# Cambridge Chapter Minutes, June 9, 2025

The June 9, 2025 Meeting of the Cambridge Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Massachusetts was held as a hybrid meeting at Cambridge Citywide Senior Center and Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM.

## In Attendance:

Shirley Dorris, President

Sengil Inkiala, Vice President

Cullen Gallagher, Secretary

Mika Pyyhkala, Treasurer

Jen Bose, Board Member

Rashad Saadieh

William Odonnell

Stephen Yerardi

Kyra Sweeney

Adam Roberge

ElizabethAnn Johnson

Kobena Bonney

David Ticchi

Helen Kobek

Kristina Constant

Ellen Bartelt

John Oliveira

Sunish Gupta

Mark Paquette

Kendal Valentine

RIck Camann

## NFB Pledge

William led the NFB Pledge

## Approval of Minutes

Corrections were noted for the May minutes, including adding Rashad to the attendees list and correcting the spelling of Helen’s name. Inky moved that we accept the May minutes as corrected; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## Treasurer’s Report

Mika presented the Treasurer’s Report.

We had a few transactions this month related to recent events affecting members of our affiliate. The chapter sent $100 each to:

Al Sten-Clanton, following his injury;

Affiliate President Shara Winton, following a family bereavement;

The Springfield Chapter, following the loss of Annette Davis Harris.

We also had our automatic $50 PAC contribution. The checking account balance was $2,695.79.

William moved that we accept the Treasurer’s Report; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Gerry Difranza, a longtime member, also passed away recently. Inky moved that we send $100 to Gerry’s family; the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

## Presidential Release

The [June Presidential Release](https://nfb.org/sites/nfb.org/files/2025-05/presidential_release_june_2025_chapter_version.mp3)  was played.

## Exhibit Table at National Convention

Shirley announced that the affiliate would have a table at the exhibit hall in New Orleans, where we would sell t-shirts and other items. Shirley would be in charge of the table, scheduling volunteers, and handling funds. Members were asked to let Shirley know their availability so she could create and distribute the schedule. Shirley would send an email requesting this information from members, and would also include the Exhibit Hall Schedule.

Ellen announced that there would be a raffle for the BELL program at the table. Raffle prizes would include lotion, soap, a Glam Cane, and a gift card to a food website. Tickets would be priced at $5 for one ticket and $10 for three.

## Upcoming David Ticchi Walk

Shirley reminded members that the David Ticchi Walk would take place on October 5. This is the chapter’s biggest fundraiser, and members were encouraged to help spread the word.

David indicated that more information would be available by the August meeting. Funds raised would go toward assisting members with attending National Convention and Washington Seminar.

## June 4 Day at the State House

Kyra provided a recap of our day at the State House on June 4. It was a productive day, with nine members in attendance, including four from the Cambridge Chapter. Members were divided into groups and held 22 meetings.

The focus was on two bills: one prohibiting discrimination against adults with disabilities in family and juvenile court proceedings (which would protect blind parents), and another imposing fines on Uber and Lyft drivers who discriminate against riders with service animals. Reception was positive on both issues, and three representatives co-sponsored the service animal bill. Kyra expressed enthusiasm for holding this event again next year.

## Financials and Board Meetings

Rashad raised concerns about access to affiliate financial information and whether chapter members were receiving the full financial picture. It was clarified that the chapter treasurer reports on chapter funds, while affiliate-level financial reporting takes place at affiliate board meetings. Members wishing to receive those details were encouraged to attend the board meetings.

ElizabethAnn emphasized the importance of members being informed of board meeting schedules in advance and having opportunities to provide input. Kyra and Shirley agreed that more could be done to improve communication and committed to ensuring that members receive the affiliate board meeting schedule going forward.

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 PM. The next meeting was scheduled for August 11.