

**South Carolina Federation of NARFE Chapters
Minutes of the Executive Board Meeting
January 30, 2014
Columbia, South Carolina**

The meeting was held at Seawell's, 1125 Rosewood Drive, Columbia, SC. Federation President Kathy Hensley called to order at 10:10 am. She led the Pledge of Allegiance and followed with a moment of silence.

Ms. Hensley asked the attendees to introduce themselves. She announced that six board members were present and five were absent. She declared that a quorum of the Executive Board was in attendance.

Ms. Hensley distributed updated rosters of the Federation Officers and Chapter presidents to all attendees.

Ms. Currie presented the minutes of the June 11, 2013, Executive Board meeting. The minutes were sent to all board members and chapter presidents prior to this meeting for review. All recommended changes were made. Mr. Ernest Williams made a motion to approve the minutes; Mr. William Nicol seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Mr. Joe McCarty presented the treasurer's report. The budget figures do not reflect the 10% national dues contributions for January, the interest for January, or the per capita dues from the chapters. There were no questions or comments concerning the report.

Mr. McCarty also distributed a report on the anticipated funds the Federation will receive from the per capita dues. These funds are due on January 31, 2014. Mr. McCarty has sent reminders to each chapter and anticipates receiving the funds shortly. He asked the DFOs to contact each chapter and ask them to get the money in. Mr. Nicol made a motion to approve the financial reports; Mr. Williams seconded the motion. The reports were approved unanimously.

Mr. McCarty reminded attendees to submit their reimbursement forms for their mileage to attend this meeting. The forms are available on the web site; he has additional forms as well. The forms must be submitted to Ms. Hensley for approval before he can process the reimbursement checks.

Ms. Hensley stated that the Federation's printed newsletter is ready for distribution. She will pick it up from the printers today; it will be mailed on Monday, February 3, 2014, to all federation members in South Carolina.

Ms. Hensley mentioned as a point of information that the federation's NARFE fiscal year runs from April 1 to March 31 of the following year. The ecard for our tax information is due on the 15th day of the fifth month of the accounting year. It is prepared and submitted by Mr. McCarty.

Ms. Hensley reported that 11 members from seven South Carolina chapters attended the recent Leadership Training in Warner Robins, GA. The Federation paid the registration fee for these attendees. The members included Ms. Hensley, Ms. Currie, Ms. Gillentine, Mr. Geiger, Mr. and Mrs. Toney, Mr. and Mrs. Hill, Ms. Jenkins, Ms. Cline and Mr. Graham. Mr. John Geiger gave a legislative report at the training.

Ms. Hensley announced that Ms. Clara Gillentine will present a separate training session on membership retention and recruitment to chapter membership officers or presidents after lunch.

Ms. Hensley announced she had asked the following people to serve on the 2014 SC Federation Convention Planning Committee: Morgan Hill (Convention Chair), Pat Whitely (Convention Co-Chair), Gail Peapples, Mimi Scharf, Ned Adams, and Frank Stevens. Mr. McCarty made a motion to approve the appointments; Morgan Hill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hill reported that he, Ms. Hensley, and the planning committee had met several times and developed some preliminary plans for the convention. He distributed a handout on the convention's possible themes. After reviewing the handout, Mr. Shaff indicated that he thought the theme should reflect the fact that this is our 50th anniversary; Mr. McCarty agreed with this point and said the convention should reflect a more positive theme. Mr. Donahue suggested adding the word "greatest" to the first theme. Ms. Olivia Williams suggested using a sub-theme of 50 years. Ms. Hensley stated that the committee has decided on the first theme (Growth and Leadership: NARFE's Challenge for the Future) and will "tweak" the theme.

Mr. Hill stated the convention will be held at the Embassy Suites hotel in North Charleston, SC. The dates for the convention are May 12-14, 2014. Registration will take place on Monday, May 12 from 12:00 until 3:30 pm. He hopes that local chapters will really participate in this year's event as it is our 50th anniversary. He reported that National Vice President Paul Carew will attend. A number of vendors have been invited. In addition, the seven candidates for National Officer positions have been invited and sent registration materials; they will receive five minutes on the program to speak. One candidate has accepted so far; one has declined.

Ms. Pat Whitely spoke about some of the arrangements that have already been made. The meetings will be held in the Convention Center which is linked to the hotel via a skywalk. Gift bags are being worked on. The Summerville JROTC will serve as the Color Guard for the opening ceremonies. The Mayor (or his representative) will issue a proclamation. Additional speakers may include a local horticulturist and an Alzheimer's researcher.

Ms. Hensley reported that the convention information will be on the NARFE web site. The registration form is on page 3 of the newsletter that is being mailed to all members. She anticipates receiving significant funds from advertising in the convention booklet and from sponsors. The registration fee for the convention is \$65. She proposed reducing the registration fee for local members who work at the convention. Mr. McCarty agreed that this would be a nice "thank you" to these members. Mr. Nicol stated that if the convention budget supports it, he would support it. It was the general consensus of the Board to offer this incentive. Ms. Whitely stated that if a person was only attending the banquet, he/she would only pay the banquet fee (approximately \$35).

Mr. Peapples presented two budget breakdowns for the convention based on having 90 or 120 people attend. The initial deposit of \$500 was made when the contract was signed; this was an advance from the federation. Additional payments are due in March and May. In all, we will owe \$4434.21 before the convention starts. Mr. Peapples is confident that the committee will be able to make these payments from the registration fees, sponsor fees, and advertising.

Mr. McCarty asked if there are a contracted minimum number of people attending the convention specified in the hotel contract. Mr. Peapples replied we have guaranteed 70 people with a total of 100 room nights in the contract. Additional expenses will include the banner hanging, audio services, the cash bar, printing of the program booklet, and the JROTC honor guard. Mr. Nicol suggested giving the JROTC an honorarium of \$50. Mr. Paul Russo asked about the cost of the sponsor tables; he also asked if political candidates could attend. Mr. Larry Shaff indicated that this has not happened in the past. Mr. Shaff asked if vendors could attend the banquet; it was decided that they could attend if they paid the separate banquet fee.

Ms. Hensley reported that the Embassy Suites hosts a Manager's Reception from 5:30 to 7:30 pm in the evening. This will take the place of our President's Reception and the Hospitality Room. On Monday evening, we will hold a Coffee and Dessert meeting in one of the function rooms. She hopes to have a speaker on Alzheimer's research at this meeting.

Mr. McCarty asked if breakfast was included in the room rate. Ms. Hensley stated that a full breakfast was included. She indicated that the Tuesday lunch would be at our own expense as there would be no Hospitality Suite this year. She reported that there were many available food sources at the outlet center nearby.

Ms. Whitely will be in charge of the program booklet. Ms. Hensley indicated that the chapter's voting membership determines how many delegates a chapter will have. She distributed a list of the number of delegates each chapter would have using the December 31, 2013, membership numbers. The Federation will pay for the Federation president, secretary, treasurer, and convention chair to attend. In addition, the Federation will receive two complimentary hotel rooms.

Ms. Hensley announced that the Region III Vice President Don Stewart sent his regrets for not being able to attend the meeting due to the weather.

Mr. Paul Donahue spoke about the updated SC NARFE website that went active on December 23, 2013. He reduced the number of pages for the site, enhanced its contact with e-chapter members, and made it available with social media sites. At a cost of \$60/year, the site is now compatible with any web browser and is easier to maintain. He hopes that chapters will take over the management of their own chapter's pages. He gave a demonstration of what the new web site looks like. All chapters have been "morphed" into two pages and contain links to legislative/political sites. In addition, the local site contains links to the SC Federation and National Convention web sites. On the Federation home page, a user can find links to the National NARFE web site, the NARFE Facebook page, and the NARFE Twitter page.

Ms. Hensley reported that she appointed Mr. Donahue as the South Carolina E-Chapter Coordinator. As such, he will handle the South Carolina e-chapter web page. Mr. Donahue reported that 60% of SC NARFE members do not have an email address listed in the membership database. He also reported that South Carolina has 278 e-chapter members. In reviewing their records, he found that 35% of these members do not list an email address, 30% do not list a telephone number, and 3% do not list either an email address or a telephone number. Ms. Hensley said she sent information concerning e-members in their local zip codes to chapter presidents to recruit e-members for local chapters.

It was mentioned that as of April 1, 2014, Microsoft will no longer support XP or Vista software with upgrades.

Ms. Gillentine reported that the December gain/loss report shows that NARFE has a total of 253,918 members as of December 31, 2013. She reported that 2013 saw a large number of deaths. The reinstatement of dropped members is about 45%. In South Carolina, she reported that we had 49 new members, 116 reinstatements, 283 dropped members, 123 deceased members with membership not transferred to a spouse, 53 members transferring in, 77 members transferring out (66 of these members transferred to the e-chapter), and 104 prospective members. The total of South Carolina's 2705 members does not reflect the 271 e-chapter members. She encouraged every officer to start using the OAM to track membership changes. It was also suggested that inactive chapters could be satellite chapters to a more active chapter. Ms. Gillentine will continue to explore this option and report her findings.

Due to Ms. Bryan's absence because of weather, there was no DFO report for District 1. Ms. Whitely, chapter president, reported that the Summerville chapter has 187 members; they have good attendance at their meetings. They advertise their meetings in the community events section of the local paper.

Mr. Williams presented the DFO report for District 2. He reported that the Columbia chapter has a new president, Robert Shear. The chapter has high numbers at meetings and filled all its officer positions for 2014. The Aiken chapter's president, Robert Johnson, said he plans to recruit at senior citizen events and suggested getting a tablecloth with the NARFE logo on it. The Orangeburg chapter is the weaker chapter; it needs to get members to actively participate. The current president of the chapter does not have email; Mr. Williams communicates with the chapter through the secretary.

Ms. Hensley asked Mr. Johnson, the Aiken chapter president, to research purchasing a tablecloth with the logo on it. Mr. Nicol stated that several years ago the federation bought banners for every chapter. Ms. Hensley indicated chapters could ask for federation funds to assist with purchases. Mr. Donahue suggested using the South Carolina NARFE logo.

Due to Ms. White's absence because of weather, there was no DFO report for District 3.

Due to Ms. Rollins' absence because of weather, there was no DFO report for District 4. Ms. Linda Foshee, chapter vice president reported that the Greenville chapter averages about 20 members per meeting.

Due to Ms. Hare's absence because of weather, that was no DFO report for District 5. Ms. Hawkins, chapter president, reported that the Camden chapter is holding steady. Their officers have been in position for four plus years; they have reduced the number of meetings held each year.

Although Ms. Kossow could not attend the meeting, she sent her DFO report for District 6 to Ms. Hensley. She attended the December meeting of the Pawley's Island Chapter. They are starting a newsletter. The Myrtle Beach chapter has over 30 members attending monthly meetings. They have new officers for most positions and recently sponsored a dinner/dance for the Alzheimer's Research Fund. The chapter advertises in a local newsletter and newspaper.

Mr. Nicol presented the DFO report for District 7. He reported that the Walterboro chapter president, Peggy Thomas, is difficult to contact so he communicates with the secretary. The chapter has 35 members; about one half of the members have email. Hilton Head has 193 members; it is an active chapter. Beaufort's president is Mamie Clarke. She reported there are about 100 members; 16-22 members attend the monthly meetings. They advertise in the local weekly newspaper. The chapter does not meet in June, July, or August.

Ms. Hensley said she will ask for written reports from the absent DFOs.

Ms. Hensley distributed copies of the final draft of the revised Operating Procedures for the Federation prepared by her and Mr. Shaff. She indicated that there is still one section – Finance -- to be completed. She also stated that the format needs to be finalized. She asked that comments be submitted to Mr. Shaff and her. The deadline for comments is mid-February.

Mr. McCarty made a motion to pay for our guests' lunches. The motion was seconded by Mr. Nicol. The motion was approved.

The meeting recessed for lunch.

After lunch, Ms. Gillentine met with chapter representatives in another room to discuss membership materials. The Executive Board meeting continued.

Ms. Hensley relayed Ms. Margaret Baptiste's request for members to contribute to the NARFE-FEEA Disaster Fund and Scholarship Fund. The coupon for contributions is in the February 2014 issue of the NARFE magazine.

Mr. John Geiger gave the Legislative Report. He stated that the 113th Congress is in its second year. In late December, Congress reached an agreement on the budget. This agreement would eliminate furloughs for 2014/15. He indicated that paying for the furlough cuts would be covered by requiring new federal employees hired after January 1, 2014, to pay additional contributions for their retirement. This essentially creates four retirement groups: CSRS and FERS with three different amounts being withheld for retirement. The spending bill goes through September 30, 2014.

Mr. Geiger reported that the Chained CPI issue has been tabled for now. He also indicated that the postal reform bill is still in committee.

In discussing the debt ceiling, he feels that there will be a compromise before the February 15 deadline. He reminded everyone that the Treasury can "borrow" from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund to meet shortfalls. Active federal employees received a 1% pay increase this year.

The congressional recess schedule has been announced. Mr. Geiger suggested using this time to visit with legislative members in their local offices. It was reported that Chapter 87 members and two Aiken members met with Congressman Wilson; 8-10 members attended the meeting. Also, Chapter 87 members met with Congressman Clyburn. Mr. William Toney has the outcomes of these meetings.

Mr. Donahue asked about the status of the WEP-GPO bill. Mr. Geiger indicated that there is little chance of this passing; it would cost an additional \$80 billion in payments.

Mr. Russo suggested that chapters should at least try to meet with aides in the local Congressional offices. Mr. Geiger reminded everyone that federal employees have given up \$119 billion in lost benefits.

Mr. Geiger reported that state of South Carolina is abolishing the Budget and Control Board in favor of a Department of Administration under the Governor's Office. This is a very big change for the state.

Mr. Geiger reported that he takes part in regional calls to gain information on current legislative issues. Sarah Weissman and Jessica Clement organize the monthly calls during the third week. This helps fill in the void between the monthly issues of the NARFE magazine. Ms. Hensley has designated Mr. Geiger to be our legislative POC for these calls. Federation Legislative Vice Chairs have also been added to the calls. Chapter legislative chairs who want to be involved need to get in touch with Mr. Geiger. It is important to remember that these calls have NARFE members from multiple chapters attending; questions/comments should be limited.

Mr. Nicol recommended getting to know the people in the local office for your state congressmen and senators. Ms. Hensley reported that Mr. Geiger set up appointments for the five attendees at the 2013 Legislative Conference to meet with all our representatives in Congress.

Mr. Williams distributed a copy of the 2013 PAC contributions by chapter. He stated there has been no disbursement of PAC funds to SC Congressional candidates in the past year. He also reported that he is soliciting for a new person to take over the NARFE PAC Coordinator's position for next year.

Ms. Williams presented the Alzheimer's Coordinator's report. As of October 31, 2013, NARFE has donated \$10,538,826.00 for Alzheimer's research. Our new national goal is \$11 million. From April 1, 2013, to January 30 of this year, South Carolina has raised \$3288.55; this includes the \$905 from last year's convention 50/50 raffle. She has distributed the information sheets for this year's 50/50 drawing to chapter Alzheimer's coordinators. She needs to have the funds submitted to her by March 25 to close out the books for this year.

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. This will give your chapter credit for the donation. Since we are trying to get an Alzheimer's speaker for this year's convention, she asked to have the speaker bring materials to the convention for distribution.

Ms. Hensley announced that Mr. Nicol is the chairperson of the Judy Kemp Award committee. The requirements for this award have been sent to the DFOs. The criteria for the award are in the Operating Guidelines. A nominee must meet three of the five criteria. The deadline for nominations is February 15, 2014.

Ms. Hensley announced that Mr. Geiger is the chairperson of the Nominating committee. The other members of the committee are Ms. Baptiste, Ms. Keepers, and Mr. Nicol. Mr. Geiger announced that the slate is about 60% complete.

Ms. Gillentine announced that today's membership training meeting went well. Materials will be sent to chapters not represented at today's meeting via email.

Ms. Hensley announced that Mr. Ken Thomas, Florida Federation president, did a presentation on using webinars for meetings at the Leadership Training Conference. The Florida Federation has the program to do webinars and would like to assist us with doing meetings via electronic means. She indicated that she may try this for smaller meetings between our two Executive Board annual meetings. She is considering asking Mr. Thomas to do a short presentation at the convention this year.

Ms. Williams reminded everyone that if a chapter is not going to be in attendance at the state convention, then they still need to get the Alzheimer's tickets and funds to the convention.

Mr. Geiger announced that he has the NARFE Checklist for the convention. This will be sent to chapter presidents for use in planning for both the state and the national conventions by the federation president.

The meeting adjourned at 2:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Currie, Secretary

These minutes were approved at the May 12, 2014, Executive Board meeting. – Patricia Currie, Secretary