



LLI at Bard College
Annual Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2024
10:57-11:26am
Olin Hall

Mission

LLI provides educational and social opportunities for our members to share their love of learning and to exchange ideas and experiences. LLI offers noncredit and noncompetitive courses and other events under the sponsorship of Bard College. LLI strives to be an inclusive organization and welcomes applicants and members from all backgrounds.

Call to Order

President Robert Beaury called the meeting to order at 10:57am. He thanked Joan Tower and the musicians who entertained us (starting at 10:05am) and welcomed LLI members

Request for Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes - Robert Beaury

- Motion to approve 2023 Annual Meeting minutes by Mary McClellan, seconded by Tom Walker, all in favor

Council Election Results - Mary McClellan: Recognition of departing Council member and Introduction of New Council member and re-elected Council members (whose two-year terms start July 1, 2024)

- Departing Council Member Jerry Brocket
- Introduction of New Council Member Karen Kane - Treasurer
- Re-elected: Robert Beaury, President Mary McClellan, First Vice-President Kayla Bell - Member at large Michael Weinstock - Member at large

Annual Membership Fee increase - Robert Beaury

- Tentative tuition increase of \$25 (to \$200 annually - to be voted on next as part of the annual budget)
- Tuition has not been raised for several years. Costs have gone up and increased donations to Bard (approx. 60% of the tuition income annually), LLI events, software costs

- Questions: Do we offer LLI scholarships? Yes, scholarships are issued to approx. 10 people annually with \$2,000 set aside for full or partial scholarships
Describe how the CCE funds are used. Jill Lundquist answered-the funds are used for students around the world in distressed situations - 2024-25 Sanctuary Fund. Also for books and travel not covered by scholarships

Presentation of Tentative 2024-25 Annual Budget - Jerry Brocket, Treasurer

- The tuition increase will cover:
 - Increased expenses for catering/social gatherings
 - The erasure of prior build of of extra funds not used during the “covid break”
 - Set aside \$10,000 for the LLI 25th Anniversary celebration

Request for member approval of proposed 2024-25 Annual Budget

- Motion to approve by Jill Lundquist, seconded by Yoram Gelman, all in favor

Proud moments from 2024 - Robert Beaury

Committee Chairs and Teams put together this list of accomplishments and what they are proud of this fiscal year

Curriculum Committee, chaired by Mary McClellan

Between Summerfest 2023, Fall 2023, Winterfest 2024 and spring 2024, the committee produced 85 courses and off campus events. We concentrate on high quality offerings across many areas, including art, history, medicine, economics, music, government, short stories, mystery novels, walking tours and much more. Our committee works year-round, moving from one semester to the next, evaluating the past and focusing on the future. We look forward to recruiting new presenters and retaining those that consistently do good work for LLI.

The Program Support Committee, chaired by Carmela Gersbeck

Provided more than 45 class and session managers to support more than 70 classes.
The AV Support team provided support to presenters who had audio-visual needs.
The Tech Help team assisted registrants and answered tech help emails. We recruited three new members for the Tech Help team this year.
There is a consistent need for more people to become class managers and assist with AV support, and members are encouraged to consider helping.
Carmela will provide training on how to register for classes on ProClass for people who have issues with it.

The Membership Development Committee, chaired by Robert English,

This past year: Sponsored tours of the Hessel Museum and the Fisher Center
Hosted the summer picnic at Robert Post Park and the Blythewood Holiday Party.
Welcomed new members at orientation, the Grieg Farms reception and through the mentor program.
Members also enjoyed the hiking and pickleball social groups organized by the committee.

Long Range Planning Team, chaired by Eleanor Weider

Eleanor is proud that P&E committee members are currently working on Long Range Planning. Carmela, Mary, Carol Goss, and Jill L. all came to join her in the planning. They have held several focus groups and have gained valuable information from the teams and committees they met with. The team's recommendations will be presented to Council for further consideration.

DEI/Social Justice Team, co-chaired by Laura Brown and Barbara Danish

Each year we produce one Zoom course on DEI/SJ issues. Last summer/fall, the course was Native Americans in the Hudson Valley and Beyond. Before that, we produced Race and the Rise of the Right, and African Americans in the Hudson Valley. This course featured mostly Native American presenters. In addition to weekly interviews with them, the course also featured several imaginative special offerings:

- Two events co-organized with the membership development committee – a luncheon for members with a Native American menu and a speaker about Native American food, and a member tour of the Hessel Museum Native Theater exhibition.
- A hike to see Native American cairns (cares) in our region, led by a specialist on the subject.

And...An interview with the winner of the National Book Award, Ned Blackhawk, which LLI co-sponsored with Starr Library, Bard College, and Oblong Books.

Communications Team, chaired by Cathy Reinis

We are happy to have expanded our team with fresh talents, and we enjoy working as a team. We have increased the variety of our stories in the monthly newsletter and have wonderful photo stories now. We welcome story ideas from members about LLI and about Bard and the Bard campus.

Hospitality Team, co- chaired by Irene Esposito and Betti Steel

Provided food and beverages for the follow events:

- Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 semesters
- Fisher Center backstage tour reception
- Senior to Senior tea
- CCS Program/tour and reception at Hessel
- LLI Annual Meeting breakfast
- Native/Brazil tour and reception at Hessel
- New member Orientation breakfast
- Native American luncheon
- Blythewood Holiday Party.
- Worked with the Social Gatherings team on wine for the Summer Picnic

Very impressive list (thank you!)

State of the Organization

LLI has grown quite a lot since its founding in 2000. Over the years the organization has benefited from excellent leadership, the right volunteers stepping up at the right times and unwavering support from Bard administration.

This past year we were able to bring more courses to the membership both in the Zoom room and in-person. We received positive feedback for both Zoom and in-person classes this last semester.

One of our immediate challenges is recruiting more presenters for classes on Zoom. We started using that technology only a few years ago, and like most institutions, had to begin from nothing and figure out what questions we should be asking in the first place. It should not come as a surprise that many of our members have a limited background in technology.

I am still amazed that a few savvy tech members got together with a few tech-interested members, and they climbed a steep tech hill and figured out how to make it work. A lot of credit goes to Carmela Gersbeck, Jeff Christiansen, Susan Christoffersen, and the teams that were assembled. But credit is also due to Chuck Mishaan and Deborah Schwartz for getting the tech train rolling for LLI.

I am not the first person to say this, LLI has been compared to a small “private school,” that has many moving parts. The classes, activities, and events we enjoy are top-quality products, and would not be possible without all the volunteers working behind the scenes.

Planning courses for the fall is well underway, planning for Winterfest 2025 has already started and a couple of proposals are on the table for Spring 2025.

We recently established a new MailChimp team under Carmela’s leadership, with two first year members – Ann Green and Alan Katz – stepping up and taking some of the load off our Communications team. They are doing a terrific job.

Our Program Support committee, specifically the Tech Team, has kept a lot of what we do stitched together. From managing our single most important software program, ProClass, to resolving tech issues large and small across all that LLI does, Carmela’s tech team keeps the lights on and the LLI trains always run on time.

And let us not forget bocce, which has become extremely popular in a short amount of time. It is a great forum for fun and socializing.

Looking Forward - Robert Beaury

I am confident that LLI will continue to function at a remarkably high level thanks to our dedicated volunteers that give so generously of their time and expertise. These leaders focus on the present and the future as well and learn from mistakes and successes alike.

He then acknowledged the contributions of the following chairs: Mary McClellan, Curriculum, Cathy Reinis, Communications, Robert English, Membership Development, Carmela Gersbeck, Program Support, Irene Esposito, outgoing Chair of the Hospitality team and Betti Steel, who has taken over the Chairs duties and responsibilities. Former presidents Joyce Carter, Anne Summers, and Tom Esposito,

Appeal for Volunteers

I will close with an appeal for volunteers, past and future. Whether or not you wish to volunteer again or are thinking about volunteering for the first time, a great starting point is to attend a meeting. Every member is welcome to join any of our committee and team meetings, which are held monthly on Zoom and are posted in the monthly newsletter, in the section titled Upcoming Meetings and Important Dates for Members.

You will not be required to sit for an interview to attend any of our meetings. There is no commitment necessary either. The hope is that you will find your place according to your timeline, and that turns into something more.

Annual Meeting Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Linda Christensen, seconded by Lynn Walker, all in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 11:26am

Submitted by,
Susan Simon, Secretary