

**Association for the Relief of Aged Women**  
**Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting, March 9, 2023**

**Vice President Diane Laflamme called the meeting to order at 9:31 AM.**

**Members in Attendance:** Beaton, Brooke, deSa, Ellis, Laflamme, Macomber, Mayall, McKnight, Natho, O’Connell, Saber.

Executive Director Clare Healy Foley and Office Administrator Jenny Costa also present.

**Members excused:** Beaulieu, Stankiewicz.

**Moment of Silence:** All present had a moment of silence for the women who we lost since our last meeting:

1. Lucinda Snow (97) Fairhaven
  - a. Part of ARAW family since 2005
  - b. Lovely, upbeat woman
  - c. Series of medical incidents: stroke, diabetes, etc.
  - d. Visited by many board members
  - e. Sent many cards to ARAW over the years
  - f. Son called to inform of passing – can’t thank ARAW enough, will be sending in donation

**Reflective Moment:** Diane Laflamme shared a quote from Joan Chittister’s *The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully*:

“A burden of these years is to allow all the stereotypes of old age to hold me back, to hold me down, to stop the flow of life in me.

A blessing of these years is that they give me the chance to break the bounds of a past life, and to create for myself a life more suited to what I now want to be.”

**Report of President:** In Jane’s absence, Vice President Diane Laflamme reported:

1. The minutes of the February 9, 2023 board meeting were approved as distributed. SO VOTED
2. The minutes of the February 9, 2023 executive session were approved as distributed. SO VOTED
3. Strategic Plan update
  - a. Distributed agenda for March 30<sup>th</sup> Mini-Retreat
  - b. DRAFT goals for retreat will be emailed in advance
  - c. Strategic Planning committee will meet after retreat to incorporate any revisions and make timetable
  - d. Final Strategic Plan to be approved at Annual Meeting

**Report of Executive Director:** Executive Director Clare Healy Foley reported:

1. FLO Newsletter

- a. Thank you to February luncheon hostesses: Diane, Leah and Pam
  - i. Salsa cancelled due to illness, NBSO musicians showed up unexpectedly
  - ii. A beneficiary complained about Coastal Neighbors Network not being open to all
    1. Cannot dictate programs, ARAW only funders
2. BA Reports
  - a. Shared board's positive feedback from last month with BAs
  - b. Streamlined and standardized numbers for reports
  - c. Beneficiaries experienced many struggles with acquiring ACP discount
3. Activity Sheet: no questions
4. Community Engagement
  - a. International Women's Day celebration March 8<sup>th</sup>
    - i. Clare and Jenny attended and (wo)manned ARAW table
    - ii. Well attended – diverse group of attendees from community
    - iii. Spoke with current and existing partners, potential new referral sources, past and present board members and a couple ARAW beneficiaries
    - iv. Presentation following – well done and inspiring, showed collaboration between many organizations
    - v. Resource guide was created and distributed at event (available in office)
  - b. Herstory presentation at NB Fishing Heritage Center tonight – staff attending
  - c. Walt's Mobile Closet event at YWCA 4/29/23 – ARAW will have table
5. FY23 CPG update
  - a. Email sent out to CP: final reports due 4/15/23, plans for unspent funds, survey
  - b. Extension requests received from Fishing Heritage Center and Zeiterion so far
6. Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) Update
  - a. Wonderful program but not user friendly
  - b. Available for ARAW or personal bill
  - c. BAs handed out paper applications – beneficiaries received no follow up
  - d. Most successful when done online
  - e. Need to renew every year
  - f. Only 2 beneficiaries currently receiving (was 3 but one kicked off recently)
7. Institute for Trustees Conference
  - a. ARAW signed up
  - b. Will have some sessions set up at office for group viewing
  - c. Code to sign up individually – to be emailed following meeting

8. Beneficiary Highlight: Rae Sousa
  - a. ARAW received refund for Verizon in form of debit card (in her name)
  - b. Reached out to brother Carl who shared:
    - i. Caregivers were using Rae's debit card in last months of life – up to \$1,500 per month
    - ii. Rae reportedly “had tons” of money – received support from multiple sources not shared with ARAW
  - c. Example of increased need to trust but verify – empowered BAs to request to look at documentation

**Report of Finance Committee:** Chair Mary Ellis reported:

1. Motion made to approve February 2023 financials, as distributed. SO VOTED
2. Portfolio – down \$546K in February, \$2.3 million YTD
3. Thank you to Cathy for work on qualified distribution

**Report of Visiting Committee:**

1. Visiting reports: Roseanne O'Connell
  - a. Lucille Bizarro (83)
    - i. Owns home in New Bedford
    - ii. Resourceful – wants to stay in home, loves her yard & speaks of garden often
    - iii. Married for 26 years with 3 kids
    - iv. Stitcher since a young age
    - v. Isolated – kids have own family
    - vi. Took French class at the council on aging
    - vii. Participated in NB Art Museum classes
    - viii. Met a friend through grief counseling
    - ix. Went to Aruba last year with her son
  - b. Evangeline Morin (90)
    - i. Moved back to New Bedford after husband's death – no children
    - ii. One of 6 sisters
    - iii. Involved with Sharon through WCAP & FLO
    - iv. Enjoys apartment at Melville Towers
    - v. Stayed home from school to work in a factory and give money to her mother
    - vi. Good attitude and distinctive chuckle
    - vii. Says “There's a lot of crabby people around, but I'm not one of them”
2. Next month – Debbie Brooke

**Report of Beneficiary Committee:** Chair Pam McKnight reported:

1. A motion was made to accept recommendations from the Beneficiary

Committee as distributed. SO VOTED

- a. 19 requests (3 new), 15 updates
2. New Beneficiary Highlight
  - a. Nancy Jean Rosiak (70 y/o) – not active
    - i. Request for homeowners' insurance \$4,848 not approved
    - ii. Lives in and owns family home worth \$1.4 million
      1. Where she cared for her mother until her death
      2. Feels she can't leave home
      3. Unsustainable living situation
      4. No children, estranged from brother
    - iii. Committee felt she had other resources available to her
  - b. Carol Christensen (71 y/o) - active
    - i. Very low income, Month End Balance (MEB) \$37
    - ii. Husband died, raised son on her own
    - iii. Does not drive, lives simply
    - iv. Request for Comcast approved

**Report of Governance Committee:** Chair Debbie Brooke reported:

1. Committee meeting update 3/7/23
  - a. Finalizing contingency plan for President and leave of absence policy to be brought to April meeting
  - b. Finalization of process for onboarding new members – after Strategic Plan approval
2. Distributed Proposed FY24 Slate of Officers
  - a. President, Vice President and Treasurer in second year of term
  - b. Gloria deSa to be Clerk
  - c. Thank you to Gale Beaton for years as Clerk

**Report of Grants Committee:** Chair Rosemary Saber reported:

1. Motion made to accept decisions of grants committee, as distributed. SO VOTED
  - a. Rosemary highlighted:
    - i. Zeiterion: during closure – mobile classroom, other venues for performances – bring culture/arts to people
    - ii. YWCA: denied but don't be discouraged, didn't see it as partnership, taking year off and will reapply next year
    - iii. DEAF Inc. (new CP): looking to expand in New Bedford, cold call with f/u Letter of Interest which was presented to committee

**Report of Legacy Committee:** Chair Diane Laflamme reported:

1. Still going through boxes
2. Goals of committee have changed – what is role now?
3. Office has taken over operational tasks – website, branding, marketing

**Report of Personnel Committee:** Chair Angela Natho reported:

1. Did not meet in February
2. Thank you to Clare and committee for presenting at February board meeting
3. Employee Appreciation Day
  - a. Handwritten notecards given to employees along with The Baker gift cards
  - b. Clare shared staff feels truly appreciated – thank you notes received and shared

**Other Business:**

1. Materials distributed: Bylaws, Grants Committee description, Board Member description
2. ARAW notepads distributed
3. Governance meeting: Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Executive session to follow.

Recorded by,  
Jenny Costa, Office Administrator

Approved by,  
Gale Beaton, Clerk