NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF KANSAS

JAYHAWK CHAPTER MINUTES

April 16, 2016

Location: Lawrence Public Library, 707 Vermont, Room B, Lawrence, Kansas

Present: Dustin Disqué, Charles Hurst, Cheryl Miller, Ron Miller, Renee Morgan, Jim Secor, Pat Slick, Rob Tabor

Absent: Athena Johnson, Brendy Latare, Sidney Roedel, Susan Tabor

Welcome & Introductions. Rob called the meeting to order at 1:13 pm. Introductions were omitted due to having no guests.

The Agenda. Two new items were added under New Business. See below.

National Report. Presidential Release # 449 was played in full. Among other matters, president Riccobono announced that bi-fold NFB membership cards are now available and bear a QR code which can be scanned by a smartphone to connect it to the part of the NFB web page which displays upcoming events and other timely news. See New Business. Following playback Rob announced he has just learned that current and past NFB presidential releases can be heard by telephone at 443-341-4234. This is in addition to the PR archives on the NFB website.

State & Chapter Report. Rob announced that the board met via teleconference on April 10. The state board voted to provide financial assistance to members of local chapters and divisions at the rate of $1200 per person and $2000 per couple subject to a maximum of approximately $10,000 depending on the combination of singles and couples approved by state president Tom Page. This is the same level of assistance provided for the 2015 75th anniversary convention. See National Convention Essentials for more details.

**State Scholarships. Rob announced that the application period for the Ken Tiede Memorial Scholarship is open. Forms are available on the state affiliate website at** [**http://nfbks.org**](http://nfbks.org) **and the deadline to submit applications is August 31. Qualifying applicants must be at least legally blind, must reside in Kansas at the time of application, and must expect to further their education at a college or university or other post-secondary training institution. Applicants are not required to be a member of any chapter or division of NFB to apply. This year as last year, there are 2 scholarship awards of $1500 each and a $2500 award, and the candidates must attend the state convention to receive her/his award. Rob recalled last year when a highly qualified applicant forfeited her award by failing to attend the convention.**

**Kansas State Convention. Rob announced that the 2016 state convention will be held at the Downtown Ramada Inn, 420 Southeast Sixth Street in Topeka from November 4-6. A follow-up meeting will be timely scheduled to plan the detailed arrangements with hotel staff. Rob along with Donna Wood, Tom Anderson, and Anya Avramenko, will serve as the convention program planning committee. Room rates are around $90 per night including hotel guest tax. Rob stated that there has been a tradition for several years of the state subsidizing room rates to a more affordable level.**

**Rehab Services Advisory Committee. Rob has applied for a governor’s appointment to the KRS Blind Rehabilitation services advisory committee and has been invited by Sharon Meissner of the governor’s office to consider a possible appointment to the Kansas Independent Living Centers advisory council in lieu of the blind services appointment. Rob stated he has verbally accepted this offer but with some misgiving as it might take him out of contention for the blind services advisory committee. Rob stated that president Tom Page was told that there is only one position allocated to NFB Kansas, notwithstanding there is no such restriction in any regulations or official policy statements.**

**Individual case advocacy. Emily Schlenker is now represented by Sharon Krepper Weissbaum of Brown Levy and Goldstein, and some meetings have been taking place at Wichita State University with Emily, Tom Page, and high level officials at WSU including general counsel David Moses. Emily has been struggling with inaccessible course materials in her endeavor to complete some courses prerequisite for admission to medical school.**

**Meanwhile, Pat slick, and Ashley Neibert continue to encounter bureaucratic red tape and obstructionist tactics from VR in their applications in which they have requested residential blindness skills training at Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB). VR counselors or their supervisors have been actively trying to redirect these blind Kansans into short term non-residential blindness skills training programs at AlphaPointe , which is not an in-state rehab training agency. This issue also confronts Kebbie Young who requests to receive blindness skills training at Blind, Inc., in Minnesota. Rob stated that he and Tom Page are commending these named persons to engage the services of Kansas Disability Rights Center through the IPE planning process, and, if necessary, the administrative appeals and hearings process. Rob stated that despite VR staff insistence, there are no comparable blindness skills training programs in Kansas.**

Vice president’s report. Renee stated she had nothing to mention at this time.

Approval of minutes for March 2016. Rob declared the minutes were approved as prepared except for the addition that Renee had no vice president’s report.

Chapter treasurer’s report. Ron stated the account balance as of March 31 was $584.20 unchanged from February 28, 2016. There being no additions or corrections, Rob declared the treasurer’s report approved as read.

Fund-raising

1. NCAA basketball tournament pool update. Rob announced that the Accessible men’s basketball tournament pool fundraiser raised $145 to chapter treasury, which is the same amount as last year’s proceeds. The winner of the pool is Paul Vonhergsenberg who picked Villa Nova to win the national NCAA men’s basketball title. Ron won the prize for the most pool participants outside the chapter and both lucky winners have possession of their Salty Iguana $50 gift cards. Rob thanked all who participated, noting that some of the proceeds were donated by some who had not submitted brackets.
2. Clean Start Soap project update. Rob gave a summary of the fundraising proposal in the January meeting by Brian Glenn, proprietor of the Clean Start Soap Company who has offered to help the chapter to raise funds through sales of soap and related cleansing products. Rob noted that the ad hoc project committee comprised of Cheryl and Jim had not met due to hospital stays and other intervening circumstances and asked the committee to convene as soon as possible to determine the feasibility and other details. Rob asked that a progress report be made at the May meeting.
3. Arts Show planning update. Renee stated that she has so far inquired into space availability and pricing for Van Go and the Cider Art Gallery here in Lawrence. Van Go would charge a rental fee of about $1500 compared to $200 per hour for the Cider Gallery. Renee has also obtained an electronic application for building use from the Lawrence arts Center which she relayed to Susan because of technical issues with her computer. Renee stated Susan had offered to contact Steve Maceli for space availability and pricing at his food catering facility at 1031 New Hampshire. Rob noted it should be fairly easy to find sponsors to cover the cost of the rental fee at Cider.
4. Freddy’s Frozen Custards fundraiser update. Rob stated that he contacted Katie Johnson, a manager in charge of marketing activities for the Lawrence branch of Freddy’s Frozen Custards and Steakburgers and was informed the Freddy’s is booked into July for Percentage Night fundraising engagements. Rob suggested a better time to hold the Freddy’s supper fundraiser would be in late August or early September, shortly after the start of the 2016-17 academic year. This is also the consensus opinion of the meeting. Rob offered to follow up with Ms. Johnson and will present an updated report at the May meeting.

NFB 2016 National Convention essentials. Rob announced that the 2016 NFB national convention will be held from June 30 through July 5 at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort Hotel in Orlando Florida. Room rates are $83 for singles and doubles and $89 for triples and quads. The deadline for online preregistration is $85 and includes both the registration fee and the banquet. Registration can be done on site but will cost $10 more than online registration. Anyone wishing to attend with financial assistance from the state affiliate must convey this request to the chapter president who will forward the list of names to state president Tom Page who will make the final decision as to who will receive financial assistance for the convention.

Plans for summer, meeting and/or social event. Noting the annual tradition of a summer break from meetings but with a picnic in June, Rob asked members for input as to what they would like to do this year. Following brief discussion, a consensus formed that we should go to a local restaurant venue with an outdoor dining area and would enable us to migrate indoors in case of rain. Rob asked Jim and Renee to investigate locations and dates and report to the chapter at the May meeting, which both agreed to do. June 11 was suggested, being Jim’s birthday.

Other old business. There was none.

New Business. Rob suggested that NFB membership cars might be worth considering, especially if they can be obtained without charge or for a nominal price. Rob offered to contact Danielle Trevino at national office regarding this matter.

iPhone training. Rob stated that some members were again requesting an iPhone training class and suggested that the public library would be ideally suited for this on account of its conference room spaces and its trouble-free Wi-Fi access. Various members indicated willingness to come for training on a week day or Saturday, but Sunday should be avoided due to lack of city transit service.

Miscellaneous announcements. Rob invited all chapter members to a piano recital in which he will participate at Pioneer Ridge located at 4851 Harvard Road on May 7 at 2:00pm under the direction of Bradford Hoopes who provided post-banquet entertainment in a duet with Ardys Ramberg at the 2014 state convention in Lawrence. Rob is diligently practicing on his recital piece which remains a mystery until the day of the recital.

Adjournment. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:28 pm.

Next meeting, May 21, 2016, Room C lower level, Lawrence Public Library, 707 Vermont

Prepared by Rob Tabor president and Cheryl Miller, substitute secretary