Tampa Bay Chapter

National Federation of the Blind of Florida

Chapter Meeting Minutes

Beef O’Brady’s

8810 N. Himes Avenue

Tampa, Florida

The meeting was called to order by President Miranda Kilby at 12:06pm.

Introductions were made, and there were twelve members in attendance. Miranda called for us to observe a moment of silence in memory of and to honor Dan Hicks’s father, Merry Schoch’s father, and longtime NFBF member and leader Tom Ryan.

Marion led us in saying the NFB pledge.

Secretary and Treasurer’s Reports

A motion was made by Marion, seconded by Lloyd, to approve the January chapter meeting minutes as emailed. The motion passed.

Dan read the previously emailed treasurer’s report. Our current balance is $2,486.78.

A motion was made by Sherrill, seconded by Paul, to approve the treasurer’s report. The motion passed.

President’s Report

Miranda said she will bring more of our NFB logo pens to distribute at our next chapter meeting. She reported that the state convention planning committee continues to meet to work toward a great convention here in Tampa, hosted by the Suncoast and Tampa Bay chapters. She encouraged all who are interested to participate in the Events Committee teleconferences chaired by Gloria, which are also planning for our convention. She announced the formation of a new book club led by NFBF Board member Camille Tate.

At this point Miranda introduced our speaker, Cherie Leporatti, from HART’s Compliance Department. She has recently come from Washington, D.C. where she held a similar position, and has a strong background in paratransit. She spoke about the importance of ADA compliance, and that there will be stepped up ADA training for all HART employees. She would like to change the culture at HART, hoping to see drivers as ambassadors. She answered many questions and listened to many concerns dealing with drivers’ knowledge about laws pertaining to service animals, and the importance of and noncompliance with, announcements made inside and outside the buses. She said there will be more initial screening of drivers and free but mandatory lessons in English for speakers of other languages.

She asked us to let her know if we have ideas for improved accessibility.

Miranda thanked her for coming to speak to our chapter.

New Business

At this point, Miranda announced that Beef O’Brady’s has generously partnered with our chapter to observe Spirit Days on the day of each chapter meeting from January through April. We will expand our 50/50 ticket sales, making them available to all patrons in the restaurant during our meeting time. As usual in this type of fundraiser, a percentage of food sales during certain hours will be given to our chapter. During these Spirit days, we will set up a table with information about important blindness topics and what the NFB is all about.

Miranda then announced the latest state fundraiser raffle, which is called the Amazing Trio Bundle. First prize is an iPad Pro, or the equivalent cash value of $800; second prize is a 400 dollar Uber or Lyft voucher,or the cash value; and third prize is a 200 dollar travel voucher or cash value. Tickets will cost five dollars each.

Elections

Miranda said our chapter elections will be held at our next chapter meeting. All Board positions are up for election. Miranda reminded all that in order to be eligible to vote or run for office we must pay our chapter dues for 2018. She also advised that if we wish to nominate someone for the Board we make sure to speak to that person and get their permission in advance. She said each nominee will have two minutes to speak.

Marion asked that the state Board reach out to NFB president Riccobono to get an opinion as to whether our policy that you cannot hold an office in more than one chapter is in keeping with our constitution. Dan stated that it is the policy of the affiliate, and not the opinion from the national office.

Chapter Fellowship

Miranda encouraged everyone to attend the next HART Board meeting on February 6.

Jeanette Torres said that to celebrate her recent move to her own apartment, she is inviting us for a house warming party on Saturday, February 10. Details will be forthcoming.

Marion extended an invitation to all to attend a concert at his Unity Church in north Tampa on February 15. He said the excellent band featured is called Acoustic Adelon.

Miscelaneous

The 50/50 drawing was then held, and the winner of 20 dollars was Miranda.

Marion said he will keep us posted on a possible venue for the public screening of NFB’s documentary Do You Dream in Color.

Miranda said she and Paul went to Susan Pierce’s class to speak about blindness and answer students’ questions.

Miranda announced that the state affiliate chose six NFBF members to attend Washington Seminar, with expenses paid. She said she was proud to announce that our chapter has two persons going, Merry Schoch, legislative co chair, and Jeanette Torres.

Our next meeting will be held on February 24.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55pm.

Respectfully submitted

Sherrill O’Brien, Secretary

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