PCNFB Chapter Minutes for January 11, 2018

The Monthly meeting of the Potomac Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind was convened at 7 p.m. by President John Halverson. Nineteen members were present.

The icebreaker was who was your favorite song/band in high school?

We had a moment of silence.

The NFB pledge was led and recited by Kathryn Webster.

The minutes of the November 9, 2017 meeting are pending Derek Manners’s submission.

Treasurer’s Report For the period from 10/19/2017 to 1/11/2018

Beginning Balance: $5,811.09

Income:

Holiday dinner proceeds $891.00

50-50 cash $22

Square proceeds remitted to NFBV $145.86

Report correction $326.06

Total Income: $1,384.92

Disbursements:

Convention Childcare $980.00

NFB PAC for November $75.00

NFBVPAD for November $75.00

NFB PAC for December $75.00

NFBVPAD for December $75.00

NFB PAC for January $75.00

NFBVPAD for January $75.00

Ediquit dinner expenses remitted to NFBV $145.86

Bonefish Grille holliday dinner,27 people+tax&20%Tip $990.00

Square Adjustment$6.37

Hospitality DJ. $180.00

Hospitality expenses at State Convention $3,066.88

 Total Disbursements: $5,819.11

Ending Balance as of 01/11/2018: General Fund: $1,376.90

Youth fund: unchanged $0.00

Philosophy

We had Albert Elia as our guest speaker and he is a lawyer working with Tim Elder continuing the work of the Federation specifically in technology. Tim Elder and Al Elia are recipients of the fellowship program at BGL. One of the specifictargets that Al Elia is working on the accessibility of kiosks at Applebees restaurants. The tablets used to place orders on kiosks are inaccessible. The same manufacturer of these kiosks are also at Panera Bread. There is a working group in place that is trying to determine how accessible to make these kiosks since it is running with Android and if that means to tap the screen so that the screen reader will turn on is still yet to be determined. Al also mentioned that when there was litigation about the airport check-in kiosks being inaccessible, the court declared that it was not under the ADA but since it was the FAA, it was overturned. There is still work being done on websites being inaccessible and if you are encountering any inaccessibility on any websites, please let Al know. There is still work to be done with Uber and Lift being discriminatory towards passengers with guide dogs. If you have faced discrimination as a guide dog user, please let Al Elia know.

Derek Manners mentioned that the newwe elevators are not accessible to individuals who are blind because there are no buttons and just raised numbers. According to Virginia law, in order for a building to be up to code in accordance with building code and the ADA means that the building does not have to accommodate the individual with the disability at all.

Project RISE

Kathryn Webster, program coordinator of Project RISE gave us a brief update on the upcoming schedule of events for the seventeen transition-age students with the first session launching on Saturday, February 17th. There will only be five sessions. Project RISE is recruiting volunteers for the first session in which there will be a parent workshop in conjunction with the student programming. Five volunteers will be needed so that students and parents can see blindness rolemodels and blindness philosopy. So that they can have positive outlook on life. There will be background checks conducted on volunteers because there are minor children involved.

Richmond Seminar

President Tracy Soforenko gave us a brief update on the bills being proposed to the delegates and senators at Richmond Seminar. The Parents bill which is aimed to allow parents who are disabled to not have their children taken away based solely on blindness/disability, the Education bill which is aimed to have blind/low vision students have Braille as a median for literacy, and the third bill is to oppose the bill passed in the Senate aimed to weaken the Virginia Americans with Disabilities Act.

We will have the opportunity to be introduced at the Senate gallery on Tuesday afternoon.

Washington Seminar

The fact sheets will be distributed to the list serves regarding the three bills being proposed on the hill. Deepa has set up appointments and formulated teams for Washington Seminar. President Tracy Soforenko stated that there will be a 3-D tactile representation of the Tet Offensive in its 50 annibersaty at the Newseum. In order to attend the event at the Newseum, one needs to obtain a badge from Tracy if you do not want to pay the $20 museum fee. Also, come to the NABS Café taking place on Monday, January 29th starting at 9pm. There will be a live auction with all sorts of goodies!

Fundraising

We are planning on having our annual wine tasting sometime in March and President John Halverson will contact 360 Bistro to inquire on some available dates. We need to build up our treasury up again. In order to continue programming and fundraising for the 2018 year, President John Halverson has proposed a planning meeting for Saturday, February 3rd at 2pm at his home.

Presidential Release

National President Mark Riccobono discusses plans for the year. John Pare elaborates on the bills for Washington Seminar. Higher institutions of learning want to have instructional materials in accessible format available for students who are blind/disabled, but they just need to know how to move forward. The second legislative issue is to give blind people who make less than $75, 000 access to accessible technology which means that if a blind person does not have any screen reading technology to look for employment, that is a burden to the blind person because this technology is expensive. The third legislative issue is to not have the new version of the Americans with Disabilities Act to move forward. The last legislative issue is to have international books in other languages available in accessible format without violating any international copyright laws.

Membership is a strong element that needs to continue to move our organization into the future. We need to continue to create greater awareness of the capabilities of the blind. The NFB is looking for other avenues of outreach to expand our network so that people can understand our philosophy and empowerment.

Announcements

Sandy Halverson gave us an update on Charlie Brown’s progress. He is doing so much better and is in good spirits. He is at The Jefferson receiving physical therapy.

I am reassured that Eagles fans are flying !

Yours in the Federation

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Evelyn Valdez,*

*Recording Secretary*

*Virginia Leadership Fellows, Classof 2016*