



TENNESSEE FEDERATION

FEDERATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR September 23, 2020

The meeting was called to order by president Baker at 0839 am. This was a virtual meeting held via ZOOM.

Roll Call by Secretary Powers:

- President A. Wayne Baker Present
- First Vice-President Billy (BJ) Godwin Present
- Second Vice-President vacant n/a
- Third Vice-President vacant n/a
- Secretary Timothy Powers Present
- Treasurer Norris Alderson Present
- Legislative Chairman vacant n/a
- Membership Chairman Rhonda Mooney Present
- Immediate Past President Ed Evans Absent
- Alzheimer’s Chairman vacant n/a
- NARFE-PAC Chairman vacant n/a
- Newsletter Editor vacant n/a
- Network Coordinator vacant n/a
- Service Officer vacant n/a
- State Legislative Officer vacant n/a
- Public Relations Officer vacant n/a
- Special Project Officer vacant n/a

Others Present: Region X vice president (RVP) Bill Shackelford and Region X Alzheimer’s chair Donna Shackelford.

This was a joint meeting with the federation board and the Tennessee chapter presidents. The following chapters were present for the meeting:

CHAPTER NAME	CH. #	REPRESENTATIVE/President
Clarksville	870	Sandra Simms
Cleveland	860	Danny Britt
Cookeville (Putnam County)	1956	Ronnie Collins

Dickson	727	Gail Jones Walker
Germantown	1968	Andrew Dandridge
Jackson	519	BJ Godwin
Knoxville	204	William Bolt
Murfreesboro	834	Wayne Lanier
Nashville	227	Mike Mellish
Sevierville (Sevier County)	1678	Mark Poley
Trenton (Tri-Co)	806	Larry Henderson
Winchester (Franklin County)	2133	Mary Edie Snyder

President Baker gave opening remarks and purpose of this meeting.

RVP Shackelford told the group how chapters are chartered by national and some history of how chapter closures are done. He stressed the importance of proper closure procedure to protect and retain members in closing chapters. In response to President Simms, RVP Shackelford described the procedure for closing a chapter.

Secretary Powers reviewed federation activities since the last annual meeting and the status of federation officer positions. RVP Shackelford said Tennessee needs to increase in Congressional District liaisons (CDLs) since only two of nine are in place with one being immediate past president Ed Evans who is inactive.

Treasure Alderson gave a financial report with \$38,136 is total of funds for the federation. He reported that the board has waived chapter dues for this year. He said the By-laws need to be reviewed on this issue later.

RVP Shackelford reported on the efforts to get NARFE Headquarters reopened. He said AMS is still not perfect with accuracy at 85 to 90 percent and the M-112-chapter information report should be available now. The AMS software vendor was last paid in June of 2019 with all payments since then withheld due to non-performance. Sale of the NARFE Headquarters building has been slowed due to Covid. October 28 is the date of the required annual meeting of NARFE. See the Newslines for link to the meeting information. He described various location and workspace options being considered for NARFE headquarters including increased work from home. He said federations in North Carolina, Kentucky and Virginia are using Zoom. West Virginia is still trying to meet face to face. Others are not meeting.

Region X Alzheimer's chair Donna Shackelford reported on research grants available and research progress. Copies of the report are available from her. She said Covid has impacted donations and encouraged the purchase of the special postal stamps to fund Alzheimer's research. She said donations can be sent directly to her with checks payable to Alzheimer's Research and the chapter number on the check. Alzheimer walks this year can be by individual or members may join a team. For the walk, make checks payable to Alzheimer's association with chapter number noted. So far, there are 35 teams in Tennessee. Donations can be made online. Several chapter representatives requested a copy of the letter sent to chapter members explaining how members can donate. She will send the letter to President Baker for distribution to all chapter presidents.

Membership Chair Mooney reported membership numbers have been shared with chapter presidents. NARFE had a net loss of 4,706 in second quarter of 2020. For the first six months of 2020 NARFE has lost 6,924 members. As of end June NARFE had 180,313 members. Mr. Dave Bowman has been hired by NARFE as national membership director. She reported that NARFE is attempting to improve the member renewal process. RVP Shackelford said chapter membership officers can access member expirations and should personally contact them before they are dropped due to nonpayment. Membership chair Mooney noted a dues increase will go into effect on January 1. She read from an email from President Mellish with several questions about how the increase will affect members. President Henderson commented he has contacted his chapter members about the increase with a recommendation that they renew before January 1, 2021. President Simms said we must focus more on recruiting active employees or we will fail. President Henderson said that NARFE would be in competition with unions for active employees. RVP Shackelford said unions discourage their members from joining NARFE.

President Baker asked how the federation board could help chapters succeed. President Baker said there are a total of 22 chapters in Tennessee. RVP Shackelford reported three Tennessee chapters have asked to be closed. He considers chapters with less than 50 members generally to be potentially in trouble and that twelve Tennessee chapters have fewer than 50 members. President Henderson said the 22 members of his chapter are highly active and one third of them attend meetings. RVP Shackelford said he would not consider that chapter to be on the list of those in trouble due to other factors. President Lanier of Murfreesboro reported his membership continues to decline and that only 10 to 12 members attend meetings and that no one is willing to fill vacant chapter officer positions. Cleveland reported they are down to 40 members with only about one third attending and filling officer positions is a problem. The chapter has used Alzheimer's as a project and has a good newsletter. Clarksville, Knoxville, and Dickson reported similar experience with membership decline, lack of persons willing to become officers, and aging membership. President Collins said a federation newsletter is a helpful aid to chapters. President Henderson suggested the board increase the stipend payment for a newsletter editor. The federation newsletter is to be published three times per year according to the bylaws. President Baker reported he has had no success in finding a newsletter editor. President Collins said the newsletter need not be a specific format and it can be a simple letter to members. President Baker said the problem is many members do not have email and regular mailing is labor intensive. Treasurer Alderson reported the cost for printing and mailing each newsletter was \$1,300 for 2017, \$1,500 for 2018, and \$2,100 for 2019 with the cost greatly affected by the number of pages in the newsletter.

President Mellish requested the information on the federation website be updated. President Collins described how to get the chapter information updated on the website. He also said he could post chapter newsletters on the website. President Mellish will send his suggestions to President Baker. He also echoed the experiences of the other chapters.

President Baker said he did not know how many members do not use a computer but thought most were our older members. He also said some members will not use email. Treasurer Alderson suggested we obtain from the chapters a list of those who were willing to receive the newsletter by email to reduce cost of printing and mailing.

President Baker recognized the value of a Zoom meeting. Treasurer Alderson asked if a future joint meeting like the one today is needed. President Sims and President Collins both said yes especially if we do not publish a newsletter. President Collins said it would be of value even if we do publish a newsletter. President Lanier recommended future joint meetings. President Baker agreed that the joint meeting is valuable, but difficult to arrange.

Next item was to discuss the idea to close chapters and transition Tennessee to national members only. President Baker listed several reasons to consider this. He said he knows not all agree with this and his opinion comes from his experience as a chapter and federation officer. He thinks the time has come to consider this move to keep NARFE as an effective organization. He asked chapter presidents to consider this and get back to him with their thoughts. He stressed this is not the federation board's position. President Henderson questioned how the federation would reach out to national members. President Baker said the details would have to be worked out and that electronic communication will be especially important. President Henderson said he sees no reason to close chapters now. President Collins said he disagrees with the closing chapters and said he would not be national member. President Baker said all members receive the NARFE magazine and email from national and the federation. He also said we must consider this idea for the future since members will not step up to replace current chapter and officers.

President Baker reviewed the survey responses received from chapter presidents. First Vice President Godwin requested a copy of the survey results for West Tennessee chapter to be used in consultation with chapters. Membership Chair Mooney again said there is a need for a newsletter, and it is too early to consider closing chapters. President Baker said he thinks the NARFE national president is receptive to this idea. RVP Shackelford said the idea of national only members is something that must be considered. Treasurer Alderson asked for clarification on the chapter closure issue. He asked if NARFE would close all chapters. RVP Shackelford said this is not a proposal but a discussion of an idea of how to cope with declining members, lack of officers and other problems. Membership Chair Mooney said we must focus now on helping chapters and forgo this idea for the foreseeable future. RVP Shackelford said the need is to look now at weak chapters and attempt to help those members transition. President Henderson said that federation seems to be focused on closing chapters instead of helping chapters improve. President Baker reviewed the vacancies on the federation board and said he has been unable to fill the vacancies. He again asked the chapter presidents to discuss the idea with their membership. RVP Shackelford observed we have no federation vice presidents to assist chapters in two thirds of the state. President Collins said the federation was weak due to the federation. He also said the federation was talking about supporting chapters while also saying we should close chapters. President Henderson said Joyce Knott has been arranging a joint meeting of all West Tennessee chapters each year with Congressman Kustoff. He said for the past few years, the Congressman himself initiated contact with Joyce Knott about the meeting. About 25 or 30 members from West Tennessee chapters attend the joint meeting. RVP Shackelford noted the lack of a Congressional District Liaison means Congressman Kustoff would not receive any NARFE-PAC money.

President Baker said he thinks we have communicated everything today and will be getting information out to chapters. RVP Shackelford asked chapter presidents to let him and President Baker the feedback from members.

President Mellish asked for the procedure for merging chapters. RVP Shackelford explained that merging is part of the closing process and the two merging chapters must get together and decide which chapter survives. Treasurer Alderson said in his experience almost all members from closing chapters did not choose national membership instead they transferred to another chapter. President Mellish also asked if the national only membership was in decline. RVP Shackelford replied that national membership is in decline.

VP Godwin moved to adjourn, second by President Baker. Adjourn at 12:36 pm