National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky

Board of Directors Meeting

Conference Call

Tuesday, October 27, 2015

8:00 PM EDT

Minutes

President, Cathy Jackson called the meeting to order. Executive Board members present were: Cathy Jackson, president; Katie Adkins, 1st vice-president; Dennis Franklin, 2nd vice-president; Lora Felty Stephens, secretary; J. Mike Freholm, treasurer. Board of directors members present were: Denise Franklin, Michael K. Freholm, Nickie Pearl, Jennifer Hall, Todd Stephens and George Stokes. All board members were present. John Glisson was a guest on the call.

Minutes from the September 26, 2015 board meeting luncheon, prepared by secretary, Lora Felty Stephens, were emailed out to board members. Denise made the motion to approve the minutes as emailed. George seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Cathy read the treasurer’s report prepared by treasurer, J. Mike Freholm, as Mike had not yet joined the conference call at this point. Account balances were as follows:

Regular Checking: $7,025.05

Cameron Fund: $445.07

Morgan Stanley Funds:

Allen Scholarship Fund: $43,751.18

NFBK Fund: $55,038.07

Cathy reported that one of the individuals who was approved for financial assistance for state convention returned the $100.00 check. So, this means that we provided financial assistance to 27 individuals. Also, there was a question in regards to the significant decrease in funds in the Allen Scholarship Fund. Due to the question, the board agreed to table acceptance of the treasurer’s until J. Mike Freholm, treasurer joined the meeting and could answer the questions.

State Convention 2016:

Cathy reported that she has spoken with Karen Duff who has helped secure locations for state conventions for the past five or so years. She is going to expand her search to include state parks, as well as other metropolitan areas of Kentucky outside of Louisville, including northern Kentucky and Bowling Green. Cathy pointed out that the technology symposium has become a vital part of our convention, and it might be more difficult to get vendors to participate if the convention is held outside of Louisville. We need to take this into consideration when choosing the 2016 venue.

NFB Newsline-Kentucky:

Todd Stephens gave an update on the current status of the NFB Newsline Project. He reported that the grant application for the Linda Neville Fund has been submitted. He stated that the Newsline-Kentucky website has been changed to reflect that NFB of Kentucky now manages the service, rather than Independence Place. The website domain has been moved from the IP server to the NFBK server. Todd has secured a new toll-free number for NFB Newsline-Kentucky through Vumber, a virtual number service. This service is sent to Todd’s mobile phone. The cost for this service is $9.95 per month. Todd has explored a new resource for securing funding called USA Funding. This is a web resource that helps locate grants that are appropriate for your need. Due to the need to print Newsline materials, Todd has requested a mid-sized color printer from Lexmark through the Design Accessibility Manager, Susan Shoe in hopes that she will be able to get a color printer donated. Todd has been in contact with a representative from the Bench and Bar publication in order to renew the contract to keep the publication on Newsline. Allison Flannigan, director of the Kentucky Office for the Blind has agreed to re-new the contract with the Kentucky Office for the Blind and NFB Newsline for another five years. The Kentucky Office for the Blind is the designated state agency through which state funds flow in order to maintain Newsline. This contract would have expired on November 3, 2015. Now, we just need to prepare for the legislative session and lobbying the state legislature to continue funding for Newsline. Current funding mandated through the governor’s budget will end in 2017. Todd reported that NFB has asked NFBK to open a bank account for the Newsline-Kentucky project. Newsline will be a project of NFBK, but accounting will need to be separate from our regular accounts. Cathy, Mike and Todd will work together to get the account established. NFBK will receive just a bit over $1,000 per month back from the national office to cover Todd’s salary, as well as, Marketing and maintaining Newsline. It takes some time for the funds to travel from the Kentucky Office for the Blind to the national office in Maryland and then back to Kentucky. So, we will need to put some startup money into the NFB Newsline-Kentucky account. George asked if Todd will be an employee of NFB of Kentucky. Cathy explained that Todd will be a contract employee. This will make accounting much easier than if Todd is considered an employee. Todd will receive a 1099 and will pay his own taxes. NFBK will not withhold taxes.

Cathy said that she feels that we should put about $5,000 into the Newsline account because there is turnaround time until we will get money from the national office. Mike clarified that this money would come from the Morgan Stanley NFBK Fund account. Dennis made the motion that we move $5,000 from the NFBK Fund into a newly established Newsline-Kentucky account. Denise seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Denise asked if the Kentucky School for the Blind Charitable Foundation has been approached to help assist with Newsline funding. As a result of the grant request from the KSB Charitable Foundation for the BELL program, we have found out that the KSB Charitable Foundation prefers to give grant money to individuals, not to fund projects or organizations. Perhaps we might apply with this in mind.

Todd reported that he has looked at the Brown Foreman grant application and Newsline seems to be a good fit for this grant. He has also looked at the criteria for Caesars. Katie suggested the Macy’s grant. Todd will continue to pursue grants to increase Newsline funding.

Resolutions:

Cathy reported that Dennis has passed along the resolution regarding the increase in funding for the Office for the Blind to the necessary entities. Katie is working on the other resolutions and getting them to those whom they concern.

Washington Seminar:

Washington Seminar is scheduled from Mon., Jan 25-Thurs., Jan. 28, 2016. Room rates are $184 per night with a 14.5% tax. Reservations are made on your own this year, not through the national office. There was discussion in regards to financial assistance. Katie suggested a possible application process. Dennis commented that we need 3 or 4 knowledgeable people to represent Kentucky, and the state should pay their expenses as much as possible. After discussion, Katie made the motion that a committee be established and an application process be set forth to determine four individuals who will represent Kentucky at the Washington Seminar. For those individuals chosen by the committee, hotel and air fare will be paid by the state. Any others who wish to attend will be required to pay their own way. The motion passed unanimously. Katie and Todd volunteered to serve on this committee.

Frankfort Legislation:

We need to write new legislation in order to continue Newsline funding through the governor’s budget. Cathy asked Katie to chair the legislative committee. She appointed Dennis Franklin, Chris Stewart, Corb O’Connor and Michael Freholm to serve on this committee. We need to begin looking at the law and write new legislation. We need to look at the legislative calendar and determine a date to lobby Frankfort. Newsline will require more than one day in Frankfort. Also, we need to determine a day to do a mini legislative seminar in Kentucky. We need to focus on legislation to increase the budget for the Office for the Blind, as well as Newsline. Katie would like to introduce fair wages legislation. Todd commented that we need to be sure that funds are earmarked for Newsline. This could be murky because of Newsline funds filtering through OFB.

Budget Committee:

Cathy stated that since we will now be running Newsline, we need to establish an annual budget because many of the grant applications that we will be seeking to help increase Newsline funding require a budget. Cathy appointed J. Mike Freholm, Dennis Franklin and Todd Stephens to the budget committee. Mike will chair the committee.

Treasurer’s Report/Allen Scholarship Fund:

The board returned to discussion of the treasurer’s report. Mike explained that the numbers indicated in the Allen Scholarship Fund was reported correctly. One of the investments in this fund dropped. Also, $1,000 was withdrawn to cover one of the 2015 scholarships. This accounts for the decline in this account.

Also, Cathy and Mike explained expenses from state convention and reconciling the account at the Galt House. Cathy said that there was some confusion in regards to the bill. It seemed that we were not charged quite enough for some of the services we received. She pointed this out to the Galt House management, and they assured her that the bill was correct. Cathy stated that she felt like the Galt House was very generous with us. Todd made the motion to accept the treasurer’s report. George seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mike commented that we should be able to fund the Washington Seminar and end up in about the same place financially as we were last year. Our general checking is approximately where we were at this time last year.

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM EDT

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Felty Stephens, Secretary