

Oklahoma Federation Executive Board Meeting
March 22, 2024, 10 AM
BancFirst, 1111 N. Lincoln Blvd, OKC

The meeting was called to order by President, Pam Burnett. An opening prayer was given by James Gillispie and the Pledge of Allegiance led by Ron Vick.

Present: Pam Burnett, George Wiland, Randy Freeland, Johnny Hanlon, Ron Vick, Jerry Walker, Karen Hackett, James Gillispie, Wanda Walker, Jo Ann Dungan, James Olden, Willa Olden, and guest Ken Dungan.

President's Opening Remarks – Pam gave an update on the status of the WEP/GPO legislation. She and James Gillispie confirmed that all Oklahoma U.S. Congressmen (except Kevin Hern) and Oklahoma U.S. Senator Markwayne Mullins, have cosigned (sponsored) the proposed legislation but not Oklahoma U.S. Senator James Lankford. Officers were encouraged to continue to stay in touch with their Senators and Congressmen, asking for support or thanking them for their support. She finished up with reminding everyone to put the next NARFE National Conference 2024 on their calendar. It will be August 18-20, 2024 at the Hyatt Regency, At the Arch in St. Louis. Early Bird registration (\$299) ends May 17th. It then goes up to \$325 until August 7th and \$350 after that up until the Conference starts.

Secretary Minutes – Randy Freeland stated that the Minutes from the last Ex. Board Meeting on October 20, 2023 were posted on the State NARFE Website on November 6, 2023. A motion was made by Karen Hackett, seconded by James Gillispie, that the minutes be approved as currently posted to the website. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer Report – Johnny Hanlon shared a Balance Sheet Detail of expenses for this fiscal year as of March 20, 2024. It outlined expenses and income for the 4 accounts maintained by the Oklahoma Federation (Checking Account, Savings Account, and two CD's). He noted he had purchased a new CD from some of the funds in the Savings Account as suggested by the Executive Board at the last Meeting. He had also purchased the Liability Insurance for the Federation on 3-18-2024. This document will be held for audit at a future time by the Audit Committee. Johnny also provided a Profit & Loss Budget Overview for June 2024 through May 2025. After considerable discussion about expenses for the National NARFE Conference in St. Louis, it was decided to create a line item for the National Conference and not try to track that through each Officer's budget line. Johnny did pencil and ink changes and shared it with the Federation Board. Note: As requested, the NARFE PAC Coordinator and Parliamentarian had been added to this budget. Karen Hackett moved that we approve this budget. It was seconded by James Gillispie and approved unanimously by the group.

Region VI Updates – Marshall Richards was not available for the meeting but sent a report to Pam. He gave information on the upcoming National NARFE Conference and encouraged the Federation and Chapters to help members (financially) that might be able to attend. He highlighted membership numbers and commended members for assisting in recruiting new members and helping reinstate many others. Marshall feels the new leadership of Nora McDonald in helping get lapsed member to rejoin, is significant.

Region VI Alzheimer's Report – Linda Richards was also absent but sent a report praising the "Walk to End Alzheimer's" efforts by NARFE groups across the nation. She stressed these funds (over \$100 million dollars in 2023) are vital to enable the Association to deliver 24/7 care and support and that money raised during these walks, stays local. The NARFE National Alzheimer's Committee awarded two

special projects and three new grants totaling \$1,220,735.00 to doctors and scientists in 2023. NARFE has now exceeded \$16 million dollars donated to Alzheimer Research. The new goal is \$17 million dollars.

Past President's Report – James wanted to remind everyone that the up-coming Postal Service Health Benefit Plan will be effective January 2025. Retirees who are eligible for the SEP for Medicare Part B received their special enrollment form this week. Be sure to read the information closely, if it applies to you. He is thankful for Dues Withholding Members (63% of our total) which is helping Oklahoma maintain much of their membership currently at 1,766 as of a 10/15/23 report. Once again, he reminded members to stay on top of the GPO and WEP as this is the closest we have ever been to change these two “monsters”.

Membership Report, 1st VP – Betty Reitz was unable to attend due to the loss of her mother. She had no report to offer at this time.

Federation Legislation Report, 2nd VP – Jean McBride-Samuels was absent from the meeting but shared the following report. She is proposing a form be submitted before our members contact Congress or the Senate. Some on the Executive Board questioned the validity of the form and need for it. James Gillispie made a motion, seconded by George Wiland, that this recommendation be postponed till a future meeting where Jean can further explain the needs for the form. The motion passed unanimously. She also mentioned that most correspondence she sees from Representative Hern and both U.S. Senators, deal with mounting debt and the security of the border. Jean mentioned she has entered the race for NARFE Region VI V.P.

State Legislation Report, 3rd VP – George Wiland has extensive experience in the election process and currently serves on the Tulsa County Election Board. He gave a summary of what is about to happen in upcoming elections within the state and an overview of the recently completed Preferential Presidential Primary. He stated that last Friday was the deadline for new bills in the Oklahoma Legislature. None, in his opinion, will affect Active or Retired Federal Employees. He mentioned two bills, HB-3156 “Ranked Choice Voting” and HB-3717 that would require a photo id to vote. Time will tell what bills will make it through the entire review process and become law.

2025 State Conference – Karen Hackett clarified that Chapter 947 Edmond has been selected as the host of the next State Conference. Her chapter is just starting to look at locations, etc. They are moving away from the initial dates of April 18-19, 2025 since the following Sunday is Easter. Now looking at possibly May 2-3, 2025 (Friday and Saturday).

FEDCon26 – Federation President, Pam Burnett, said our federation was not submitted as a possible host based on communications she got from Arizona and Missouri. Marshall Richards told Pam that he is on the Time and Place Committee for the 2026 Conference. The Committee has sent requests for proposal to several different cities and are waiting to hear back as to what they can offer. He will keep us posted.

Oklahoma NARFE News and Oklahoma NARFE Website – Nancy Stanphill was absent but sent the following information. The newspaper is supposed to have gone to the printer on March 1st. Hopefully the print copy will arrive in our mailboxes soon. You can check our website for the latest about the newspaper. The next deadline for articles is April 22nd.

She has been attending Zoom meetings on a regular basis as part of a CAB Microsite Working Group. Their purpose is to get State and National Websites consistent, informational, and easy to use. The new Oklahoma website is going well and up and running. She welcomes questions or comments from the Executive Board as well as members throughout the state on how to make it better and more useful.

New Backup Webmaster for Oklahoma NARFE: Nancy asked Karen Hackett, and she has agreed, to be a back up to her as the Oklahoma NARFE Webmaster. Nancy asked the Executive Board to consider this. Ron Vick made a motion, seconded by James Gillispie, that Karen be selected for this position. The motion passed unanimously. Randy Freeland (Secretary) was directed to add her to the Oklahoma Federation Officers List on the National NARFE Website as Federation Network Coordinator 2.

Activities in Districts (i.e., Chapter Closings, Meetings, etc.)

District 1 – Gary Flinchum was absent but sent the following report. The two Chapters in District 1 are meeting twice a year. Chapter 2184 has the option, if suitable speakers are found, to call a meeting and the same for Chapter 278.

Chapter 2184 hopes to have a larger group of health reps in October to fully explain the new plans being offered to Postal Retirees. Many members in 2184 fall in that category. He suggested other retirees may need to keep an eye open for more changes in their plans. OPM wants more people to be connected to Medicare Drug plans. Representative HERN's office has been contacted and no follow-up was given.

District 2 -- Ron Vick Now has 3 chapters in his district. They are Azalea/Muskogee Chapter 22, Okmulgee and Okfuskee Chapter 730, and Mayes County/Pryor Chapter 1787. He mentioned he is stepping down as President of Chapter 730 and hoping someone will step up to that position.

District 3 -- Jerry Walker Reported Weatherford and Altus Chapters keep in touch with members by phone. Not many face to face meetings anymore. Weatherford Chapter has been invited to attend Chisolm Trail 749 meetings anytime they wish. The Payne County Chapter still meets regularly and have had excellent speakers at their meetings. Attendance averages about 8 to 15 members. They hosted a Health Fair in October. Chapter 749 Chisholm Trail (Yukon) is going strong with an average of 25 to 35 members showing up each month for great programs.

District 4 – Harry Fritzler was not able to attend the meeting due to Spring Break for grandkids. Nothing new to report. Ken Dungan mentioned that Chapter 946 may vote to go to a quarterly meeting.

District 5 – Karen Hackett assisted with FEHB Open Season Health Fairs at the VA Medical Center (VAMC) with an estimated 75 visitors. She also attended one at Tinker AFB (TAFB) with 350 to 400 visitors. A member from Chapter 184 assisted her at the VAMC and a member from chapter 947 assisted at TAFB. As mentioned before, she is working with Nancy Stanphill as a backup webmaster to learn the State NARFE website and be helpful in keeping it up to date.

Alzheimer's Report – Gerry Winkeler was absent and did not have a report.

Lunch – was provided on site and coordinated with McAlister's by our President, Pam Burnett

PAC Chair -- De Wood was absent but submitted the following report. She has given several talks to the Chisholm Trail meetings. She is waiting for a call back from Representative Bice to attend a local home town meeting with President Pam. There is still time to give to NARFE PAC to help our national Senators and representatives. PAC is not just for this month but any and every month of the year. Please sign up for to give as a sustainer, if you have not already.

Service Officer's Report – No report. We are still looking for anyone interested in serving in this very important office for our membership.

Historian – JoAnn Dungan She is still keeping a scrapbook up to date but always asking for pictures and articles about what is going on in each Chapter. Please continue to have chapters send her information that needs to be preserved and possibly included in our files at the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Parliamentarian – James Olden He again informed the group that only “elected” officers can make or second motions and vote on items at a Federation Executive Board Meeting. The question was asked again about the Immediate Vice-President being a voting member. The group agreed we all thought he should be a voting member and will be handled that way until the Oklahoma Federation Bylaws are revised at some point in the future.

OK NARFE Federation Representative to Council on Aging – Willa Olden She had recently attended (February 1, 2024) a meeting of this group. Subjects discussed were: Rental Assistance is out of money. If you know of any resources, please send the information to Barbara Gwinn at the Council on Aging Office. Senior Day at the Capitol was Monday, March 11th. Staffing at nursing homes is as low as 74% in some areas. Unpaid Caregivers can claim a tax credit. Multisector Plan Goals are: Provide more safe, accessible, and affordable housing. Reliable and affordable transportation. More education on staying well. Get more prosecutions and convictions in abuse cases. Establish more social connection because 42% of Oklahomans who died from suicide in 2023 were age 50 or older. Help older adults stay in the workforce as long as they want. **988** is the mental health lifeline – use it!

New Business:

Approval of new mileage and per diem rates for 2024. Randy Freeland stated the new rates were sent to Nancy Stanphill on 3-7-2024 and she posted them to the website that day pending approval by the Executive Board at our meeting. Karen Hackett made a motion to approve the rates posted. It was seconded by James Gillispie and approved unanimously by the group.

Addition of line items in the budget for 2024 to fund the PAC-Chair and Parliamentarian positions. Motion made by James Gillispie and seconded by George Wiland and approved unanimously.

Proposal and discussion of providing financial aid to federation officers to attend FedCon24. After much discussion it was decided the Executive Board would provide, not to exceed \$6,000, without further board action. This would include actual expenses with a limit of \$1,200 each for up to 5 officers. Because our President must attend a Federation President’s Meeting prior to the Conference, her expenses would be paid in full. A motion to this effect was made by Karen Hackett and seconded by James Gillispie and approved unanimously.

Next Meeting was established as Friday, October 18, 2024 10:00AM at the same location as this meeting.

Adjourn A motion was made by Johnny Hanlon and seconded by James Gillispie that the meeting adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by Randy Freeland, Oklahoma Federation Secretary