



AAUW Governance – It Truly Takes a Village

Written by AAUW-Walla Walla member Dorothy Steding*

One of the great rewards of being a part of this organization is how much gets accomplished with our all-volunteer groups. Education and work experience among participants vary, but by acknowledging the gifts brought to the table by each of us, we are able to get things done while respecting and honoring those individual gifts.

An advantage of taking a leadership role in our group is that it hones your listening skills, patience, and respect for others. Fortunately for our leaders, the members of our branch have a strong and clear mission guiding us.

The AAUW organization consists of three layers: National, State, and Branch

Local Branch Management

In 2016, AAUW-Walla Walla members Linda Howell, Sally Kearsley, and Dorothy Steding, took on the task of reviewing and revising the bylaws of our branch. Linda, who was then president, led this immense undertaking. The bylaws were accepted by AAUW National and our branch leadership in January 2017.

The bylaws of our branch state: *“The purpose of the affiliate is to further AAUW purposes and policies. The affiliate shall promote equity, education, and development of opportunities for women and girls that enable them to realize their full potential.”*

The **Board of Directors** for our branch consists of elected officers, including the **president**, **president-elect**, **VP of membership**, **VP of programs**, **secretary**, and **treasurer**. A complete description of the related duties of each is detailed in our branch bylaws.

Essentially, the **president** presides at board meetings and is the designated communicator with the AAUW National organization. The president commits to **three years on the board**: first as president-elect, then as president, and finally as past president. The **president-elect** fills in for the president as needed and takes over the presidency after one year of experience. The **secretary** is elected to a two-year term on even-numbered years, and the **treasurer** for two years, on odd-numbered years.

- **Appointed officers** serve as needed to carry on the work of the affiliate. In our branch they include **communications, AAUW funds, Tech Trek, Great Explorations, community mini grants, scholarships & high school scholars, NCCWSL, public policy, member engagement, and three members at large.**
- **Committee Chairs: Book Sale and Kitchen Tour.**
- **Past president:** The immediate past president serves as a non-voting member of the board of directors and chairs the nominating committee for new officers.

All the above elected, appointed, and committee chairs attend the monthly board meeting.

Term of office is open-ended for appointed officers and committee chairs based on their decision as to when they want to pass the responsibilities on to another member.

The Executive Committee consists of the **elected officers only** and meetings are held as needed.

All branches of AAUW follow the same fiscal year: **July 1 through June 30**. The board sets and maintains policies and procedures to control financial records.

State AAUW Management

The State organization has the same mission as our local branch and its officers include president, VP, secretary, and VP of finance.

The state has several directors: **membership, recruitment, retention, programs, public policy, college & university relations, diversity, equity and Inclusion, Special Projects Fund, communications, bylaws, nominations, Tech Trek, and at-large.**

National AAUW Management

The National executives and staff include the chief executive officer, managing director & chief of staff, VP of finance, VP of programs and fellowships, senior director of institutional advancement, STEM program director, director of institutional advancement, director of fellowships and grants, and director of information technology.

The National board of directors is made up of the chair and vice chair, the board finance chair, the secretary, and eleven directors.

Think about where you can get involved!

Please consider a leadership position in our branch; it is quite rewarding! The structure is set up to make the job pretty painless. That being said, a leadership role is a “worker bee” position, so be prepared to do more than fill in a line on your resume. I am sure any board officer—elected or appointed, past or present—will be happy to answer your questions and address any concerns.

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