National Federation of the Blind of Cleveland Chapter

January 15, 2021 Minutes:

The January2021 Chapter monthly meeting was held through zoom platform on Friday, January 15, 2021 at 5:00 P.M. The zoom link and passcode were provided to all members, guests, visitors and are given below in these minutes. The reason for having this meeting through zoom platform is to adhere to COVID-19 social distancing adopted by the National Federation of the Blind and the local and state officials.

Welcome:

Regina Mason, Board Member, welcomed all members, attendees from other chapters and Divisions, all guests/visitors.

Roll Call:

Suzanne Turner, President, welcomed everyone and made sure about the attendance of the chapter’s members, guests and visitors.

Mr. Harold Jefferson, member, help all attendees to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

NFB Pledge:

William Turner, First Vice President, helped all attendees to recite the National Federation of the Blind Pledge.

Mending and Bereaved Members:

Suzanne Turner, President and Cheryl Fields, 2nd Vice president, informed the Board about some Chapter/Affiliate members and/or their relatives are having some health issues and urged everyone to keep them in his/her thoughts and prayers. Also, they mentioned those members who are feeling better or fully recovered.

Secretary Report:

Due to some technological problems, October 16, 2020 minutes were postponed till the next meeting to be discussed and approved. We will send the minutes again and read it in the next monthly meeting.

2020 Gavel Award:

Suzanne Turner, President, informed all members that it is an honor to win the Gavel Award 3 times consecutively and the additional $50.00 that was deposited in our treasury account.

Memorial for Rosa Jones:

The Board approved having a memorial for her to celebrate her life during the February 2021 monthly meeting. The program will be prepared by JoAnn Williams and Teresa McKenney

Senior Division:

Gloria Conway made the following announcements:

1: Shirley Patterson is the guest for the coming Senior Solutions meeting that will be held on Sunday, January 17, 2021 at 7:00 P.M on the old State Conference line. Shirley Patterson added that the topic is going to be Stroke and urged everyone to attend.

2: The dues are $10.00 for 2021 and advised members to use Zale to send their membership dues.

Community Service Committee:

Cheryl Fields, Chair, informed all members that her committee is very active, and many important events are going to take place through zoom platform and urged everyone to attend/participate. She reminded everyone about the following events:

1: NVDA Training,

2: Anil Louis and Barbara Pierce presentation related to Black Month History,

3: The weekly happy hour,

4: The super ball party with the participation of 7 states.

OLBPD Representative/Speaker:

Mr. Kenneth Redd gave a great talk about the many services that the Ohio Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled provides and how to be a member. He encouraged everybody to apply and be a member and take advantage of such golden opportunity. He answered many questions from the attendees and promised to leave his contact information with Suzanne. Suzanne Turner thanked him on behalf of all members for his time, the service they are providing and for the very informative speech.

President’s Announcements/Remarks:

Suzanne Turner, President, thanked everyone for attending the meeting, for the help some of the members are providing, and for all the meetings organized by some members during these COVID-19 difficult times. Moreover, she welcomed all visitors from other chapters who are joining our meeting and made the following reminders/announcements:

1: She urged everyone to keep an eye on his/her email to know about the future speakers invited to the Chapter and the Affiliate.

2: She reminded all members about the Ohio Affiliate Board of Directors meeting that will be held on Monday, January 25, 2021 and urged everyone to attend.

3: She informed all members that the Voice box will be updated very soon.

4: She explained what does a duel membership mean, and how it is handled by the National Federation of the Blind. Additionally, she clarified that if anyone is an elected officer in another blind organization, he or she cannot be an elected officer at all levels in the National Federation of the Blind. She concluded by promising to send the policy that Richard Payne have sent already.

5: She reminded everyone about the on-going meetings about the four Legislative Initiatives on Thursdays by the National Federation of the Blind office and their most updated fact sheets. She urged all members to attend Eric Duffey’s meetings with his Legislative Committee members and get as much as you can out of their meetings/discussions in order to be ready whenever faced to speak with your House representative or Senator.

6: She reminded all members about the seminar that will be given by Laura Gold from Services for Independent Living on Tuesday, January 26, 2021 from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm.

7: She reminded all members about the meeting that our Affiliate president, Richard Payne is organizing with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disability (OOD) in the near future and urged anyone with questions about the meeting to get in touch with President Payne.

Urban Design and Art Project:

Heather ways informed all members that the Urban Design and Art Agency are in the process of getting rid of any physical barriers in the city of Cleveland and urged everyone to get in touch with the Agency if they know of such barriers and let them know. She added that they will have an interview with the caller that will last about 30 minutes and concluded that this agency is part of Kent State University.

The NFB Affiliate Cookbook:

Pat Mcferson excitedly talked about the cookbook project and the planning that is taking place. She urged everyone to submit his/her recipes to the committee in charge. She added that the cookbook has many categories, will be available in many formats, the money earned will go to the affiliate and the deadline for submitting recipes is end of February 2021. She concluded by mentioning that Coleen Ruth, Cheryl, Delcenia, Maggy, Wanda and Candice are the rest of the members of the Cookbook Committee. She urged everyone to submit his/her recipes.

Toastmaster Membership:

Suzanne Turner informed everyone that she is now a member in the International Diversity Toastmaster Club and will be giving a speech very soon. She added that she will let us know when she knows about her speech date and time.

Zero Tolerance for Sexual misconduct and Harassment:

Suzanne Turner and Cheryl Fields reminded all members about what our National President, Mark Riccobono said, “There should be a safe and healthy place for all members in the community.” They added that any such misconduct must be immediately reported to the persons in charge. Additionally, they mentioned the following:

1: There are some links that have more information about the matter.

2: These are very sensitive topics and should be discussed with empathy.

3: No tolerance whatsoever with sexual abuse or harassment.

4: During February/March monthly meetings we will go over the code of conduct provided by the National Federation of the Blind.

5: The National Federation of the Blind and RAIN, now, have a joint Task Force/committee composed of six members (all survivors) that included our own Cheryl Fields. When contacting them they carefully listen to you and give you advice.

7: Suzanne Turner promised to send an email about the subject and on how to handle the situation and mentioned that she was a victim of the above.

8: Cheryl fields reiterated that the subject is very sensitive and pointed out to the two articles that are on the news media. She added that Sexual abuse and harassment does exist in the National Federation of the Blind and that’s why they partnered with RAIN to deal with the matter and solve it.

9: The National Federation of the Blind is now in the process of Rewriting the code of conduct to better deal and handle the matter.

10: Cheryl Fields mentioned that the six members of the task force are all females (all survivors) and we are considered External Investigators all over the USA. She added that we have a website and a phone number that are confidential. She concluded that if you have been a victim at any of the events/activities of the National Federation of the Blind You need to go to the NFB website and fill an application to start getting help and advice.

11: Cheryl Fields added that there is one to one contact, there is a hotline and the problem may not be solved overnight.

12: both Suzanne and Cheryl stressed the fact that NFB should be a safe place for its members!!! They concluded their presentation by mentioning that sweeping the sexual misconduct and harassment under the rug is not acceptable anymore!!! William Turner appreciated the Great initiative and firmly said that this is a step in the right direction and this type of conduct needs to stop immediately!

Miscellaneous:

1: Suzanne Turner, President, reminded all members about Committees/Chairing for this year.

2: She reminded all members about their great work and achievements for the last three years or so and how they managed to win the Gavel Award for three consecutive years. She congratulated everyone and advised them to Keep it up!!!

3: She reminded everyone about the 2020 taxes, the use of H&R Block, and Filing a rebate if you did not receive your stimulus checks. She added that in February or so there will be City Hall vaccination;

4: Patricia McPherson reminded everyone about the Greater Akron Chapter’s fundraising that is going to be on Friday, January 29, 2021.

New Little Member:

Suzanne Turner, President, informed all members that Brooke was gifted a baby girl and she named her Emma. She added that both mother and baby are doing great.

I O S training:

Suzanne Turner informed everyone about the available I O S trainings and urged all members to register online on their website for such important training. She added that they need Mentors to teach I O S as well.

Shout Out:

Suzanne Turner welcomed back both Cecil Dukes and Rebecca Russel and mentioned that she is so glad to see and hear both of them on the phone/zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.

///

Please make a note of the action items below:

Voice Box Number:

(641) 715-3900

Code: 582705

Cleveland Teleconference Number:

(605) 313-4834

Code: 246345

Ohio Conference Line:

Tel: (712) 775-7031

Code: 240281423

Zoom link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/4081850851>

Meeting ID: 408 185 0851

One tap mobile

+16468769923 and ID code: 408-185-0851.

Zoom Telephone number:

(669) 900-6833

Id: 4081850851

Ali Benmerzouga, Recording Secretary

440-590-0315 – cell

Natassha Ricks, Treasurer

(216) 376-9863

Notes!

1. Please take a moment and like, share and promote Cleveland’s Facebook Page

<https://m.facebook.com/NationalFederationOfTheBlindOfOhioClevelandChapter/>

2. Please subscribe to Ohio-Talk to stay informed on the know in the Ohio Affiliate.

Ohio-Talk mailing list

Ohio-Talk@nfbnet.org

<http://nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/ohio-talk_nfbnet.org>

3. Please subscribe to Cleveland’s List Serve for all up-to-date information in the Cleveland Chapter.

<http://www.nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfboh-cleveland_nfbnet.org>

nfboh-cleveland-request@nfbnet.org

4- Please don’t forget to send your dues to our Treasurer, Natassha Ricks as soon as you can.

5-please call a member who you have not seen for a while and talk to him/her about returning to the Cleveland Chapter.

//////