National Federation of the Blind of Kansas Jayhawk Chapter

Minutes for May 16, 2015

Location: Room C, Lawrence Public Library, 707 Vermont ST, Lawrence Kansas

Call To Order, Welcome, and Introductions. The meeting was called to order at 1:15 pm by chapter president Rob Tabor. Seven members and one guest were present. Chapter members welcome Pat Slick as our newest member. In the absence of both Susan Tabor and Jim Secor Cheryl Miller agreed to record the meeting from which minutes will be generated.

NFB National Report. National Presidential Release No. 439 by president Mark Riccobono was audio streamed and covered a wide range of items including the upcoming 2015 NFB 75th anniversary National Convention in Orlando Florida from July 5-11. Among other things, conventioneers will attempt to set a new world record for the larges umbrella mosaic. President Riccobono announced the retirement of Tom Anderson who has worked as a braille literacy instructor at Colorado Center for the Blind. President Riccobono recognized Tom’s years of positive impact on the lives of many blind students at CCB and his ongoing positive contributions to NFB which he hopes will continue.

Chapter President’s Report. Rob announced that the state board met via teleconference on April 7. The board voted to provide financial assistance to members in good standing of a local chapter to the national convention. There will be 12 assistance packages at $1200 per person and an additional 8 assistance packages at $800 apiece. The state affiliate board strongly urges those receiving financial assistance to attend the resolutions committee meeting, the national board meeting, any NFB divisional meeting, all general sessions, and the convention banquet. Requests for financial assistance must be communicated to the member’s chapter president who will submit lists of names to state affiliate president Tom Page who has state board authorization to make the final determination as to who will receive financial assistance to be provided on a first come first served basis.

Kenneth Tiede Memorial Scholarships. There will be 3 scholarships presented at the 2015 state convention in November in Wichita with 2 scholarship awards of $1500 and one scholarship award of $2500. Qualified scholarship applicants must be legally blind, a resident of Kansas, attending or planning to attend higher education during the 2015-16 academic year, maintain a minimum GPA o 2.5 in the most recent school year, and have a demonstrated leadership potential. Susie Stanzel will receive and collect scholarship applications. Rob provided Susie’s contact information.

Lawrence Public Library (LPL) Accessibility Review. On April 23 Rob along with Bob Mikesic and several members of the Independence Inc. Access Task Force met with Brad Allen, executive director and various staff of the Lawrence Public Library to identify areas for improvement in the accessibility of its facilities, programs, and materials. Rob stated it was generally agreed the library complies with the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) and its 2010 Accessibility Guidelines. Rob offered to review the LPL website for any accessibility issues, although it was noted the LPL website will eventually be moving to a content management platform. Rob noted that the LPL card catalog system needs to be made screen reader accessible as do the desktop computers in the computer lab. Rob suggested to LPL managers that NVDA could be installed and evaluated for accessibility with software applications running on these computers. Rob notes this approach should result in significant cost savings in the LPL operating budget if NVDA, an open source screen reader, is able to provide a functional level of accessibility.

Welcome Back Tom! Rob noted that Tom Anderson and wife Linda are in the process of moving to Overland Park where they will live in a house owned by Linda’s parents. Rob stated he will invite Tom to participate in the Jayhawk Chapter.

Vice President’s Report. On a personal note, Renee expressed her sincere thanks to all for the caring and support extended to her and Charlie during his post-stroke recovery and rehabilitation process which is being continued on an outpatient basis.

Approval of Minutes of April 2015.

Rob announced that approval of the April minutes needs to be deferred to allow needed time to prepare a corrected draft which will be presented for approval along with the May minutes at the next regular business meeting.

Treasurers Report. Ron Miller reported the checking account balance forward as of March 31 is $649.44. Total deposits are $157. Total disbursements were $56.24 as a bank debit for new check blanks. The ending balance as of April 30 is $750.20. Ron notes that $12 of the newly deposited funds were remitted by Tim Hornik for his membership dues. The president called for changes or corrections. Hearing none, the treasurer’s report was approved as read.

Fund-raising projects update. Rob notes that $145 of the recent deposit into chapter treasury was generated by the proceeds of the NCAA basketball tournament pool fund-raiser. Rob noted we would have had to sell 363 candy bars to clear a $145 profit. Rob stated this is especially remarkable considering the project ran for about 17 days.

Freddy’s Fund-raising Supper. Rob announced that the Freddy’s supper event was well attended both in the dining room and the drive-up windows but we are waiting to be informed as to the proceeds.

75 Days of Service” project. Rob encourages us all to continue to think about community service projects in which we could participate as a chapter, while noting that the NFB community service division was launched to provide blind Federationists with opportunities to give back to our local communities.

National 2015 NFB Convention. Our discussion adduced that Rob will be the only attending member from the chapter. Renee moved that $200 be provided to Rob for convention expenses. Ron seconded and the motion carried unanimously and Rob thanked the chapter for its generous support.

Social event for June. On lengthy discussion we established a consensus to gather for a pot luck picnic on June 13 at a covered picnic shelter at a Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department park facility. Rob appointed Renee to chair an ad hoc social committee to plan the details of the event while suggesting she enlist the assistance of chapter members, especially those who have helped to plan previous chapter social events. Pat moved that $100 be allocated to cover meat and picnic shelter use fees. Charlie seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Other old business. Rob announced he has not yet been able to speak with state president Tom Page regarding accessibility concerns about the customer service kiosks at the Kansas State House. This is due mainly to Tom’s busy studio and road tour schedule.

New Business. Pat raised concerns as to the difficulties of navigating busy right of way intersections, particularly those near doctor’s offices and similar medical treatment facilities and suggested that chapter members develop a list of priority intersections to present to the city for installation of audible pedestrian traffic signaling devices. Rob noted NFB’s history of opposition in general to audible traffic signal devices, citing lack of evidence that they make blind persons safer and the difficulty of regulating the volume of sound which can often be loud enough to obstruct ability to hear and attend to the actual flow of traffic. We generally agree to give the matter further thought.

Champs Program. Athena announced that the Jayhawk Area Agency on Aging has received a grant which will enable seniors age 60 and older to receive a card which will enable them to purchase one meal a day for $3. The goal of the program is to assure that seniors are getting at least one nutritious meal a day with a built-in opportunity for daily social contact in the community. Informational meetings about the program take place at The Douglas County Senior Centre on the first Monday of each month.

Blind People Giving Back. Rob announced that the Blind People Giving Back audio play which was performed near the end of the April presidential release has been extracted as a stand-alone MP3 audio file and will be made available once post production work is completed.

Knowledge Base, “The Right To Raise a Family” ,” from the “nation’s Blind” NFB YouTube channel Was presented as an audio stream.

This video production was inspired by a recent case in Missouri involving a blind couple whose new-born child was removed from them by a state child welfare worker for 57 days only because of blindness.

Adjournment. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:54 pm.

Next meeting TBA

Submitted by

Rob Tabor Jayhawk Chapter president