**59th Annual Missouri State Convention Minutes for March 2021**

 At the bottom of this document you will find the March action points, presidential report, audit report, annual treasurers’ report, amendments and resolutions.

On Thursday evening, President Wright brought the NFB of Missouri State Board meeting to order at 6:05p.m.

Officers present President Shelia Wright, Vice President Melissa Kane, Second Vice President Jenny Carmack, Recording Secretary Becky Boyer, Corresponding Secretary Daniel Garcia, and Treasurer Carol Coulter.

 Board members present Gene Coulter, Dacia Cole, Amy Wilson, Jeff Giffen, Robin House, Chris Tisdal, Roger Chrome, and Gary Wunder.

 Carol Coulter read the treasurers report for February 2021. Melissa Kane made a motion to accept the report as read. Daniel Garcia seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Beginning checking account balance $57669.01 and the ending balance is $13969.85 nonrestricted funds $225,829.36 and restricted fund is $104,319.69

 Gene Coulter made the motion to accept the January 2021 board meeting minutes as emailed. Chris seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

 Hal Boyer read the January 2021 action points. Three of the action points will be carried over to the March 2021 action points.

 Carol Morgan gave the ways and means report. The RADA fund raiser has so far brought in $240 for the Missouri State affiliate. This fund raiser will continue till the end of July 2021. There are still teddy bears and umbrellas for sale. We would like to thank Randy Carmack for posting the information about the RADA fund raiser on the affiliates Facebook page and the website.

 Chris Tisdal gave the membership report. Chris and a small group out of the membership committee will start working on the perspective members game night being held in May 2021.

 President Wright reported on the Cocovizzo case. Sarah, a senior in high school, wants to attend the transition Program at the Kansas school for the blind to acquire independent living skills and increase her confidence. She is being told by the north Kansas City school district that they will not cross the state line to send her to this program. Sarah and her mother Linda are currently working with Amy Coopman an attorney that the NFB of Missouri has retained to represent the family to reach a suitable outcome which will meet Sarah’s needs.

 Dennis Miller provided background on the James Shelton case. James reported that he has been told by the Department of Health and Human services that he can no longer be the main care giver for his mother who has serious health issues. James indicated they did not believe he could provide adequate care for his mother because he is blind. DHS is wanting to place his mother in a nursing home. James has acquired a local attorney and first contacted our national office requesting assistance. Are state affiliate was asked to reach out to him to see if we could help resolve the issue. James first reported that the hearing had been scheduled to occur in just a few days however it did not occur then. There has not been a hearing date set at this time. Dennis did get a meeting arranged for James and his mother with Independent Living because she qualified for services. Dennis is staying in contact with James to give as much help as he can. Since we first started talking with James, He has brought several other issues including blind pension and RSB. Since four of our leaders have had contact with James, we need to be sure to communicate with each other.

 Jenny Carmack gave a report on the Mission Beam program. A job announcement has been sent out for the transition coordinator position for the Mission Beam program. The committee is working on a handbook that will explain the program. In the future they intend to work on an announcement for mentors.

 Dennis Miller and Chris Tisdal gave a report on the 2021 Washington seminar. Chris said that 22 affiliate members participated in the seminar. Dennis stated that they were able to speak with 4 representatives who indicated that they would cosponsor the Access Technology Affordability Act. Representatives were willing to listen to information that was provided about the home medical and website accessibility proposals. Dennis said that the training that the NFB national office provided prior to the Washington seminar was very thorough. Both Dennis and Chris thanked the members who participated in the Washington seminar for all their hard work.

 Roger Chrome gave a report on the Jefferson City seminar. The members that participated in the seminar made some quality connections that resulted in two representatives moving the BRITE act into legislation. Roger thanked the affiliate members who participated in the Jefferson City seminar. President Wright said there would be a meeting concerning the Brite act at 9:00a.m. On Friday April 2nd.

 President Wright said there is a new transportation program to get people to COVID test sites for a low cost. If you are having problems getting your COVID vaccination there is a form that can be filled out to report the problem.

 Gene made a motion that a leadership seminar be done. Carol seconded the motion. The motion was approved. The seminar will be held in May of 2021. President Wright will set up a committee to plan the seminar.

 Gary Wunder sent a large amount of Missouri affiliate historical information to national office to be archived.

 Carol made a motion to have the June 26th state board meeting done virtually on zoom. Melissa seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

 Carol made a motion to adjourn. Jeff seconded the motion. The motion was approved. The meeting ended at 7:55p.m.

 President Wright brought the 59th annual Missouri State conventions general session to order on Saturday March 26th at 9:00a.m.

 Dennis Miller welcomed everyone to the Missouri affiliates 2021 virtual state convention. The hosts of the convention was the Show me chapter and the Old drum chapter. Dan Keller sang the national anthem. President Wright read the list of members who had passed away and asked for a moment of silence. Amy Wilson went over the rules for door prizes. Gene Fleeman went over the nominations from the nominating committee.

 Robin House thanked everyone on the scholarship committee for all their help. She introduced the scholarship recipients which are Nancy Aguilera who is a 1st year Ph.D. Student at University of Missouri in Saint Louis, Aida Talic who is a high school student planning to attend Saint Louis University, Kendra Dameron who is a high school student planning to attend University of central Missouri or Missouri State University, and Jordan Walker, a high school student, who plans to attend University of central Missouri.

 President Wright introduced our National representative Anil Lewis. As the executive director of the Jernigan Institute he wants to raise hopes and celebrate accomplishments. He thinks of Gary Wunder as a mentor and he said President Wright is a wonderful leader. NFB is

Implementing a training that will provide practices which are meant to discourage any social ills concerning diversity and this is thanks to President Riccobono’s leadership and guidance. Any information concerning the 2021 national convention can be found on the NFB website. There is a quarterly meeting held on zoom by the national office for new and perspective NFB members which provides essential information about NFB. Concerning legal issues NFB has to focus on the most crucial cases because this is all there budget will allow. Concerning legislation that NFB is working on it is important for individuals to communicate with legislators for action to occur.

 NFB has many programs which help a wide age range of children receive training in braille and Kane skills. Future workers can take advantage of the career mentoring program. Technology skills are important and NFB has a program which can help you build those skills. NFB Newsline has over 500 newspapers which allows you access to news taking place throughout a variety of news providers. Keeping track of current and past information regarding NFB can be done through the NFB blog, podcast, and our many publications.

 President Wright introduced Leslie Bowman the director of Wolfner Library. She said that Wolfner library had 8,000 patrons. Newsline can be accessed through Wolfner library. Throughout this year there will be webinars held concerning a range of topics and talks will be given by a few different authors. For children there will be summer reading programs and craft kits that can be mailed out. Concerning a book series the library is setting up duplication on demand now an entire book series will be put on one cartridge.

 President Wright introduced Keith Roderick and Jim Brinkman with Rehab Services for the Blind. Keith spoke about federal performance and restructuring. Federal restructuring enacted new performance standards such as updating paper work that clients must complete, video conferencing with staff, and updating online services with venders. Jim Brinkman spoke about older and newer positions being filled with RSB. The newer positions are working with employers to find out what skill set they are looking for concerning job opportunities for clients and they will assist councilors and clients in connecting with employers. They will provide training on how to fill out applications, research companies the individual wants to work for, and doing interviews. Training on how to work their way into the work environment.

 President Wright introduced Dr. Angela Fredrick who spoke about micro aggression. She grew up in the federation. Dr. Fredrick is a sociologist and holds an assistant professor position at Texas University El Paso. What is aggression? This is a comment or action that is subtly or often unintentionally hostel or demeaning to a member of a minority or a marginalized group. People commit micro aggressions frequently and do not realize the comments they made actually were harmful to a person and even actions that which were meant to be beneficial to someone can also result in harm. Micro aggressions happen in a pattern of instances. Some types of micro aggression are

Insults rapped in compliments, all individuals in a certain group will act the same, and people invading an individual’s personal space. Committing these micro aggressions of any type can cause harmful consequences.

 President Wright introduced Jo Grove moderator and Jeremiah Wells, Britney Berk, and Chris Tisdal for the panel on diversity and inclusion. Diversity refers to the identity of a person and inclusion refers to how included they feel. Everyone should be treated equally so a diversity and inclusion committee was created to insure equality is achieved. Gender is different then biological sex because gender refers to a individuals personal experience with gender and gender identity. Race refers to how we are identified and included. Our organization should have a welcoming presence and make everyone feel included and strive to encourage people to take part in activities.

 President Wright gave the presidential report which you can find at the bottom of this document.

 President Wright ended the general session for a lunch break at 12:15p.m.

 Vice President Melissa Kane resumed the general session at 1:00p.m.

 Vice President Kane introduced Carol Morgan to announce king and queen dollar amounts. Jefferson City $500, Columbia $320.38, Kansas City $200, and Lewis and Clark $50.

 Vice President Kane introduced Michael Hingson. Separate but equal, what does this mean? A blind individual can access a website but all the parts of that website may not be available for the user. For a website to be considered equal for everyone it must be completely accessible. The blind do not get included in the same dialogs as other groups and because of this NFB must seek inclusion through legislative measures.

 Vice President Kane introduced Katheryn Webster with the NFB survivors task force. NFB has taken a proactive and reactive steps to create a safe environment for members. The task force consists of three branches training and culture which over sees that training is provided and resources are available for individuals. Procedures and oversight which is working with Rainn and are obtaining feedback from NFB members to find out what is working or not working. Communications and engagement which guarantees transparency is executed and information is dispersed over many different platforms. Rainn will be doing training with the NFB national board and state boards then they will be providing training with a broader scope of members. The survivors task force will be sharing their scheduled meeting times by email and on the NFB website.

 Vice President Kane introduced Chris Parsons with the Colorado center. She is blind and attended public school in Missouri where she grew up. Chris road a bike and did other types of activities that children usually participate in. While attending college she realized that she had always done things with someone and that she had book smarts but not street smarts. While working at a college she attended a NFB national convention and decided that she would attend the Colorado center to receive training because she had lost belief in herself. In coming back to Missouri she fell back into her old ways. The skills she acquired during her training gave Chris the confidence to take a job teaching at the Colorado center. In obtaining the job and finding independence she knew she would not be going back to Missouri she would stay in Colorado where she found her independence. When Chris found out she was three months pregnant, she realized there was so much she did not know but through asking questions and figuring thins out on her own her child is now five. Now she is teaching seniors at the Colorado center and feels lucky to be helping people believe in themselves.

 Vice President Kane introduced Lynn Baillif who has been teaching a nutrition class for the Missouri affiliate sports and recreation program. She spoke about five nutritional myths. Eating sugar is not a big deal. This is not a true statement because sugar causes inflammation in the body and can lead to heart problem issues. Men should only have 9 teaspoons a day and women only six teaspoons. Exercise must be done at a gym for 30 minutes. This is a myth because exercise can be done anywhere and it can be divided into increments of 15 minutes. Doctors are well informed about nutrition. This is not a valid statement because they have usually only had one class about nutrition in medical school. Registered dietitians are the experts when it comes to the subject of nutrition. Fats are a bad thing to include in your diet. Animal fats are not healthy but you should include some healthy fats into your diet one example is extra virgin olive oil. Lynn does the health and wellness zoom calls on Monday nights.

 Vice President Kane introduced Robin House to speak about sports and recreation. On behalf of the sports and recreation committee and the NFB Missouri affiliate Lynn was given a cutting board with a message inscribed on it. Robin reported that the annual float trip had been canceled because of COVID. She thanked everyone who had participated in the one month fitness challenge and the prize of a $20 amazon gift card was awarded to Liam McCoy.

 Vice President Kane introduced Amy Wilson to speak about a new program that she is the director of through strive for you. SEED is the program and this stands for safety education empowerment and defense. Many different self defense techniques are provided in the program. Ongoing physical training and doing self-defense drills is essential in the program. During the instruction they aim to understand your mind set for your living conditions to further your self-defense techniques. The classes will include a warm up and cool down portion also children and family classes will be offered.

 President Wright introduced Chip Hailey and Paul Mims to speak about bringing blind Missourians into the next century. Chip and his colleague Paul have developed a program called TAVIM which stands for technology association for visually impaired Missourians and is for seniors 55 and older. Sometimes seniors are apprehensive to learn about or work with computers. In this program seniors will receive instruction on setting up and using their computer. Most seniors will seek the training for personal use and this program is being offered for free.

 President Wright introduced Gary Wunder to speak about the seniors program. The golden years may not be so golden when there is sight loss. Seniors are the most over looked group and all we offer them is hope. Unmet needs of seniors needs to be discovered but we do not want to duplicate other offered programs. The senior program committee is focusing on the isolation that may be felt because of their sight loss. We want to offer seniors tips and skills and to help provide encouragement and may be this will reduce feelings of isolation.

 President Wright introduced Sveta Ehlers to speak on Adversity. She lived in an orphanage in Armenia and attended the blind school. Throughout her childhood she was abused and did not receive much education from the blind school. She was adopted by an American family and her mother taught her how to read braille. Becoming a lawyer is the career she is wanting to pursue. Experiencing challenges can help you build confidence. Adversity can help to build determination and self-reliance. What does not kill you can make you stronger and trust in the Lord can help you through adverse times.

 President Wright introduced Jenny Carmack to speak about the Mission Beam program which is a transition program for individuals ages 14 to 21. They want to empower youth to acquire secondary education and employment. They want to provide individuals the ability to advocate for themselves in an employment, educational, and personal situations. They are currently seeking a director for the Mission Beam program and there is a job description available. The committee is wanting to hire a director and hopefully get the program launched in a few months. They do think the growth of the Mission Beam program will be continuous.

 President Wright introduced Dennis Miller to speak about achieving greater independence with Cochlear implants. Dennis has worn hearing aids for many years and throughout this time his ability to hear has decreased and consider in the steadily deterioration of his hearing ability Dennis became more isolated. His doctor told him nothing more could be done with regular hearing aids and Independence American suggested that he get Cochlear implants. Dennis was extremely skeptical about getting the implants because of all the bad things he had heard about the Cochlear implant. The fear of being totally Deafblind and the encouragement from his church family lead him to meet with the surgeon about getting the cochlear implants. He received the surgery with no pain. Electrodes are implanted in the brain by passing the damaged ear. It takes the brain a little bit of time to adapt but hearing things is clearer with the implants. Medicare payed for the first implant but he had to work with a few agencies to receive the second one. Getting the implants has given him confidence.

 President Wright asked Gary Wunder to read the Constitutional amendment regarding the NFB code of conduct and the amendments to the Affiliate Bylaws which can be found at the bottom of this document.

 President Wright ended the general session at 5:00p.m.

 Dennis welcomed everyone to the banquet at 7:00p.m.

 Willa Patterson gave the invocation.

 Carol Morgan announced the winner of the king and queen contest which was Jefferson City giving $500. Rita Lynch said thank you and they were happy to make the donation to the affiliate. Carol Morgan also announced the traveling trophy award. Mineral area 0, Springfield 0, Old Drum $1, Show me $18, Lewis and Clark $427.50, Jefferson City $1100, Columbia $2767.26, and the traveling trophy goes to Kansas City with $4024. Daniel Garcia said thank you to the Kansas City chapter and he said the traveling trophy wants to retire in KC.

 Dennis Miller recognized this year’s sponsors which were Vanda pharmaceutical and NanoPac.

 President Wright welcomed the Ivanhoe chapter and read the charter from the national NFB President Mark Riccobono. President Wright said congratulations and the President of the Ivanhoe chapter James White said thank you and they are proud to accept being a member of the affiliate.

 The tenBroek award was given to Linda Deweese and she said thank you for the award.

 Robin House presented the Jernigan award to Gene Fleeman and he said thank you for this award.

 President Wright presented the Gary L Wunder award to Jenny Carmack. She said thank you for the award it is an honor and she loves the work she does for NFB.

 Robin House presented the scholarship winners. $650 goes to Aida Talic. She plans to attend Saint Louis University and major in social work. $650 goes to Jordan Walker who plans to attend the University of Central Missouri Warrensburg and is majoring in psychology. $1000 goes to Nancy Aguilera. She is a 1st year Ph.D. student at the University of Missouri Saint Louis and is majoring in political science. $1250 goes to Kendra Damron. Kendra plans to attend either the university of Central Missouri Warrensburg or Missouri State University and is going to major in psychology.

 Dennis Miller introduced the national representative Anil Lewis to give the banquet speech. He loves the comfort that everyone in the affiliate has with one another and he is proud to be here. He said a special hello to Tom Stevens. President Wright you are doing a great job in building the affiliate the member ship shares the work and they enjoy it.

 He is working on reconciliation and drawing parallels after the George Floyd accident because it removed the rose colored glasses he did not even realize he was wearing.

 How are you living in the days after civil rights? Dr. Jernigan did a speech called the day after civil rights some of the points in this speech is in the beginning the blind were hungry and wanted to eat. Next, the blind wanted to work and they wanted to be considered equal. Achieving this would mean that confrontation would occur. A minority group gaining civil rights can lead to integration. People gaining self-esteem can move them beyond minority thinking.

 Feed someone first and then teach them how to fish and they will be able to eat for a life time. NFB fed him first and then started teaching him alternative skills. In one weekend he went blind from RP and he had to learn a different skill set. His first time encountering being blind was when he applied for a position and was denied an interview so he called back and acted as a different person and was granted an interview. The job he acquired he had the skill set for but was only paid just above minimum wage.

 NFB has taught him a skill set that has helped him through his life.

 We need to change the heart and mind of society and move ourselves away from a minority mentality. Legislation does not create understanding and confrontation does not cause respect. NFB allows people the opportunity to develop skills to gain power to bring about change.

 People in today’s society are still unaware of the things that blind individuals can do. There have been instances in his life where he has used humor to get people to realize that he can do things that others do. Anil said that he was full of hope and he loves the NFB so lets go build the federation.

After the banquet speech, Jeff Giffen, our Missouri PAC Chair, asked if anyone present would be interested in joining the PAC Plan or increasing their PAC which goes to the national treasury.

Then Jeff led the affiliate into a time of accepting pledges for our state affiliate to offset our not being able to hold our annual auction at the end of the banquet. After a number of pledges had been made and the stream of pledges ceased, Mark Harris pledged to match the total of pledges made to the affiliate. He made this donation in loving memory of his father who passed away earlier in the year.

 On Sunday afternoon, President Wright brought the business meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

 President Wright said thank for the banquet and the speech. President Wright introduced Gene Fleeman to read the audit report for 2020. Jenny Carmack made a motion to approved the report as read. Dacia Cole seconded the motion. The motion was approved. President Wright said thank you to the audit committee and Carol Coulter for all their hard work. The audit report can be found at the bottom of this document.

 Carol Coulter read the annual treasurers report for 2020. Melissa Kane made the motion to except the report as read. Jenny Carmack seconded the motion. The motion was approved. The annual treasurers report can be found at the bottom of this document.

 President Wright introduced Gary Wunder to read resolutions and amendments. Gary read the amendment which was the code of conduct. Gary said the committee says do pass. Gene Coulter seconded. The amendment was approved. Gary read the second amendment about life time membership. Gary said the committee do pass. Jeff Giffen seconded. The amendment was approved. Gary read amendment 3 which had to do with division deadlines, reports, and having either the state President or the state treasurer being on the account. Gary said committee do pass. Melissa Kane seconded. The amendment was approved. Gary read the bylaw securing of chapter and division record. Gary said committee do pass. Gene coulter seconded. The amendment was approved. Gary said thank you to the resolution committee. You can find the amendments at the bottom of this document.

 President Wright announced that we were ready for elections. She introduced Gene Fleeman to read the nominating committees recommendations for Officers and board members positions. The recommendations were as follows Officers Shelia Wright for President Melissa Kane 1st Vice President Jenny Carmack 2nd Vice President Becky Boyer Recording Secretary Daniel Garcia Corresponding Secretary Carol Coulter Treasurer. Board members recommended Gene Coulter Dacia Cole Amy Wilson Jeff Giffen Robin House Chris Tisdal and Roger Chrome.

 Melissa Kane said Shelia Wright was nominated for President. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Gene Fleeman made a motion that nominations cease cand Shelia be voted in by acclamation. Carol Coulter seconded. The motion was approved. President Wright said that Melissa Kane was nominated for the position of 1st Vice President. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Chris made the motion to vote Melissa in by acclimation. Carol Coulter second. The motion was approved. President Wright said that Jenny Carmack had been nominated for the 2nd Vice President position. She asked 3 times for nominations from the floor. Dacia Cole made the motion to vote her in by acclimation. Carol seconded. The motion was approved. President Wright said that Carol Coulter had been nominated for the Treasurers position. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Willa Patterson made a motion to vote her in by acclimation. Brent Ford second. The motion was approved. President Wright said that Becky Boyer had been nominated for the Recording Secretary position. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Cory McMahon made a motion that nominations cease and she be voted in by acclimation. Dennis Miller seconded. The motion was approved. President Wright said that Daniel Garcia was nominated fro the Corresponding Secretary position. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Gary Wunder made a motion that nominations cease and he be voted in by acclimation. Gary Horchem second. The motion was approved. President Wright said that Gene Coulter was nominated for a board position. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Gary Horchem made a motion nominations cease and he be voted in by acclimation. Dacia Cole second. The motion was approved. Gene Coulter’s position is a 2 year position. President Wright said that Amy Wilson had been nominated for a board position. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Ruby Polk made the motion that nominations cease and she be voted in by acclimation. Carol Coulter second. The motion was approved. Amy Wilson’s position is a 2 year position. President Wright said that Dacia Cole was nominated for a board position. She asked for nominations from the floor and Dennis Miller nominated Randy Carmack and Gary Horchem nominated Carol McGhee. Carol Coulter made a motion that nominations cease. The vote was then done electronically. Randy Carmack won the board position. President Wright said that Roger Chrome had been nominated for a board position. She asked for nominations from the floor. Gary Horchem nominated Carolyn McGhee and Jeff Giffen nominated Dennis Miller. Carol Coulter made the motion that nominations cease. The vote was then done electronically and Dennis Miller got the position as board member. President Wright said that Jeff Giffen had been nominated for a board position. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Gary Wunder made a motion that nominations cease and he be voted in by acclimation. Carol Coulter second. The motion was approved. President Wright said that Robin House had been nominated for a board position. She asked for nominations from the floor. Gary Horchem nominated Carolyn McGhee. Carol Coulter made the motion that nominations cease. A electronic vote was done. Robin House got the board position. President Wright said that Chris Tisdal was nominated for a board position. She asked for nominations from the floor. Gary Horchem nominated Carolyn McGhee. Willa Patterson moved nominations cease. Rita Linch second. Electronic vote took place. Chris tisdal got the board position.

 Vice President Kane said that President Wright had been nominated for delegate for national convention. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Willa Patterson moved that nominations cease and she be voted in by acclimation. Dacia Cole seconded. The motion was approved. President Wright said that Vice President Melissa Kane was nominated for alternate delegate. She asked for nominations from the floor 3 times. Dacia cole moved that nominations cease and she be voted in by acclimation. Brent Ford second. The motion was approved.

 President Wright introduced Luann Blake to speak about accessible voting. Prior to 2000 a blind person who wanted to vote would have to tell their choices to someone who would mark the ballot for them. In 2000 the Help America Vote Act was passed. This meant that voting machines should be available for people with any kind of disability for voting purposes. HAVA only covered In person voting for federal elections. The elections of 2020 changed how we had to think about voting because of the Covid Pandemic. A small number of states provided accessible absentee voting. There is still progress to be made but now there is only 25 states that do not provide accessible absentee voting. Missouri is one of the states that does not provide accessible absentee voting. States are apprehensive to provide accessible absentee voting for the fear of lack of security but if a person can not vote independently then there is a lack of security. State and national leaders can refer you to sources with this issue.

 President Wright introduced Vice President Kane to speak about accessible voting in Missouri. The state affiliate has been working for 7 years to try and get a law passed for accessible absentee voting. There is also a issue with in person accessible voting in some districts in Missouri. The secretary of state is the one who is dismissive of this issue. If you have complaints about accessible voting at a poling place then you can file a on line complaint with ADA.GOV.

 President Wright asked Anil Lewis to say a few words about his convention experience. He said that it was a educational and inspirational and fun filled 4 days. It was a well executed convention. President Wright is providing wonderful leadership and has a great team. Lets continue to celebrate our accomplishments and go build the federation.

 President Wright asked for any other old business and there was none so she then asked for any new business.

 Gene Coulter moved that prices should remain the same for registration and banquet for the 2022 convention. Dacia Cole second the motion. The motion was approved.

 Carol Coulter made a motion to give $200 for the Sun fund, $500 for national Bell program, $1000 for Tenbroek, $1000 for Jernigan, and $1000 for White Kane fund. Gene Coulter seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

 Dacia Cole made a motion to give $2500 for the state scholarship program. Gene Coulter seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

 Gary Wunder made a motion that a commendation be done for the Show me chapter and the old drum chapter. Chris Tisdal seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

 Gary Wunder made a motion for a commendation being done for President Wright for the convention. Melissa Kane seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

 Dennis Miller made a motion for a commendation for Randy Carmack’s hard work behind the scenes for convention. Melissa Kane seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

 President Wright said congratulations to the Division Presidents and the scholarship winners.

 President Wright said she welcomes feed back that will effect future conventions.

 Jeff made a motion to adjourn. Melissa Kane seconded the motion. The motion was approved. The meeting ended at 5:12p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Becky Boyer

Recording Secretary

March 2021 Action points.

* President Wright will select members for a committee to plan the May leadership seminar.
* Carol Coulter will send checks to the NFB national office for the following amounts $200 Sun fund $500 Bell program $1000 tenBroek $1000 Jernigan and $1000 white Kane.
* Carol Coulter will transfer $2500 into the state scholarship fund.
* Daniel Garcia will send the letter out to the chapters so they can send it out to schools in there are who are teaching blind students in person or virtually.
* Carol Coulter will give the pay pal information to the audit committee.
* Becky Boyer will send out Hal’s email to the membership list.

2021 Annual Presidential Report

March 27, 2021

At the end of each calendar year, wordsmiths and language experts select the word of the year. It was no surprise that pandemic and unprecedented were two of the top considerationsfor 2020. In the end, dictionary.com chose pandemic as the clear winner. While the pandemic demanded much of society’s attention and resulted in disruptions and restrictions, I want to look back over the past year and focus on the positive lessons and accomplishments of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri. Since our last state convention, let’s draw on these to launch us into a new year of love, hope, and determination as we move forward into the coming year.

As you will recall the first change brought about by the pandemic was that our annual state convention was delayed and since we could not hold an in person convention, we immediately began exploring the virtual platform that would become a part of our everyday life.

Therefore, I delivered my last presidential report about nine months ago as we gathered for our first virtual annual state convention ever. By that time, we had some experience hosting many small discussions and meetings via Zoom, which felt much different from what we were facing. Our hard work and the butterflies that often come with trying new things, paid off. We had a very successful state convention for which we couldall be proud. Many of our Federation brothers and sisters, from across the country, were able to join us for the convention. Both we in Missouri and other state affiliate leaders had an opportunity to learn what worked well and what changes might work better. Who knew then that we would be holding our second virtual state convention? We believe we will use our virtual tools even better, and we are already off to what I believe will be an outstanding convention. Thank you to all our members that help this to happen.

We have developed skills and a way that we can reach prospective members, include members that cannot attend live events, and better serve blind Missourians that do not live near other blind people. It will not take the place of face-to-face interaction but will expand and enhance what we can do.

Even while our state convention was getting under way last year,our Missouri Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning (BELL) Academy  Coordinators, Jenny Carmack and Debbie Wunder, were engaged with our Missouri families participating in the first of three summer sessions of our BELL Academy in Home Edition. Missouri had seven students participating throughout the summer with their families support. This was our first contact with four of these families. Thank you Jenny and Debbie for your work and to our National Program that provided the framework.

July brought another first; our first virtual National Convention. With the convention, we learned about new tools and ideas that we could use to carryout the work of the National Federation of the Blind and we are using a few of these tools and ideas to help us carry out this year’s state convention. Leave it to the National Federation of the Blind to find viable solutions to help us carry out the work of the Federation. Our virtual National Convention allowed many people to attend their first NFB Convention. Both members and nonmembers tuned in to take part in the convention and Missouri had a record number of 120 in attendance.

During fall of 2019, we received notice from the Commerce Trust Company that the National Federation of the Blind St. Louis Chapter had been named as a beneficiary by Virginia Schenk in her Living Trust. As the St. Louis Chapter has been dissolved, The National Federation of the Blind of Missouri was the appropriate recipient. Chris Tisdal in his capacity as President of our Lewis and Clark Chapter, received the first correspondence concerning the Schenk Living Trust and worked with the state affiliate to connect us with the financial institution handling the estate.    Unfortunately none of us who remain had the privilege of knowing Virginia Schenk. What we do know is that she had a huge impact in her community both in her lifetime and beyond. Based on the time line that the Living Trust was established, it is probably that she made her selection of the National Federation of the Blind, St. Louis Chapter, from having contact with our long time member, John Dower. John Dower was an insurance salesman in St. Louis and President of the St. Louis Chapter. He would close his business every Friday to get out into the community to sell candy and pass out cards and literature on behalf of the Federation. As a result, the National Federation of the Blind has received a number of bequest from the contacts he made. In late summer, the National Federation of the Blind received $427,014. Thank you Virginia Schenk for making room for the National Federation of the Blind in your heart. Thank you John Dower for what we are reasonably sure of was this gift resulting from your hard work. Your legacy lives on because you not only worked on our behalf but you shared ourwork and our mission with whomever you came in contact.

In keeping with NFB policy that affiliates will share at least fifty percent of bequests with our national organization, we immediately shared $214,000.00 with our national organization. All of us benefit greatly from our national programs, our national literature, our branding, etc. Every dollar that we spend on a national level goes further than those we as an affiliate spend. Our collective effort includes efforts to fund our movement and it is our collective movement that gives us the strength that we have. We are proud to have been able to share this gift with our national organization.

I want to say one more thing about the Virginia Schenk Trust and the added benefits her gift gives us in funding our state affiliate. Having these available funds, especially more than we have had in a very long time, can be a blessing or a curse. It will be a blessing if we use it to build the Federation by using it to develop programs that teach blind people that it is respectable to be blind, to help blind people to learn skills, build dreams, and inspire them to live the life they want. To help us educate those in our communities that have low expectations of us.

It is a curse if we take the money we have and determine we are going to save it for a rainy day. If we become complacent and feel like we don’t really need to do any fundraising. If we take either of these positions, I assure you, the rainy day will come soon.  The money will dwindle more quickly than you ever imagined. The members will forget how to raise money. Our communities will forget who we are because they no longer see us out in the public working to fund our programs.    We’ve seen this happen within our own affiliate before and we’ve seen it happen elsewhere. Let’s be sure not to fall into the trap of complacency. Let’s turn our blessing into opportunities to reach blind people of all ages and to help them understand they can live the life they want!

We were all very excited when the new STEM To You Program was announced and immediately applied to be one of the 15 states to be selected to host this event. We were selected and had started making plans to hold the event in Jefferson City this past fall. Like everything else this became a virtual program and much of the work was planned by our national colleagues.  Jenny Carmack volunteered to help teach and was selected to do so in both sessions that were offered. In addition, we were proud to have seventeen Missourians participate. We were familiar with some of the students but again we were able to make contact with several families for the first time.

For over 30 years, the NFB of Missouri has received some funds from the National Federation of the Blind Service Foundation. In December, 2019, the thrift store and pick-up service in Kansas City was closed and the work of the NFB Service Foundation began winding down. For the first eight months of 2020 we continued receiving distributions from the Service Foundation. In September, we were notified that we were eligible for a final distribution in the amount of $50,000.00 but that we needed to identify how we were going to use the money and that it should not go to regular operating expenses or projects we were already doing. In October at the direction of the affiliate board, a special committee was appointed to accept proposals and make recommendations to the board. The committee was given 30 days to do their work. The committee was chaired by Becky Boyer; others that served were, Jenny Carmack, Tezzie Wells, Cory McMahon, Daniel Garcia, and Dennis Miller. This committee worked diligently and recommended that we set aside $40,000 to begin a transition program for students ages 14-21 and $10,000 to start a program to assist newly blinded seniors in adjusting to blindness.Committee members were concerned that the proposal that was submitted requested $15, 000 and decided to appeal to the board to set aside an additional $5,000 to help get this program off the ground. There were three other proposals submitted that the committee thought would be worthwhile projects. The first was at the request of the Sports and Recreation Committee for a Health and Wellness program with emphasis on nutrition.  Thebenefit of this program is that it could begin immediately as an instructor and curriculum had already been planned and a lot of the instruction could be done virtually. The second proposal of these proposals came from our Scholarship Committee who would like for us to take our top scholarship winner to the national convention to determine if this helped them to become more connected with the Federation. The initial proposal was for funding for three years. The third proposal was one that really could not be acted upon at this time and should be reconsidered at a later time. The NFB Board accepted the recommendations of the committee including setting aside the additional funding. Thank you to those that submitted proposals and to those who served on the special committee. Planning committees were appointed for the transition program and for the senior programand have begun their work.

Much work has already been done on the transition program for ages 14-21. The new program will be known as Mission BEAM (Blindness, Empowerment, Advocacy, and Mentoring). You will hear more about this program from Jenny Carmack, chair, later in the convention. Gary Wunder is chairing the Senior Blind Program.

Washington Seminar brought new challenges as we needed to move it to a virtual platform. The beauty of it being virtual is that we had at least 20 members participating in this event and many of them were participating in their first Washington Seminar. We were able to have constituents from every congressional district which also was a first and a delight to members of congress. You have already heard about the legislative priorities this morning so I will not go over those again; however, we made the most progress on the Access Technology Affordability Act. Both Senator Blunt and Representative Luetkemeyer has cosponsored the ATAA. Just yesterday afternoon, some of us finally had an opportunity to meet with Representative Cleaver. We were delighted that at the beginning of the meeting we were assured that the congressman had signed on to the Access Technology Affordability Act earlier this week. We should be certain to express our thanks to these members and to follow-up with the rest to encourage them to do likewise. Remember Washington Seminar is the beginning of our legislative work on the national level. We’ve laid the groundwork but the outcome will be based on the work we do the rest of the year.

I’d like to turn to our Jefferson City Seminar and our legislative concerns on the state level. Once we realized that we really did need to go virtual with our legislative work on the state level, I think we all started out thinking it was going to be a difficult year; however, we felt it was important for us to show a presence and bring our concerns to those we could meet with. We extended our seminar dates from two days to five to allow for scheduling meetings and in some cases the appointments stretched out over a two week period. While we did not accomplish meeting with someone in every office, we had some really great meetings with representatives and senators. We found them to be more relaxed, in less of a hurry, and more likely to ask questions. I believe we established the beginnings of a good relationship with a number of new representatives.

One of our goals this year, was to introduce the BRITE Act which deals with blind students’ rights to learn Braille, Kane travel, technology and a quality education.

Early on in the seminar, we had two representatives that agreed to submit the model bill we presented to legislative research and get the bill filed. This was despite the fact that the deadline for filing a bill was drawing near. Everyone realized that we did not have much time but the commitments were sincere. Today there are two bills which have been filed and both have been referred to the Elementary and Secondary Education Committee in the House. We're waiting now for a hearing to be scheduled on these bills which are identical and closely follows the model language.   Since we are running behind, I will not go into the other issues but I would definitely consider our efforts to be successful in many ways and we are not done yet.

We have acquired the legal services of Amy Coopman, to help Sarah Coccovizzo. Sarah is a senior in high school and she and her parents has requested to attend a one year transition program at the Kansas School for the Blind. One of the emphasis in the transition program outlined in the federal regulations includes community involvement.

Sarah wants to participate in the Kansas School’s program because it is a one year program near the community resources where she plans to live, attend college, and work. She probably could go to the Missouri School for the Blind across the state but it is a two year program and does not give her the benefit of tapping into community resources she will be able to use. This plan has been discussed for about a year but only recently did the school district rule this out saying they cannot cross the stateline. This is despite the fact that it is not at all unusual for school districts in the Kansas City metropolitan area to enroll their students in programs at the Kansas School for the Blind. Ms. Coopman will assist Sarah and her parents in navigating the school district complaint process to ensure that Sarah’s needs are addressed properly and to determine next steps.

We were contacted by James Shelton who lives in Kirksville. James explained that he has been caring for his mother for several years because her health is declining and she wants to stay in her own home. Recently, James’ mother fell and he reported that a social worker has indicated that he cannot provide his mother with the care that is needed because he is blind. He indicated that there was going to be a hearing and asked for help. Dennis Miller agreed to assess the situation and has been working with James directly as he is familiar with all the players and resources there in Kirksville. Since the initial contact, James has brought up several other areas in which he has been denied services or roadblocks. He has reached out to several affiliate leaders. We will assess the situation for each area and advise him accordingly.

Finally, I want to talk a little bit about Daniel Garcia in his capacity as Chairman of our Public Relations Committee. You all see Daniel work hard in our state affiliate and on the chapter level. He is bright and very creative. He has excellent communication skills and chairs our Public RelationsCommittee. When we think about Public relations, we may think about getting out a press release about something we are doingor contacting the newspaper or TV station to get a story. Maybe coming up with a new brochure or advertisement. All good ideas but most can be expensive. Open of the things Daniel does is particularly creative as far as I am concern and is encouragement to me and to at least one of our young members in Kansas City and it is absolutely free. Thinking outside the box. I share this to encourage us all to recognize the opportunities there are out there to tell our story to influence attitudes, and to get the NFB of Missouri’s name out into our communities.

Daniel uses NFB Newsline everyday to read the paper and he reads the Opinion Section. On several occasions he has written a letter expressing his opinion on issues related to blindness andhas used this as an opportunity to promote the work we in the NFB are doing. I think I started paying more attention to this in November. Daniel saw an invitation to the column’s readers to send in letters on what they are Thankful for. Daniel prepared his letter and sent it off to the paper for consideration. At the Kansas City Chapter meeting in November, he told the chapter about the recent invitation and that he had sent in his letter which indicated he was thankful for the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri. He went on to encourage our chapter members to send in their letters of thanks for the NFB. He said that maybe if the editor got several letters from people who are thankful for the organization, maybe they would select one to be included in the paper.

Tarra Coccovizzo, one of our NFB Kane Drivers and a member of the Kansas City Chapter, took the challenge and wrote and submitted her letter about why she was thankful for the National Federation of the Blind. I don’t know how many people took the challenge Daniel extended that day, but just as Daniel hoped, the strategy worked. Congratulations to Tarra for accepting the challenge and getting published. Thank you Daniel for thinking outside the box and providing us an example of how to think outside the box to promote the National Federation of the Blind.

Just last week, there was another article in the opinion section.And it was about some state legislators who wanted to eliminate the internet divide and increase infrastructure that would bring internet service to rural and less populated areas of the state.Daniel wasted no time at submitting another letter about the existence of a second internet divide. Divide.

Although they didn't use his play on words, his letter was publish and it was an excellent letter about the inaccessible issues revolving around webpages and apps.

There are all kinds of ways that we as members can educate the public and further our efforts as an organization. Thank you Daniel for demonstrating this to us. There are all kinds of platforms we can use to make the work of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri known throughout Missouri. We all have different strengths and talents, feel free to share your successes. You never know who will inspire, teach, or reach.

I am very pleased that almost one-fourth of our members are on one or more committees and are have specific assignments.  The scope of our committee work is greater than it has ever been.

We are limited only by the number of hands we have to carry out our programs. If you are not serving in some special way in our affiliate and want to get more involved in what we do, please reach out and let me know where you would like to serve. We need your help as we continue to build the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri.

As I wrote this report, I considered what would be the word of the year within the National Federation of the Blind. I don’t know that I settled on one specific word but what seemed to resonate with me were words like resilient, commitment, and determination

National Federation of the Blind of Missouri

Financial Audit Report as of March 13, 2021

Date:  March 13, 2021

Reporting Period: The reporting period is for the calendar year January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

An internal audit of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri was conducted on Saturday, March 13th, 2021, in Columbia, MO by the Audit committee consisting of Gene Fleeman Chair, Lawrence Luck, Chris Griggs andMelissa Kane. Shelia Wright, NFBMO President andCarol Coulter – Treasurer, were in attendance to answer questions and provide additional information as needed.

Documents available for review included bank statements, check registers, treasurer’s reports, reimbursement vouchers, board minutes, a bonding certificate, and the NFB of MO constitution.

As of the date of the audit, the Old Drum & Mineral Area Chapters were not in compliance or had only submitted incomplete information concerning their membership rosters, dues, and Chapter financial reports.

The financial records belonging to the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri were examined. The audit revealed the following:

Beginning total balance January 1, 2020: $72,606.78 with an unrestricted balance of $46,821.29

Ending total balance December 31, 2020: $326,922.62 with an unrestricted Balance of $225,127.58.

All records were complete, well organized, easily understood, and in compliance with the constitution and financial policies of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri.

A Certificate of Bonding and evidence of renewal was present.

All treasurer's reports and random reimbursement vouchers were reviewed by the Audit Committee. Testing of treasurer's Reports showed they reconciled with periodic statements from financial institutions holding funds belonging to the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri.

All disbursements of funds which were randomly selected and examined have been authorized appropriately by the President or Vice-President of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri and in compliance with established policy.

All deposits examined were made in a timely manner.

The annual end of the year report was tied to the quarterly reports, and no exceptions were found.

AUDIT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. It is recommended by the audit committee that the policy requiring Chapter Dues, Rosters, and Financial Reports be submitted to the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri Treasurer no later than February 1stof each year be reiterated to all Chapters.

2. Reminder be made to everyone that no member of a Chapter that is delinquent in dues at the time of State Convention can vote, hold office, or be on a committee.

3. Considering the State reimbursement rate for mileage changes frequently, it is everyone’s responsibility to know and apply the current rate.

Respectfully submitted,

Gene Fleeman, Chair

National Federation of the Blind of Missouri Audit Committee

National Federation of the Blind

Of Missouri

Annual Treasurer’s Report

January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020

Checking account balance as of Jan. 1, 2020                                13,937.55

Deposits

National Thrift Store grant ……………………………………..   56,000.00

Convention Receipts ………………………...............................    2,278.00

Convention exhibit tables………………………………………         285.00

Donations ……………………………………………………….    100.00

Dues from all sources ……………………………………………   880.00

BELL Academydonations……………………………………….   150.00

Donations to Scholarship fund 2020……………………………  1,050.00

Lewis and Clark for Rittgers Fund………………………………         50.00

Dissolution of Merchants Division……………………………..   891.00

Student Division money…………………………………………         45.00

Guide dog Divisionmoney………………………………………    123.00

King and Queen fund raiser ……………………………………..   4,022.76

Money from Board Meeting lunches……………………………   116.00

Cruise raffle……………………………………………………..  2,026.73

Umbrella sales…………………………………………………..        30.00

Teddy bear sales ………………………………………………….      20.00

Transfer from Jefferson City area money market……………….    3,000.00

Jefferson City Seminar ……………………………………………     40.00

Kansas City walk-a-thon…………………………………………. 3,124.00

Amazon Smiles ……………………………………………………    101.78

NRO Campground refund……………………………………….. .    780.00

In memory of Marcella Johnson………………………………….       50.00

Bankcard services refund…………………………………………      23.50

Washington DC refunds……………………………………………    250.00

Bequest from Virginia Schenk ………………………………      427,014.00

Total Deposits . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .         502,450.77

Disbursements

PAC to National ………………………………………………      3,250.00

Audit committee  . . . . . . . . . . . . .  . . . .  . . . . . . . . . . . .  . . . . . . . .    339.70

Blind Missourian  . . . . .. . . . … . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 1,461.12

Thumb drives for Blind Missourian…………………………….         155.97

Board meetings………………………………………………….   2,082.47

Bonding of Treasurer and President …………………………….   300.00

2020 State Convention Expenses……………………………….         11.59

2020 state convention refunds………………………..................   1,213.00

Governmental Affairs…………………………………………..   312.79

Grant to National treasury……………………………………… 5,300.00

Public Relations…………………………………………………    125.00

Jefferson City seminar ………………………………………….   1,257.29

Insurance ……………………………………………………….. 1,414.00

Ways and means

    Raffle tickets for cruise………………………………………         63.36

    Purchase of cruise……………………………………………    1,691.14

    Cruise winner cash portion…………………………………..    1,300.00

Scholarship expenses……………………………………………. 4,500.00

Convention awards………………………………………………     96.80

Office Supplies…………………………………………………..    204.96

National’s portion of the Patricia Morrow bequest ………………  1,000.00

Transfer to Rittgers Fund, Lewis and Clark donation ……………      50.00

Transfer to Rittgers, donation of 2 people’s convention refunds         164.00

Washington DC Seminar………………………………………..   3,955.34

Kane Drivers lunch………………………………………………        96.22

National BELL- Home Edition………………………………….     500.00

All PayPal fees…………………………………………………...      53.26

Float trip …………………………………………………………     807.30

National’s half of the Virginia Schenk bequest………. ……..   214,000.00

Transfer to state money market account ……………………..    213,014.00

Total Disbursements . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 458,719.31

Checking account balance as of Dec. 31, 2020 . . . . . . . . . . . . . 57,669.01

Money Market Account

Balance on Jan. 1, 2020 . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .     36,883.74

Deposits

Interest for 2020…………………………………………….               4.48

Transferred from checking Virginia Schenk bequest……….       213,014.00

Total deposits ……………………………………………….       213,018.48

Disbursements

Purchased an 8 monthCD……………………………………     200,000.00

Total disbursements . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .  200,000.00

Balance as of Dec. 31, 2020…………………………………   49,902.22

Money Market Account (Kansas City area)

Balance on Jan. 1, 2020……………………………………….      1,751.02

Deposits

Interest for 2020………………………………………………          0.12

Total deposits …………………………………………………         0.12

Disbursements

Total Disbursements ………………………………………….         0.00

Balance as of Dec. 31, 2020………………………………….       1,751.14

Money Market Account (Jefferson City area)

Balance on Jan. 1, 2020……………………………………      14,775.97

Deposits

Interest for 2020……………………………………………..              1.20

Total deposits ………………………………………………..            1.20

Disbursements

Transfer to checking for cruise raffle…………………………..    3,000.00

Total disbursements ……………………………………………    3,000.00

Balance as of Dec. 31, 2020…………………………………   11,777.17

Rittgers Fund Money Market Account

Balance on Jan. 1, 2020……………………………………..   5,258.50

Deposits

Interest for 2020……………………………………………..          0.58

Donations

  Kansas City chapter ……………………………………….       100.00

  Columbia chapter  ……………………………………………    100.00

  Jefferson City Chapter ……………………………………….   100.00

  Show-Me Chapter……………………………………………     50.00

  Transfer from checking for Lewis and Clark Chapter………        50.00

  Transfer from checking, two individuals donated their

     State convention refunds…………………………………        164.00

Total deposits . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .  . . . . . . . . . .   564.58

Disbursement

Total disbursements ………………………………………….         0.00

Balance as of Dec. 31, 2020…………………………………    5,823.08

Certificate of Deposit purchased on September 18, 2020

  With a maturity date of May 19, 2021………………….      200,000.00

Total in checking, Money Markets and CD’s…………….        326,922.62

Non-restricted funds . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .  . . . .                   225,127.58

Restricted Funds

  Kansas City area ………………………………………….       1,751.14

  Jefferson City area ………………………………………..      11,777.17

 Rittgers Fund ………………………………………………    5,823.08

  Lewis and Clark area………………………………………       5,000.00

  Student Division……………………………………………           85.00

  Dog Guide Division………………………………………..         708.65

  Scholarship fund……………………………………………     3,050.00

  Funds to send scholarship winners for the next 3 years

     To national convention………………………………….        3,750.00

  BELL 2021…………………………………………………      8,150.00

  Senior Blind Program………………………………………    15,000.00

  Sports and Recreation Program…………………………….      2,500.00

  Rittgers Fund……………………………………………….      4,200.00

  Mission BEAM Program……………………………………   40,000.00

Total Restricted funds ………………………………………   101,795.04

Respectfully submitted

Carol Coulter Treasurer

2021 Constitutional Amendments

Amendment 1:

Add a new Article:

Article XIV

Code of Conduct

The National Federation of the Blind of Missouri shall abide by the National Federation of the Blind Code of Conduct. All individuals within the organization, including all attendees at NFB-sponsored events, are expected to refrain from the unwelcome and harmful misconduct outlined in the Code, including but not limited to discrimination, abuse, misuse of power, sexual misconduct, conflict of interest, fraud, and other forms of misconduct.

Second Amendment

Regarding Lifetime Membership

Amend Article X to remove sentence about Lifetime membership in Section B.

New Language:

Section B, Payment: In accordance with Article IV of the Constitution,

Local chapters shall pay the state dues of their members. Members who are not affiliated with the local chapters shall pay their dues before or during the time of the annual convention. No person may vote who is delinquent in the payment of his or her dues.

Old Language:

Section B, Payment: In accordance with Article IV of the Constitution,

Local chapters shall pay the state dues of their members. Members who are not affiliated with the local chapters shall pay their dues before or during the time of the annual convention. A lifetime membership may be secured for a fee of one hundred dollars ($100). No person may vote who is delinquent in the payment of his or her dues.

Third Amendment:

The purpose of this amendment is three-fold. First, making the deadlines for chapters and divisions the same for dues and reports. Second, adding provision forbidding chapters and divisions from being 501c3. Third, providing that divisions have either State President or Treasure be a signer on their bank account.

New Language:

Article IV

Local Chapters and Divisions.

Section B, Divisions:

Any organized group of special interests wishing to become a division of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri may form a special interest group and after meeting regularly for two years may apply to become a division by applying for a charter by submitting to the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri a copy of its constitution and a list of the names and addresses of its members and elected officers. When the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri either in convention assembled or by action of its Board of Directors shall have approved the application, it shall issue to the division a Certificate of Charter. \*Annually, on or before February1, each division shall provide to the Recording Secretary and to the Treasurer of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri, a current list of its members and their addresses On or before February 1 of each year, and each division shall forward to the State Treasurer a detailed financial report of its activities for the preceding fiscal year.\* The fiscal year of this organization shall be the calendar year. As new members enter a division, their names and addresses shall be sent, without delay, to the Recording Secretary of the state organization. The President of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri shall be an ex-officio member of each division. In the event of the dissolution of a division, or if (for whatever reason) a division ceases to be a part of this organization, its assets shall become the property of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri. Divisions shall not pay affiliate dues for their members, except in the case where a person has not already had dues paid by themselves or a local chapter. In such a case dues must be paid at our annual state convention and immediately forwarded to the State Affiliate Treasurer. The affiliate shall have the power to dissolve any division that is not regularly meeting or fails to meet at any state convention. Any Division may establish their own bank account provided that either the State Affiliate Treasurer or President is an authorized signer.

Section C Division and Chapter Status

No chapter, division, or group of the affiliate shall either seek, apply for, or receive Internal Revenue Service 501c3 status without prior approval of the board of directors of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri and the President of the National Federation of the Blind.

Old Language:

Article IV

Local Chapters and Divisions.

Section A

Section B, Divisions:

Any organized group of special interests wishing to become a division of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri may form a special interest group and after meeting regularly for two years may apply to become a division by applying for a charter by submitting to the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri a copy of its constitution and a list of the names and addresses of its members and elected officers. When the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri either in convention assembled or by action of its Board of Directors shall have approved the application, it shall issue to the division a Certificate of Charter. Annually, within fifteen days of the end of the State Affiliate Convention, each division shall provide to the Recording Secretary and to the Treasurer of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri, a current list of its members and their addresses. On or before February 1 of each year, each division shall forward to the State Treasurer a detailed financial report of its activities for the preceding fiscal year. The fiscal year of this organization shall be the calendar year. As new members enter a division, their names and addresses shall be sent, without delay, to the Recording Secretary of the state organization. The President of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri shall be an ex-officio member of each division. In the event of the dissolution of a division, or if (for whatever reason) a division ceases to be a part of this organization, its assets shall become the property of the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri. Divisions shall not pay affiliate dues for their members, except in the case where a person has not already had dues paid by themselves or a local chapter. In such a case dues must be paid at our annual state convention and immediately forwarded to the State Affiliate Treasurer. The affiliate shall have the power to dissolve any division that is not regularly meeting or fails to meet at any state convention.

Resolution 2021-01

A RESOLUTION REGARDING ACCESSIBLE VOTING.

WHEREAS, the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) was passed in 2002 in part to ensure blind people would be provided an accessible, private, and independent method of voting in all federal elections; and

WHEREAS, this organization has attempted ever since to extend the provisions of HAVA to state and local elections through legislation and interaction with the Missouri Secretary of State’s office; and

WHEREAS, repeated legislative efforts have been unsuccessful and the Secretary of State’s office has shown a total unwillingness to work with us to ensure that blind people have the right to a private and independent vote as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Now, therefore:

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Missouri in convention assembled this 27th day of March, 2021, that we shall immediately do whatever is required to ensure that blind people have full and equal accessible voting rights regardless where they live, whether it be in a local or national election and whether they choose to vote at the polls or by absentee ballot; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that our efforts include working with the United States Department of Justice, filing legal action in the courts, or by any other means that will achieve this goal in giving blind people the right to vote privately and independently in every election.