N FBA Phoenix Chapter Business Meeting

Secretary’s Report

Date: Saturday, May 02, 2020

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Location: Conference Call

Phoenix Chapter Conference Call Line: (712) 770-4856

Code: 614039 Pound Sign

NFBA Phoenix Chapter Listserv

Email: nfba-phoenix@nfbnet.org

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

At 9:39 a.m., President Brad Kuhn called the meeting to order.

Roll call

Nineteen participants joined the meeting, with fourteen members and five guests, including Charlie Kinnune, Director of Outreach, and Bryan Finnui, Founder of Democracy Live.

Pledges

Pledge to the American Flag

Betty Love led the Pledge to the American Flag.

NFB Pledge

Colin Wong led the NFB Pledge, by reciting one line at-a-time, with participants repeating each line.

The NFB One-Minute Message

Hope Dowden spiritedly asked Brad if he has memorized the NFB One-Minute Message, putting Brad “on-the-spot.” It can be found at the end of these Minutes, along with the NFB Pledge.

Prayer Requests

Jordan opened and closed this time of Prayer. Additional concerns and requests included:

Brad reminded us to keep members, friends, and their families in our Prayers, whether or not they are living under the same roof.

Betty asked that Monica and her family be kept in Prayer, for strength, comfort, and healing in these difficult times.

Secretary’s Report, Vicki Hodges, Secretary

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the April 11, 2020, Secretary’s Report, as corrected. The correction was: First Vice President, Jordan Moon, instead of President, Brad Kuhn, conducted the April 11, 2020, Phoenix Chapter Business Meeting. A copy of the corrected April 11, 2020 Phoenix Chapter Business Meeting Minutes will be emailed to Affiliate President Porterfield and copied to Brad, according to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of the Federation.

Treasurer’s Report, Donna Silba, Treasurer

Previous Balance: $842.84 (as of Saturday, April 11, 2020)

Total Income: $0.00

Total Expenses: $25.00

New Balance: $817.84 (as of Saturday, May 02, 2020)

Lanyards

Expenses: $700.00

Income: $452.00

Profit: -$248.00

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to accept the May 02, 2020, Treasurer’s Report, as presented. A copy of the May 02, 2020 Phoenix Chapter Treasurer’s Report will be emailed to Affiliate President Porterfield and copied to Brad, according to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of the Federation.

Limited access to bankers, during the Covid-19 restrictions is impeding Donna’s and Jordan’s efforts to establish an electronic payment link to the Phoenix Chapter checking account, whereby, membership dues, donations, and contributions can be received. Zell, PayPal, Messenger, and other options are being researched. The system must be reliable, simple to use, not tied to anyone’s personal phone number/email account, and provide a monthly, account statement.

Democracy Live, Charlie Kinnune, Director of Outreach and Bryan Finnui, Founder

Brad invited Bryan and Charlie to discuss with us the issue of securing equal access to voting in time for the 2020 Presidential Election, and to answer questions as to how their company, Democracy Live, has developed a Vote-by-Mail ballot system that is user-friendly to blind, low vision, and other print-disabled voters. A link to their sample ballot is located at the end of this agenda item, for you to check out at your convenience.

Seventy to ninety percent of voters in any given state in this country are choosing to vote in the privacy and convenience of their own home, marking and mailing in their paper ballot, rather than voting at their official, designated polling location. With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic fallout, this trend will, no doubt, increase exponentially, as we prepare for the 2020 Presidential Election, and beyond.

Currently, blind and print-disabled voters can vote by:

Using a designated, polling location machine on which Assistive Technology software has to be activated, before navigating the ballot with a specially-designed control pad, to electronically, mark the ballot choices;

Requesting a braille or large-print paper ballot that can be marked at home, before mailing it in, or dropping it off at the precinct polling location on Election Day; or,

Requesting a standard-print paper ballot that can be marked at home, with the assistance of another person, before mailing it in or dropping it off at the precinct polling location on Election Day.

Completed and submitted braille ballots, large-print ballots, and standard-print paper ballots marked with the assistance of another person, automatically identifies the voter, as having a print disability. Jordan specified that the NFB of Arizona affiliate has been working for four years to pass a voting bill, standardizing the ballot in such a way to eliminate any features that would identify the voter as having a print disability.

While precinct polling location machine voting provides the only method for marking a secret ballot by blind, low vision, and other print-disabled constituents with no identifying features, it lacks the convenience (and, now safety) of a Vote-by-Mail ballot, available to and chosen by a growing majority of the electorate.

The Help America Vote Act (HAVA( and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandate that every state elections board implement equal access voting, to comply with Federal Law that has been on the books for years, guaranteeing citizens the basic, civil right to independently vote by secret ballot.

A handful of states have already taken steps to implement an electronic system; whereby, print-disabled voters can independently link to a secure website on “the cloud,” using the device of choice, to access, navigate, and mark a ballot. Such a system is similar to shopping on Amazon. The voted ballot can be submitted directly to the Elections Office, in some states, while in other states, the voted ballot must be printed out and submitted by mail.

Kim expressed concern that a printed ballot submitted by mail may have some distinguishing feature, identifying the voter as having a print disability. Additionally, some people do not have access to a printer.

Bryan and Charlie stated that, as with military voters, the elections office separates the name of the voter from the printed paper ballot through a duplication process, before tabulating it. Of course, the better technique would be the electronic submission of the ballot, directly to the elections office, where it would be duplicated on paper for tabulation purposes.

Currently, Arizona is doing nothing to address the voting access inequity, citing that the state legislature has no authority to require that, the fifteen Arizona county Elections Boards comply with federal voting laws. Jordan stated that, one of the first challenges in Arizona “is to persuade the state legislature to recognize the Federal Law.” Furthermore, Betty and Mike specified political resistance and apathy is exacerbated by ignorance and condescending attitudes of most Arizona legislators, towards blind, low vision, and other print-disabled voters.

Bryan urged us to work with the Secretary of State, instead of waiting for the legislature, since she has jurisdiction over the county Elections Boards. It is up to us to start the conversation with Secretary Hobbs, to persuade her to issue a directive that, all Arizona counties will implement equal access voting in time for the 2020 Presidential Election. Jordan will coordinate this action, with Sami Hamed, NFB of Arizona Legislative Committee chair.

Charlie will follow up this discussion by forwarding the NFB Jernigan Institute’s Vote-by-Mail toolkit, detailing background material, equal access voting systems specifications, tips on educating legislators, constituent scripts, and more. He will also provide a link to Democracy Live’s sample mail-in ballot. Brad has already tried navigating their sample ballot, and found it easy to access. Jordan agreed to ask President Porterfield if there is room on the affiliate Board’s quarterly meeting agenda, for Charlie and Bryan to make a presentation and answer questions, Saturday, May 09, 2020.

<https://ss.liveballot.com?data=demo>

Presidential Release, Mark A. Riccobono, President/National Federation of the Blind

Presidential Release #494, May, 2020, President Riccobono, again, delivered the presidential release, before a live virtual audience. He discussed: the national convention; advocacy efforts; legal efforts; Global Accessibility Awareness Day; the Braille Monitor; the NFB BELL® Academy; and Giving Tuesday, followed by a live Q&A session. More than 900 people attended. Links to the English Audio version and the Spanish Transcription version can be found at the end of this report, along with the NFB Pledge and the NFB One-Minute Message.

Jordan stated that the June, 2020, Presidential Release will be a live, virtual report, as well. No time table for the end of “social distancing” has been established, by the NFB leadership. As a result, a large portion of next week’s NFB of Arizona Quarterly Board Meeting is dedicated to discussing the 2020 State Convention.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to hold the NFB of Arizona Phoenix Chapter June 06, 2020, Business Meeting, virtually. Brad, Jordan, and Colin will work together to gain access to the Affiliate’s Zoom service, for future Phoenix Chapter meetings. Meanwhile, the Phoenix Chapter Conference Call Line will continue to serve as our meeting call line, until further notice.

Old Business

Phoenix Chapter Listserv

Those who are not receiving Phoenix Chapter Listserv messages can go to the

nfbnet.org link, and follow the instructions to find Phoenix Chapter and add your email address. Betty explained that she found this to be a simple process. You may also contact Jordan at, (951) 316-5363, for assistance.

Membership Recruitment & Retention Committee, Monica Nunez, Chair

Monica reported that member contact information is being gathered and updated, including a notation as to when dues expire for each member. As soon as the roster is completely updated, a copy will be forwarded to Tarik Williams, Chair/NFB of Arizona Membership Recruitment & Retention Committee. Tarik will ensure that a New Member Packet is issued from the NFB National Office, to our newest, Phoenix Chapter members.

Fund-Raising Committee, Rodney Fletcher & Michael Smith, Co-Chairs

Rodney and Mike will meet to discuss innovative ideas for fund-raising, compatible within the Covid-19 restrictions.

New Business

Monday Evening Meetings, Jordan Moon, First Vice President

Jordan encouraged us to participate in the Monday Evening meetings, at 6:00 p.m., and to invite others to join us. This is an opportunity for us to share resources, tips, and experiences. It is also a time to stay connected and to encourage one another. It is important to stay in contact with our “Call Buddy,” and others that come to mind, throughout the week.

One protective mask per person was personalized and provided for those that ordered them, through a friend of Vicki’s. Please contact Vicki at, (602) 403-9019, if you have not ordered your first mask. Additional masks can be ordered, for a $7.00 fee. If an additional mask is to be ordered and delivered by mail, an additional $2.00 may be charged. After some discussion, it was decided that each person would pay for all charges, including postage.

Announcements

NFB of Arizona Quarterly Board Meeting, Jordan Moon, First Vice President/NFB of Arizona

Jordan explained that President Porterfield will be distributing the Quarterly Board Meeting Agenda, for members to review, before attending the virtual meeting, via Zoom.

Date: Saturday, May 09, 2020

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Zoom: (669) 900-6833

Meeting I.D.: 910 3353 0345

Brad announced that he raised $330 for the affiliate, through his Birthday fund-raiser, on his Facebook page.

Rodney and Brad have pledged to make a donation, from their Stimulus Payment, and challenged others to do the same.

Jordan stated that SSDI recipients should have already received the Stimulus Payment, and if not, it should arrive no later than May 15th. SSI recipients should receive their Stimulus Payment no later than the end of May. Stimulus claims for eligible dependents had to be filed by May 05, 2020. Those claimed as a dependent will not receive a Stimulus Payment.

Brad announced that the NFB National office has a limited number of $25 Lyft vouchers, available to those that are lacking transportation funds. Please contact your state president to learn more about this offer, and to learn if you are eligible. President Porterfield can be reached at,

Nfb.az.president@gmail.com

(520) 850-2180

Adjournment

At 11:50 a.m., President Brad Kuhn adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicki Hodges, Secretary/NFB of AZ Phoenix Chapter

* [Presidential Release #494, May 2020 (English Audio)](https://www.nfb.org/images/nfb/audio/podcast/presidential-releases-en/may-release-page-audio.mp3)
* [Presidential Release #494, May 2020 (Spanish Transcript)](https://www.nfb.org/resources/publications-and-media/presidential-releases/transcripts/may-2020-spanish-transcript)

NFB Pledge

I pledge to participate actively in the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind,

to achieve equality, opportunity, and security for the blind;

to support the policies and programs of the Federation;

and to abide by its constitution.

NFB One-Minute Message

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND KNOWS THAT BLINDNESS IS NOT THE CHARACTERISTIC THAT DEFINES YOU OR YOUR FUTURE. EVERY DAY WE RAISE THE EXPECTATIONS OF BLIND PEOPLE, BECAUSE LOW EXPECTATIONS CREATE OBSTACLES BETWEEN BLIND PEOPLE AND OUR DREAMS. YOU CAN LIVE THE LIFE YOU WANT; BLINDNESS IS NOT WHAT HOLDS YOU BACK. THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND--IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR OURSELVES.