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National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas

Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

August 8th, 2023

Opening: The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas (NFBAR) was called to order at 7:01 P.M., via Zoom, by President Nena Chadwick, who welcomed the membership and guests.

Board Members Present: President Nena Chadwick, 1st Vice President Brent Philpot, 2nd Vice President Donavon Cavender, Secretary Kyle Kiper, Treasurer David Henry, Board Member Bettye Johnson, and Board Member Cindy Scott-Huisman.

Board Members Absent: Board Member Tanya VanHouten and Board Member Mollie Hernandez.

Federationists Present: Scott Jones, Amerissa Lovato, Jahmal Lovato, Brandon Patterson, Tawnya Philpot, Virginia “Ginger” Robertson, Jimmy Sparks, Charles Tate, Larry Wayland, Freddie Wilkey, and Curtis Willoughby.

Guest Present: Rikki Tate

Roll Call: Treasurer Henry led all participants in a roll call, providing an opportunity for all present to identify and introduce themselves.

NFB Pledge and One Minute Message: President Chadwick led all participants in the reciting of the National Federation of the Blind Pledge and One Minute Message.

Approval of Minutes: President Chadwick advised the membership that minutes of the July meeting were emailed to all members and inquired whether anyone had any comments or requests for corrections. A correction was requested, regarding the date of the next meeting, from August 15th to August 8th. 1st Vice President Philpot made a motion to accept the previous minutes. 2nd Vice President Cavender seconded the motion. A voice vote was held, and the motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report: President Chadwick advised the membership that the June and July Treasurer’s Reports were emailed out, by Treasurer Henry. President Chadwick asked for any comments or corrections. Treasurer Henry advised that he was still needing to make some additional corrections, to the June Report, but that they were concerning spreadsheet cells and labels, and not the actual data. 1st Vice President Philpot made a motion to accept the corrected June report. Board Member Johnson seconded the motion. A voice vote was held, and the motion carried. The July Treasurer’s Report was presented, with no corrections requested. 2nd Vice President Cavender made a motion to accept the July report. 1st Vice President Philpot seconded the motion. A voice vote was held, and the motion carried.

Committee Reports: President Chadwick asked the Chairs or Representatives, of each Affiliate Committee, to provide an update. She also asked members, who are interested in assisting with any committee, to please contact the appropriate Chairperson.

BELL Committee: President Chadwick shared that she, Federationists Joshua Goolsby and Amerissa Lovato had met with National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky President Jayne Seif, on the processes involved in providing a BELL Academy for her state. Federationist Lovato expanded, on the discussion, listing several topics which were covered, including how BELL works, how the week-long term is managed, what are the age parameters of attendees, and other questions. President Chadwick said she will be following up with Karen Anderson, at the Jernigan Institute, regarding further guidance on the program.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee: Board Member Johnson, also the Committee Chair, advised that she is forming her committee, to work, for the rest of the year. .

Budget Committee: President Chadwick said that this group will include all elected NFBAR Board of Directors members, and that Treasurer David Henry will be scheduling a first committee meeting.

History Committee: 2nd Vice President Cavender reported that he has been reviewing received documents, dated back into 2022, and asks that Chapter Secretaries remove the Draft notation, prior to submission, and that Treasurers send their approved reports in, either on their own or with the meeting minutes. He added that he did not have any submissions, from the At Large Chapter, and was not sure what to do about River Valley Chapter missing document submissions. At Large Chapter Federationist Charles Tate said he would discuss the issue, with Chapter President Tanya VanHouten. Federationist Sparks suggested that chapters submit their Meeting Minutes and Treasurer’s Reports together. President Chadwick said she would follow-up with Chapter Presidents, regarding this process.

State Legislative Committee: 1st Vice President Philpot, also Committee Chair, reported that, at this time, he had nothing new to add.

Federal Legislative Committee: Federationist and Committee Chair Wayland reported that he had emailed out information on the Supreme Court’s pending decision, on Internet and Software Accessibility, which is reported to possibly have an impact on the Blind. He asked that members continue to write to their elected Congressional Leaders, and stay updated on the Medical Technology and Web Accessibility proposed legislation. A discussion, regarding the need for more accessible Medical Technology took place.

Social Media Committee: President Chadwick reported that 1st Vice President Philpot, 2nd Vice President Cavender, and Federationist Jahmal Lovato will schedule to meet. She asked that all members refrain from posting the Affiliate Zoom Link, on Social Media.

Newsline Committee: Federationist, and Committee Chair, Jahmal Lovato advised that he had nothing to report, but is talking to the National Office.

PAC Committee: President Chadwick advised that there would be no PAC Report, as Federationist, and Committee Chair, Donna Walker was absent.

PSA Committee: Federationist, and Committee Chair, Charles Tate reported that he has been successful in facilitating the broadcasting of NFB Public Service Announcements, on 6 Jonesboro Area Radio Stations, and continues to work to expand into other counties. Board Member Scott-Huisman asked to be included within this committee, so she may assist in facilitating the broadcast of PSAs in Central Arkansas. Tate advised that he will be arranging a Committee Meeting.

Continuing Business: President Chadwick updated the membership on Federationist Jones efforts to develop an Affiliate Member Directory. Jones added that he has the information in a format, of which he may edit and develop the list, but wants input from members on what information they would like within their directory. Treasurer Henry expressed some difficulty with the need to create a Google Account, to utilize the Google Doc, but Jones replied that he can set the document to be open for viewing, without the necessity of an account. Federationist Jahmal Lovato shared that he has suggestions, on how to possibly design the directory in a more accessible manner. Jones and Lovato agreed to meet, at a future date, to discuss the matter.

President Chadwick advised that she had been asked, by the River Valley Chapter, to extend the deadline, discussed during her previous meeting with the Board regarding a NFBAR Board member being placed on the Chapter banking account, until August 19th, which she had granted.

New Business: President Chadwick announced that the first 2024 NFBAR Convention Committee meeting will take place on August 24th, at 7:00. She asked that anyone interested in taking part, please contact her. She asked that members text her, with their request to join.

President Chadwick discussed a concern, raised by Board Member Scott-Huisman, regarding the use of a P.O. Box on the NFBAR Converge web page, and also the use of the Affiliate President’s physical address, on the general site. Treasurer Henry said that the Post Office Box was used, when being used with Converge, to keep checks from being sent to an unsecured mail box. Chadwick said that the residential address was necessary to validate her position and address, during the collection of some unclaimed property. She added that the P.O. Box will be listed, on all future Vendor and Sponsor Application Forms.

President Chadwick announced that an email had been distributed, by the National Office, regarding the new Kenneth Jernigan Leadership Program. She asked that any members, interested in the program, contact her after August 16th, when she and all Affiliate Presidents will be trained, on a meeting with President Riccobono.

Chapter Reports: President Chadwick asked that Chapter Presidents, or their representatives, please provide updates on the activities of their memberships.

At-Large Chapter: Federationist Charles Tate, representing Chapter President VanHouten, reported that his chapter had been active in distributing the NFB Public Service Announcements and were actively working on fundraising projects. President Chadwick added her gratitude to VanHouten, on her work toward the Statewide Raffle of a Razorback Blanket. Board Member Scott-Huisman advised that tickets are $5, can be obtained by contacting VanHouten, and that the raffle officially starts on September 2nd, on the day of the first Razorback football game. She also said that the blanket will spend much of its time, on public display at her business, Cantrell Gallery, in Little Rock.

Central Arkansas Chapter: Chapter President Scott-Huisman reported that her chapter did not hold a July Meeting, following the National Convention. She announced that the next meeting would be on Saturday, August 12th, at the Little Rock Terry Library. She shared that she had been selected to attend the NFB Presidential Leadership Seminar, at the Jernigan Institute, and was very excited about the honor of being invited. Federationist Scott Jones added that Scott-Huisman had also been featured, in the High Profile section, of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette. The members congratulated President Scott-Huisman on her honors. President Chadwick mentioned that Scott-Huisman had been very quick to reply with a Draft Chapter Pamphlet, and thanked her for the effort.

Northwest Arkansas Chapter: Chapter President David Henry reported that his chapter did not hold a July Meeting, but instead met for a cookout. He advised that around 16 people took part, and that all enjoyed hot dogs and hamburgers. He also shared that his chapter would be taking part in the upcoming Bikes, Blues, and BBQ Festival, in Fayetteville, in Late September, where they will have a table and tent, and will provide outreach on the Federation. He added that he is also researching farmers markets, for more outreach opportunities.

River Valley Chapter: Chapter Liaison Freddie Wilkey reported that his chapter had not met in July, but would be meeting in August.

Additional Announcements: Federationist Wayland asked the membership to stay advised, on news regarding the Arkansas Division of Services for the Blind Board of Directors, and to stay alert of efforts to remove the Board. He also shared that the next Friends of the Arkansas Information Reading Service meeting will take place, via conference call, on August 10th. He asked that anyone interested in attending please contact him.

Treasurer Henry announced that the next Arkansas Division of Services for the Blind Board Meeting will be in-person, in Little Rock, on August 8th.

President Chadwick wished all August birthday members a Happy Birthday, asked that all congratulate Federationists Emily and Joshua Goolsby on a Happy Anniversary, and that the Affiliate sends its condolences to 1st Vice President Philpot, and his family, on the death of his Father. .

NFBAR Board Mystery Game: President Chadwick drew a number, representing one of the attending Federationists, for an award to be presented at the next State Convention. The winner was Federationist Freddie Wilkey.

Adjournment: President Chadwick reminded all members that the next meeting would be on September 12th, at 7:00, and then adjourned the meeting, at 8:15 P.M.

Minutes submitted on September 7th, 2023 by Secretary Kyle Kiper,

Minutes reviewed on September 7th, 2023 by President Nena Chadwick

Minutes approved on DATE, 2023 by the NFBAR Board of Directors