National Federation of the Blind of Tucson

Meeting Minutes for August 5, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 PM.

There were 17 people attending in person and two on zoom.

The Pledge of Allegiance and the NFB Pledge were said.

Introductions were made and new attendees and members were welcomed to the meeting.

Paul and Mary Ellen Gabias were voted in as members of the Tucson chapter.

The June 2023 meeting minutes were read and a motion was made to accept them with one correction. The award that was received by SAAVI was the Jacob Bolotin Award and not the Jacobus Ten’Broek Award.

Mariana read the treasurer’s reports for June and July as Joanne was unable to attend the meeting. Both reports were accepted as read.

Tarik reported that a group from the Tucson chapter met with Dan O’roark during his stop in Flagstaff on his cycle ride of route 66 to bring attention to Braille literacy.

Donald said that the problems with the listserv are continuing. Those who are still having difficulty receiving messages from the state affiliate should resubscribe at nfbnet.org. Work with the national office to get the listserv working properly continues.

The theme of the state convention is usually based on the banquet speech at the national convention. This year the theme will be “We Are At The Center Of The Movement. Donald reviewed the agenda for the state convention. The original transport option for people attending the convention from Tucson had a low response so it has been cancelled. Those who signed up for it will get a refund. Those who wish to attend the convention for the full time and who still need transport should contact Amy Porterfield. Those who are having difficulty booking hotel rooms should contact Tarik for assistance. The national representative will be announced at the state board meeting on August 12. Anyone who wants to contribute auction items should contact Tarik. Those who would like to volunteer at the convention should contact Amy. The chapter voted to contribute $100.00 toward door prizes for the state convention.

Mariana announced that the student division is sponsoring a talent show on Friday evening of the state convention. First prize will be $100.00. Registration is $10.00 and those who want to participate can do so at az.nfb.org. Those who need backing tracks for their performance should contact Joe Good as soon as possible.

A discussion was held about why it is important to attend NFB meetings and events in-person whenever possible. It was emphasized that when we are physically together isolation is reduced, role-modeling can take place and personal connections are made. Having meals and other social activities before or after meetings strengthens connections and the social structure of the chapter. It was also emphasized that virtual options should continue so we don’t exclude people who can not attend in person for a variety of reasons and that we not judge their decision to attend virtually. It was acknowledged that many people do not have the privilege of attending meetings in person due to transport deficiencies, connection problems or other personal circumstances. It was mentioned that there should be no barriers to voting for virtual participants.

The month of October used to be called “Meet the Blind Month” but is now known as BEAM (Blindness Equality Achievement Month). Planning for BEAM will take place in September and those with activity ideas should send them to Tarik. Tarik reviewed past BEAM activities the chapter has done. To better facilitate BEAM planning, a motion was approved to hold the September chapter meeting on the second Saturday of the month which will be September 9.

Announcements:

Amy announced that a seminar on STEM for children will be held on August 19 in Phoenix. Registration is still available on the SAAVI web site.

Amy also said that a seminar on individualized education planning for schools will be held on the same date and at the same location.

Barbara said that accessible calendars can be obtained from the talking book library. She also said that Fry’s Pharmacy now has Script Talk which provides accessible information about prescriptions. Contact Envision to set up the program.

Barbara said that audiovolt.net provides audio tracks of described movies and TV programs.

Finally, she said that United Airlines is installing Braille signage on seats and other important designations and that Amazon now has a mobile phone plan for $25.00 a month which should provide much-needed competition for existing cell phone companies.

Donald said that the Department of Justice has issued a rule-making process on accessible web sites under Title II of the ADA. It is important for everyone to contribute when the public comment period is announced.

Tarik announced that Donald was interviewed on his podcast recently. The name of the podcast is Speak Your Vision and can be accessed on all podcast platforms.

A Dutch Auction was then held with the prize of two insulated water containers which was won by Jason Trammell.

The meeting adjourned at 3:09 PM

The next chapter meeting will be held on Saturday September 9, at 1:00 PM.

Submitted by Jean Parker, Secretary