

# NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF FLORIDA MELBOURNE SPACE COAST CHAPTER Chapter Teleconference Minutes—March 12, 2022

*The meeting was called to order at 10:07 AM*

## PRESENT

Camille Tate	President
Joyce Taylor	Vice President
Nancy Hollo	Secretary/Treasurer
Maria Rigogliosi	1 <sup>st</sup> Board

- **Meeting Called to Order/Roll Call (CT)**
- **Pledge of Allegiance (NH)**
- **NFB Pledge (CT)**
- **One Minute Message (CT)**
- **Invocation (JT)** and update on Juan Perez' condition
- **Secretary's Report (NH):**
  - **January 8** Accepted as emailed (**MR/JT 2<sup>nd</sup>**)
  - **February 12** Accepted as emailed (**MR/JT 2<sup>nd</sup>**)
  - Members can request that the minutes be read. CT will clarify that at the next chapter meeting. Members can call 216-712-9499 to have the minutes read to them individually if they prefer not to request it at the chapter meeting.
- **Treasurer's Report (NH): \$4,405.16 (as of 2/28) CT:** Satellite Beach Lions has donated \$1,000.00 again this year. The check has been sent to the affiliate treasurer, Sylvia Young, who will in turn issue a check for \$1,000.00 to our chapter.
- **President's Report (CT):** Annual report to affiliate with copies of bank statements was sent to the affiliate treasurer Sylvia Young. \$66.00 will be sent to the affiliate to cover \$3.00 per each member dues received in 2021.
  - **National Convention (CT):** The board voted to cover the \$25 cost of registration for the national convention in New Orleans. The extra charge for late registration will not be reimbursed.
  - **Transportation Disadvantaged Program (CT):** CT serves on the coordinating board for the Transportation Disadvantaged Program. She attended the meeting on February 28. Electronic bus passes are now available for paratransit. Passes last for six weeks, a single pass is \$1.50 or a ten ride pass is \$15.00. There is a phone app called Open Transit for smart phones. There is a

- log in process. Contact Carmen at SCAT with your name and phone number for verification of your account.
- **Javier Molinares** was reinstated in the chapter by member vote. (MR/NH2<sup>nd</sup>) NH to send him information on how to pay dues.

## **OLD BUSINESS** *(from February 12, 2022)*

- **MSSC Secretary Resignation (CT):** JS has resigned as secretary but will still remain active as a member. NH will take minutes of the board and chapter meetings until someone is appointed or runs for Secretary in August.
- **Chapter Elections (CT):** We are a four member board at present. The offices of President, Secretary, First and Third Board (currently vacant) are up for election in August, 2023. The Second Board seat is open. A board member is responsible for attending the majority of board and chapter meetings, and should be able to access email.
- **Chapter Constitution Review Committee (CT):** Beginning in April, a committee of 3-5 chapter members will review our chapter constitution and compare it to the model template provided by the affiliate. The committee will meet once a month. After changes are made, the constitution will be read to the chapter and discussed and amended. It will be read a second time at another chapter meeting. If there are no changes after the second reading, it will be forwarded to the Affiliate Board to be approved, and then sent to the National office. NH volunteered for the review committee. Marilyn Womble requested a copy of the chapter constitution and model template via email. Volunteers are needed.
- **Washington Seminar (CT):** will be virtual this year due to Covid restrictions. CT will post a Zoom link for District 8 legislative sessions. We are welcome to listen in. The donation to the affiliate to cover Camille's per diem cost was cancelled, since she won't be traveling to Washington. Marilyn Womble requested a copy of the legislative issues via email.
- **State Convention 2022 (CT):** The convention will be in person this year. The dates are October 7 through 9 at the South Bank Hotel in Jacksonville. The cost is \$115 plus tax per night. The board has not decided on reimbursement and assistance yet until the registration and banquet fees are determined. Those are costs that the chapter usually reimburses. All are invited to the Convention Planning conference call on the first Sunday of each month at 8:00 p.m.
- **National Convention (CT):** As of now, the convention will be in person, July 5 through 10 at the New Orleans Marriott. The cost is \$104 plus 14% tax per night, plus a \$3 fee per

person per night. Registration and banquet fees are not known at this time. On March 1 the online registration portal opens.

- **Children's Hunger Project (Maria Rigogliosi):** Maria has arranged an opportunity for us to pack weekend meals for children to take home from school on Fridays. Our date and time is reserved for Wednesday, March 30 at noon in Cocoa. We will spend an hour and a half to two hours packing up to 250 meals wrapped in Saran Wrap. We'll work assembly line style and chairs will be provided. Please contact Maria at 321-795-7376 if you would like to attend. Maria has arranged bus transportation from your home to the venue and back. All are invited.
- **The Joe Show (Joe Naulty):** Although the board has decided not to run the car show this year, Joe is planning to continue with the Joe Show independently. It is in the preliminary planning stage, tentatively scheduled for October 2. MOPAR may take the project on.
- **Communities of Faith (CT):** In order to encourage more to attend the calls, the time will be changed to every third Monday of the month at noon starting in March. There is also a Communities of Faith for the National Division. All are welcome. Invitations will come via email.
- **Seniors Committee (CT):** Meets the first Thursday of the month. For more information, contact Camille at the number below.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Constitution Review Committee (CT):** Thanks to members who volunteered for the committee. The committee will review and make changes to the Chapter's constitution. It's anticipated that only minor changes will have to be made. It will be read out loud to the chapter, comments will be taken, revisions made, and read a second time to the chapter. If approved, it will be forwarded to the affiliate Constitution Review Committee. CT is cochair. If the affiliate approves they will send it to the National Office.
- **Chapter Polo Shirts (CT):** All Uniform Wear on 192 has an image of the NFB logo, so there is no setup fee to imprint shirts. We will buy the shirts from them for the best price instead of sourcing our own. The final price should be between \$15 to \$17 per shirt. The shirts will be blue with the full color NFB logo and National Federation of the Blind, Live the Life You Want. Please email Camille with your size.

- **Chapter Elections in August (CT):** The chapter has only four out of seven seats filled. The seats of President, Secretary, and Boards two and three are empty. Camille wants to fill at least the secretary and one more board seat. She clarified that email access is preferred but not required; we could work around it with text and phone calls. Please reach out to Camille with questions about what is expected of a board member. CT will run again for chapter president in August. 2022 to 2024 will be her last term as chapter president. If board seats are not filled the chapter won't be able to continue.
- **Open Leadership Building (CT):** The affiliate is in the same situation, without prospective new leaders. Every second Thursday at 8pm until the end of the year there will be an open meeting for Leadership Building. A reading assignment from the reference guide for leaders will be sent out each month, then read at meeting. Meeting notices are sent out to the chapter email list. Those without email access will depend on other members to spread the word and invite and assist them to join the meetings. JT discussed pairing mentors with mentees upon request. CT is working on pairing.
- **National Convention (CT):** There will be no board or chapter meeting in July. The convention is in New Orleans from July 5 through July 10. The hotel is the New Orleans Marriott. The overflow hotel is the Sheraton New Orleans. This year the convention is in person; there is a virtual component but without voting. If you attend in person, are a registered member of the NFB, and are registered for convention and in attendance you have the right to vote. Virtual attendance gives you access to meetings. New Orleans has vaccine and mask mandates in force. A negative COVID test within 72 hrs of arrival in New Orleans is required. A negative COVID test is required by the NFB within 24 hours before meetings. Free Covid testing will be provided. Provisions for those who may test positive will be provided. Kenneth Jernigan scholarships up to \$500 will be awarded for first time in person convention attendees. April 15 is the application deadline online at [nfb.org](https://nfb.org). Contact CT for assistance. To receive the money, you must be a member and attend the entire convention from July 5 through 10, including the banquet. Applicants will be interviewed by affiliate board members. The award will not be paid until your arrival at the convention.

- **State Convention (CT):** The state convention runs from Friday October 7 until the banquet the evening of Sunday October 9, with members leaving Monday morning, October 10. It will be held in Jacksonville at the South Bank Hotel. The room rate per night is a total \$122 or 123, including taxes and fees. There is no occupancy fee, the rate will be the same with up to 4 per room. Open Convention Planning Committee meets the first Sunday of April. Our chapter board is not discussing assistance yet. The state affiliate has not decided if or how much assistance will be given. Usually one room per chapter is provided.
- **Resource Time (MR):** Maria encourages participation with the Children's Hunger Project. We will pack lunches for children to take home on the weekend. Homeless kids are not assured of a meal until they go back to school on Monday. Nonperishable food will be packed in Saran Wrap. Wednesday, March 30 at noon. We'll work on an assembly line process, chairs will be provided for anyone who can't stand the entire time. All are encouraged, Maria will arrange bus transportation to 1855 W. King Street in Cocoa. Call Maria at 321-795-7376.
- **Transportation Disadvantaged Program and the ADA (CT):** The Transportation Disadvantaged Board hears complaints. People are receiving wrong or incorrect information. Paratransit is for any disabled people. The TD program for elderly, low income and disabled riders is the only one of its kind in the US, in force before the ADA was passed. The TD and ADA have differences. The TD program rules must be abided by. Monday through Friday from 6 am to 3 or 4 pm are the parameters. They are only required to take you to grocery shop, to the mall or to doctors. Every paratransit user is covered under the TD program, but not the ADA. SCAT receives money from county, state and federal government for general paratransit, funneled into the TD program. ADA rides are not reimbursed. Fares are the same. With ADA anyone on paratransit gets 50% reduced fare, \$1.50 each way. On a fixed route a paratransit client gets reduced fare also, 75 cents.
  - Reservation requirements are up to a maximum of seven days in advance and a minimum of three days in advance under TD rules. An ADA qualified client has a 24 hour minimum advance reservation period, not including weekends. Call before 3 pm.

- An application for the TD program should be filled out every 3 years. There is a separate application for ADA eligible riders, with a 21 day process to approve ADA paratransit. Please fill out both applications.
  - Blindness is not an automatic guarantee of ADA paratransit under federal guidelines, for example, if you have good mobility. Brevard County does not deny blind applicants for paratransit.
  - ADA and TD are separate programs. Under ADA you cannot be denied a ride based on destination or not having enough drivers. As long as SCAT is operating each route must have ADA service. SCAT tries to provide for every user, but you are only entitled to a ride if you're within 3/4 miles of a fixed route bus stop, whether TD or ADA. They try to accommodate but are not required to provide a ride. Availability depends on where you live.
  - 321transit.com is a website that provides riders with a guide to all the rules and regulations including the grievance procedure. It has all stops and times on all fixed routes.
  - Issues with service, denial of service, an issue with a driver or serious issue with a rider can be reported via a form on the website or in the riders guide, or even call SCAT to file a grievance. Most issues are misunderstandings of rules, or mistakes SCAT makes. SCAT employees are not social workers, but if there is actual abuse, please use the grievance form.
  - Grievance Committee Meetings are open to the public. Public cannot speak on matters on the agenda, but are entitled to speak on other matters. CT will consult her TD meeting minutes to see if any seats are open for MR to apply for.
  - (MR) Uber has added a 55 cent surcharge on each ride and UberEats. CT Uber is \$6.30 to go ¾ mile. Run by an app, requires smart phone or tablet. Go go grandpa is an alternative, but you must use a credit or debit card. It is a ride service that doesn't require an app. Call Maria at 321-795-7376 with questions or concerns about transportation, also reach out to Camille by voice or text. 321-372-4899.
- **Membership Roster (CT):** Our policy has been that it is confidential, not shared outside the chapter, except to the Treasurer of the affiliate. Are the

members in favor of sharing the membership list with Joe Naulty? Two members agreed and noone objected. NH apologized for assuming that Joe as emeritus board member should receive the roster and already sent it to him.

- Javier offers location for chapter meetings at 4670 Babcock Palm Bay FL.

Adjourned 11:57 AM MR / NH 2nd

### **Next board teleconference on April 9 at 10:00 AM**

*Please plan to be at the next MSCC Board teleconference meeting as we look forward to seeing you and hearing what you have to say. If you have any questions, concerns, or specific interests, please contact **Camille Tate at (321)372-4899** so these matters can be addressed at the next teleconference. Thank you.*