# Cambridge Chapter Minutes, January 15, 2024

The January 15, 2024 meeting of the Cambridge Chapter was held via Zoom. It was called to order at 6:01 PM

## In Attendance:

Mika Pyyhkala

Cullen Gallagher

Laurie Mattioli

Al Sten-Clanton

Masha Sten-Clanton

Kristina Constant

Shirley Dorris

Debbie Malone

Ellen Bartelt

John Oliveira

ElizabethAnn Johnson

Kyra Sweeney

Rachel Kobierecki

Rashad Saadieh

David Ticchi

Jenn Bose

Justin Heard

Sengil Inkiala

## NFB Pledge

Cullen led the NFB Pledge.

## Approval of Minutes

Al moved that the November minutes be accepted; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## Treasurer’s Report

Mika presented the Treasurer’s Report. We have continued to receive donations for the walk via the bank and PayPal. From Scot Hurley’s last report, we have received $6,468. Donations have continued, so next report will be around $7,300.

We made a transfer of $4,000 to the state to keep our balance at the recommended level.

The cost for our holiday party in December was $735.82.

Our account balance is $576.13. Once we make a transfer from PayPal, it will be closer to the $1,500 recommended balance. This transfer should be completed by next month’s meeting.

You can use the Cambridge Chapter PayPal or Zelle to pay dues. Dues are $10. ON the presidential Release, President Riccobono encouraged members to pay their dues before the end of January to prevent membership from lapsing. It also makes it easier to update the records with the national office.

[The PayPal link is on this page.](https://nfbma.org/chapters-divisions/cambridge-chapter)

For Zelle, send payments to treasurer@nfbma.org.

Be sure to put Cambridge Chapter dues in the memo field.

Kristina moved that the Treasurer’s Report be accepted: the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## Presidential Release

Justin presented highlights from the [January Presidential Release.](https://nfb.org/sites/nfb.org/files/2024-01/january_2024_release_chapter_version_final_0.mp3)

## State Convention

Justin urged everyone to make their room reservations for the state convention, as the room block is filling up fast. It is also important to select your lunch location, so group leaders can know how many people are coming and get braille menus if needed. Registration and the agenda will be available soon. We are excited that President Riccobono will be attending. Book your rooms and lunch, and stay tuned for more details.

## Article Discussion

We discussed the article  [Why Do Some Voting Advocates Fight Equal Access for the Blind? From the January Braille Monitor.](https://nfb.org//images/nfb/publications/bm/bm24/bm2401/bm240101.htm)

This is an opinion piece from President Riccobono that appeared in the hill, which discusses organizations that oppose our accessible voting legislation due to unfounded security concerns.

Some points raised include:

When voting in-person, Machines are sometimes not set up, requiring voters to tell their votes to a poll worker.

Vote by mail isn't always secure for sited people either. A Ballot box set on fire was mentioned as an example.

It is really sad that there are people out there that would mark a ballot how they wanted it, ignoring the voters wishes.

A few things we could do include going to the polls the night before and make sure they have the voting machines ready to go. We could also volunteer as poll workers, which could be another way to test the machines ahead of time and advocate for what we need.

David suggested that our state legislative Director reach out to the secretary of states office to have him remind communities that the accessible machines should be set up and ready to go when the polls open. There should be no delay in blind people being able to vote.

## Format for Next Meetings

Since Justin has moved, we discussed the format of the next three chapter meetings. The options discussed included continuing with hybrid meetings at the senior center either with Justin leading meetings via zoom or someone else running them, or holding these meetings via zoom for the remainder of Justin’s term as president. Members felt strongly that we needed to continue meeting in-person at the senior center, as they have kindly set aside the room for us. There were no objections to continuing with a hybrid format and Justin running things remotely through the speaker. The dates for the next two meetings are February 12 and March 11.

At the April meeting, we will hold elections for all of the constitutional officers. This will likely be conducted similarly to last year. We will discuss it next month.

## Community Outreach Committee Update

The committee met before the holidays to lay out the ground work for what they want to do, including reaching out to hospitals and doctors as a lot of us have issues with healthcare. They will be meeting again soon to dive into specifics. The committee is definitely moving forward.

## Adjournment

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM