the committee and conduct an email vote.

New Business – Kathy discussed the Summerville chapter's request for matching funds for the purchase of a banner to use at various recruiting events. Joe McCarty indicated that Ms. Hensley could endorse the request without a vote. She approved the request for Federation matching funds and the request will be forwarded to National.

2015 State Convention – Bob Shear, 2015 Convention Committee Chair provided information regarding the 51st annual SC Federation Convention which will be held in Columbia. Convention will be held from April 27-29, 2015 at Marriott Hotel in downtown Columbia. The registration form is in the process of being finalized. Bob passed out a draft version to attendees. Registration fee will be \$70.00 this year and the room rate will be \$107.16. Breakfast at hotel will cost \$8.00 a day. There are many restaurants within walking distance of the hotel. March 27, 2015 is registration deadline and hotel reservations are due by April 2, 2015. Parking will be free.

Paul Russo suggested asking Bob Mueller to redesign the convention registration form to provide the ability to complete the form on line versus printing the form and filling in by hand. Mr. Shear urged early registration. There will be four menu choices (London broil, grilled salmon, grilled chicken breast or vegetarian pasta plate). Other details regarding the convention will be provided once plans are finalized.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm

Respectfully submitted:

/s/ Patricia Whitley
Federation Secretary