# National Federation of the Blind of New Jersey

Topic: Braille Group Meeting Notes

Date: Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Time: 7 PM

Location: Affiliate Zoom

Facilitator: Mary Jo Partyka

Email: [choirnfb@gmail.com](mailto:choirnfb@gmail.com)

# 1. Roll Call

There were ten in attendance. Attendees included: Mary Jo Partyka, Tracy Carcione, Linda DeBerardinis, Ed Godfrey, , Ken Lawrence, Bea Olivetti and Andy Smith

Participants: Misty Hagan, Darlene Scannell and Jessie Scannell2. Welcoming

# 2. Welcoming Remarks

Mary Jo welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their participation.

# NFB Pledge

Mary Jo led the recitation of the NFB Pledge.

# From Divisions to Committees

President Melendez and the Board of Directors agreed on transitioning Divisions into Committee and the Braille and Diabetic to groups. Meetings will provide meeting notes and will be sent to the NFBNJ distribution listserv. Only current dues paying members of the affiliate or chapter can join committees and/or groups. Since the Braille Committee has been transited into a group. This will not affect our meetings except it may result in getting more members.

# Braille Mentoring Program

Mary Jo Partyka told the members that she had talked to President Melendez, regarding the Braille Mentoring Program. Although we agreed that this was a good idea which worked in the past, it is not very feasible now. Some of the members who requested help with Braille live in remote areas or in places which would require the mentors to travel longer distances to get there. President Melendez liked the idea of the LIFE (Literacy is for Everyone) program where anyone can join, even if they don’t know Braille. They may be encouraged to learn Braille after they see how it works. We may have to consider joining with another group to see how this project works.

# Braille Readers are Leader’s contest

Mary Jo informed the group she received information concerning the Braille Readers are Leaders Contest, which will take place from December 4, 2023 to February 2, 2024. The amount of material read will be measured, based on the number of pages each person reads.

# Brailling Cards for State Convention

Mary Jo indicated that she will be brailing cards for lunch, Friday meal and banquet tickets during the state convention. The Braille Committee might want to consider taking part in this project in future conventions.

# BELL Program

President Melendez and the Board agreed to not provide a BELL Program for 2024. We had difficulty getting students and even though we had a program this year, it proved more costly than it should have. We only had two students. We only have one coordinator for BELL right now. Hoverer, the affiliate will be conducting a one-day Stem2you program which will take place in August 2024.

# Agendas

As members of the Braille Committee, we want to express our thanks to staff at the New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center (TBBC) for brailling the agendas for this year’s state convention.

# Next Meeting

The next Braille Group meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 19 at 7 PM using the NFB of NJ Zoom account.

Braille Group meeting notes submitted by Mary Jo Partyka, Facilitator

Reviewed and edited by Linda Melendez, President