National Federation of the Blind San Antonio Chapter, Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2021

Amelia Pellicciotti, Secretary

meeting comes to order at 11:35 a.m.

Amelia read the secretary's report, and there was a motion to accept the minutes as read with no additional clarification or modification needed.

Wendy gave the Treasurers report, because Bryan is absent for this meeting.

Wendy and Bryan went to the bank and added her to the account, $1500 was moved to savings so that it could collect interest.

We did make an expenditure for the low-vision expo, $115.73 was spent on mailing information for goody bags for the participants.

Wendy stated the balance.

Wendy called for a motion to accept the treasurers report as read.

It was seconded by Amelia and approved.

Amelia reminded the group that articles are recommended to supplement one of the requirements for our NEWSLINE grant.

Next for her tech tip Wendy wanted to show the group how to know if your pen is writing with seeing AI using its hand-writing feature.

The app has a hand-writing channel and it will tell you if it detects simple words written.

There were other suggestions such as using be my eyes, but seeing AI is a very quick and independent method.

Amelia noted in the legislative advocacy report that the Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Act has taken effect. This will require now and in the future that hybrid or electric cars standing still, in reverse or traveling up to 30 KPH be required to make a sufficient level of sound.

For announcements, Wendy reminded everyone about the low vision expo, next Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Everyone will have hand-delivered goody bags as participants, there is a team of 30 people to drop off the information packets to everyone registered.

Yesterday, Diana Wolfe said that there were 276 registrants.

It will be virtual, there will be breakout rooms, we will have a vender list, but door prizes can only be received if you register. Registration is free.

Liz Wisecarver volunteered to help us man the room and give a demonstration of NFB Newsline features on her Bluetooth speaker.

Next, we have the national convention, which will take place virtually this year, and it is also free to register.

National convention occurs from Jul 6-10, but the end-date for registration is in May.

There is a feature in the national convention registration where you must accept the code of conduct, if you choose to participate in this event.

The NFB national office is also taking registrants for bell academy this summer.

They will send all of the information and all of the supplies and materials to the childs home, and again all sessions will be virtual this year with Bell.

Norma Crosby in the last day or so has posted a survey, and that is to determine whether or not the Texas state convention in November should be in person or if it should be a hybrid version.

Likewise, the San Antonio Chapter has generated its own survey, attempting to get information from our members as to what kinds of speakers, subject matter and outings people would like to see in the fall.

The folks who have filled it out offered very good suggestions.

Text 55,000 and type in the word vaccine or vacuna in Spanish. This will notify you when more appointments are made available in the city.

There is not a general clearing house for all Vaccine registration sites, so you may have to call around individually to HEB or other pharmacies Wendy has noticed that generally the websites to register are mostly accessible

 www.vaccinefinder.org will allow you to narrow it down to which type of vaccine and the selected City to find the nearest sights to your home.

The last announcement is that Michael Quahardo had his short story published, and it is called Guardians of Luum.

This is the first one and he will publish a few more.

For new business, we discussed purchasing a zoom membership for the chapter annually. We have had a couple of instances with the chapter where we needed to speak with a couple of advisors on a helpful topic, we will probably move forward with the zoom membership.

This will give us the opportunity to do activities, Such as tech training, braille and other advisory sessions prior to the meeting.

We had a meeting with the book share library program, so we are trying to see if we can get the state NLS talking book program, or a local public library at the very least to purchase blocks of memberships, so that current members of the State Talking book program can take advantage of this service.

The way this works is: if a print disabled person has a membership in the Texas talking book program, they are allowed to register with BookShare for free.

We will let the group know about developments on that front.

In May, we have a tentative agreement with Audrie Sudderfield of para sports at Morgan’s Wonderland to speak about their programs, and opening up of their new facilities.

Wendy was toying with the idea of having a representative from Texas able to come in May.

An able account is a long-term savings or investment that does not count against your SSI or SSDI

Each state stipulates their own rules, and you can now have a bank card issued.

If we got this speaker, she could tell us how to set it up as well as the legalities of it.

On One of the survey forms that was filled out someone wanted to hear from a successful blind musician or artist.

Wendy is also going to contact the One Touch self-defense group for the fall, but we would love to hear everyone's feedback.

Via was also suggested again as a speaker.

With regards to vaccinations sights Wendy wanted to know if the Alamo dome is requiring folks to stay in their car.

Athalie Malone indicated that Via is giving free rides to every sight as long as you have an appointment, there is a specific section designated for via vans where you can stay inside the vehicle.

Alamo Dome has been temporarily changed to a drive through location to accommodate the NC AA basketball tournament.

Heather indicated that she called Bexar county at precinct 2 in order to make her appointment over the phone since it is difficult to find slots open via the internet.

Wonderland mall has one shot on each floor with Fizer on the bottom floor and moderna on the top, there are also volunteers to assist you to get to the vaccination window.

Athalie indicated that Walgreens CVS HEB and Walmart are giving the vaccine but you have to call around.

Churches and other non-profits are starting to get doses, for door-to-door transport to seniors, but they are far and few between.

Amelia asked if anyone with the Chapter needed assistance filling out paperwork to receive any services such as assistance with Winter Weather financial relief, or assistance with Covid appointments.

The low vision expo is virtual and there is going to be two people with the lighthouse who will act as hosts. Any vendors that have issues can contact someone from the lighthouse. The chapter members who attended wished that keyboard commands were given to the vendors for training with screen readers.

On zoom they will activate the breakout rooms at 9:30 a.m. there are other things going on during the event. For example, a power point will play in the main session room, but you can go into any of the vendor rooms once they are active.

From 11:00 to 11:30 a.m. there will be just breakout rooms.

One of the vendors put out an announcement stating that they have volunteers giving rides to covid appointments.

Meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.