

AAUW TC AREA BRANCH

Organizational Meeting

August 25, 2025

Start Time: 9:00am End Time: 11:00am

ZOOM Registration Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/uNtZ5ABeS12hMQ2bwqOwjQ>

Passcode: **883061**

The mission of AAUW-TC is to advance equity for women and girls in the Grand Traverse Bay Area by offering scholarships for educational opportunities, workshops, and leadership training.

APPROVED MINUTES Sept 22, 2025 Board Meeting

NOTE: This meeting did not have any Motions requiring Board voting. Reports were heard and accepted.

Attending: Jean Zerges, President; Chris Walter, Recording Secretary; Laura Higgins, Financial Officer; Cathy Wallach and Diane Jones, Membership Co-VPs; Amy Gibson, Communications; Carol Evans, Program VP; Vickie Craig, Public Policy; Lauren Johnson, Athena Event; Marlene Smith, Scholarships

Absent: Darlene Garland, Hospitality; Susanne Sorkin, Books for Schools; Pat Lewallen, Corresponding Secretary, Sent email Report; Shirley Murray, Nominating, Provided report

Approval of Agenda: Are there any additions to the Agenda? – Agenda Accepted

President - Jean Zerges –

Main topics today:

- Sept. General Mtg & Athena Event.
- Appreciation to all who worked this summer on various branch projects.
- Welcome to Diane Jones, very new member, as Co-VP for Membership.

Acceptance of June 9, 2025 Minutes - Chris Walter- Recording Secretary – Corrections were made, those minutes are now approved and will be filed digitally in Archives.

Financial Report - Laura Higgins - Finance Officer -

- **2024-25 Fiscal Year:** Created and summarized financial report. Statement will be prepared for amending Branch Bylaws re: Annual Financial Review (not an audit).

Financial Review Committee's work (refer to MEMO in today's packet), which is a best practice action.

- **2025-26 Fiscal Year:** 2 checks to scholarship recipients; Membership renewals; \$20 to LARA MI and filed IRS report.

Reports:

Cathy Wallach - Membership VP

- Will meet with Diane Jones to contact new members.
- Jean will designate Diane for state and national to be able to access membership database with Amy's assistance.
- Amy will contact 12-person list receiving Newsletter and invite them to join Branch.

Carol Evans - Program VP

Thanks to all who participated in this summer's 2 events (Botanic Garden and Children's Museum).

Fall meetings:

- Committee will meet soon to organize details for September and December events, rooms have been reserved for entire year.
- Need to confirm with Darlene when kitchen is needed at Bethlehem Lutheran; October 20 speaker - TJ Andrews, Atty & County commissioner; November 17 – Lauren Glenn, CFO at Munson.
- Carol wants more ideas for Jan and Feb, ~~Mar~~ Zoom mtgs in addition to Alison Thornton who teaches AI at NMC and Tech person at TADL. More: Public Policy ideas from Vicki; Follow-up with Scholarship recipients who have completed education.
- Sept brief report on State AAUW from Amy Shamroe.

Darlene Garland – Hospitality, No Report

Board discussion about Interest Group Fair at Sept 13 Mtg:

- 10 groups display at ½ of 8 Ft Tables with Sign-up Sheets and be available to talk with interested people - 3 book groups, Public Policy, Knitting, Bridge, STEM, Lunchin' Around, Poetry, Athena. Each group bring table cloths for ½ of 8 ft display table.
- Ask Study Groups to volunteer to bring refreshments to 3 General Meetings (Oct, Nov, Mar).
- Food for September meeting - Carol will collaborate with Darlene about details; Brunch at 11:00 AM
- Jean will contact Interest Group reps to have display, signup sheet & talk with interested people.

Lauren Johnson - Athena Awards

- Met with Laura and Amy to review Athena Playbook developed by Laura; 4 Major Groups and potential Leaders were identified:

Event (Venue, Food, Beverages, Centerpieces, Photographer, Emcee), **Nan Horstman** (Carol will approach first)

Publicity, Bonnie Willings

Nominations, Ann Freeman

Sponsors, Karen Segal (Chris will make initial call)

- Need to define people power to get jobs done
- Lauren needs input on additional people for leadership and if we don't get people we don't do it
- Laura reminded all of the significant impact on budget if we don't hold Athena.
- Make BIG pitch in Newsletter and September general meeting. ALL Members provide "Leads" for the 4 groups.

Pat Lewallen - Corresponding Secretary, Emailed Report:

- Regularly sends cards to members...condolence, sympathy, illness, congratulatory, etc. Continue to alert Pat.
- Organizes LUNCHIN AROUND social gatherings for members, September through June on the third Thursday of the month at a local restaurant. Next LUNCHIN AROUND is Thursday, September 18th NOON at the Jolly Pumpkin restaurant. Members and guests most welcome to join us.
- Willing to provide food for in person AAUW meetings (**Darlene and Carol take note**).
- Happy to help with the 2026 ATHENA award ceremony (**Lauren take note**).

Amy Gibson – Communication

- Monthly Newsletter deadline is end of each month.
- Officers should start using AAUW email address for your role in Branch whenever you send Board-related emails for ease in succession.
- Keep Playbook notations for your role updated.

Laura Higgins – Stem

- Free Library at Children's Museum is up and running, See Newsletter for updates.
- Committee will begin Phase 2 of Action Plan to engage with another local STEM group for an educational, hands-on event in 2026.

Marlene Smith – Scholarships

- Current committee members: Amy Gibson, Cindy Hull, Jeanie Stanton, Jeanette Thompson, Bonnie Willings, Kay Whale and Marlene Smith, Scholarship Committee Chairperson
- 2024 recipient unclaimed 2nd semester award, decision made re: \$1,000;

- 3 options were considered – turn over to Minnie Votruba endowment, General budget, share with 2025 recipients; 3rd option was selected.
- Committee will become more active in January when availability of scholarships is announced.

Suzanne Sorkin - Books for Schools, No report this month

Shirley Murray - Nominating Committee – Diane Jones presented as Co-VP for Membership, and willing to serve 2 year term.

Vickie Craig - Public Policy

- Met with Cindy Hull re: past Branch events for PP (Natl Equal Pay Day, plus Zonta collaboration) and looked at State Playbook.
- Would like ideas from Board and branch members.
- Possibly encourage attendance at Intl Affairs Forum program relevant to Public Policy – November 12, Fighting for Girls' Education: Creating a Future Where Girls are Free to Learn & Lead at Milliken Auditorium, 6:00 PM reception, 7:00 PM speakers from Malala Fund.
- Amy also suggested our motto – Education for Women – Letter writing days and supporting non-partisan issues along with League of Women Voters – Grand Traverse and Leelanau. Laura suggested keeping an eye on ballot measures.
- Vickie will investigate status of Violence Against Women Act.

Other Topics:

Jean – Looking ahead – Be ready to participate in Friday Night Live (Spring or Summer 2026), Membership VPs would be involved.

Laura - Getting Athena Awards delivered to the 2024 and 2025 recipients is High Priority, now that we have asked for and received the awards. (***Laura or Pat L. please take a photo of them prior to presenting them to the awardees.***) Someone needs to take to winners ASAP with apologies and flowers. Laura is taking the awards to Pat Lewallen today.

Carol – Spoke with Alison Thornton who cannot attend Monday morning Board meetings, so we should schedule at least one meeting at another time, possibly a lunch meeting? Also invite NMC female faculty to at least one of our General Meetings

Meeting Dates for 2025-26

September 13 (Saturday) at 11 AM, Bethlehem Community Room

October 20 (Monday) at 6 PM - Janis Room at Dennos Museum

November 17 (Monday 6 PM - Jamis Room at Dennos Museum

December 13 - Holiday Party at Bethlehem Community Room

January 19 - Zoom

February 16 - Zoom

March 16th - (Monday) – 6 PM - Janis Room at Dennos Museum

April 25- Annual Meeting- Saturday at Noon

May 7 - Athena Awards

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM

Next Board meeting will be held on September 22, 2025 at 9:00 AM, location TBA

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Walter, Recording Secretary