National Federation of the Blind

Potomac Chapter Minutes

September 8, 2022

President Christine Grassman called the meeting to order a little after 7:00 PM. The meeting was held on Zoom and in person at St. George’s Episcopal Church. To kick off the meeting President Grassman asked everyone to say something significant they did this summer in their introductions.

The minutes and treasurer’s report were reviewed. Tracy Soforenko moved, and Gary grassman seconded to approve the treasurer’s report. The minutes were adopted. Tracy moved, and a member seconded to approve the treasurer’s report. The report was adopted.

President Grassman introduced Joan Port, a local representative from the League of Women Voters, to discuss voting accessibility in Northern Virginia. She described a voter registration event for people with disabilities taking place at the Arlington Central Library on October 15th. At the event there will be information in Braille, sample ballot marking tools, and speakers from the disability community. People with disabilities can use this time as an opportunity to update their registration or register to vote. Joan asked for any input regarding accessibility of the voting process. The chapter suggested that she and her organization create a flyer in a Word document we can distribute.

President Grassman encouraged everyone to take the strategic planning survey President Riccobono is releasing in a couple weeks. The survey will be open from September 19th through the 25th, and members can take it online or over the phone.

President Grassman gave some updates on state convention. She encouraged the chapter to register for either the in-person or virtual convention experience. Anyone who needs assistance registering for the convention should let her know. She drew the chapter’s attention to the CPR class taking place on Friday afternoon at convention. Several individuals have been appointed to help out with the convention. President Grassman appointed Julie McGinnity to chair the door prize committee and Nancy Yager to help first-time convention attendees navigate the hotel. All members were encouraged to reach out to Christine Grassman or Joe Orozco if they want to help in any way. Tracy Soforenko spoke excitedly about all the activities that will be happening at this year’s convention, including a Laten night and a chocolate tasting.

President Grassman showed a video from Allison Korb, a 10-year-old girl who attended the Buddy Program at Blind Inc. The chapter provided her funding to attend the program through our youth fund. In her video Allison spoke about the classes she took and thanked the chapter for the opportunity to attend the Buddy Program.

The committee chairs gave their reports. President Grassman announced that the chapter would be switching from PayPal to Zell. Deepa reported that the social committee is planning a hay ride event in October at Butler’s Orchard in German Town, Maryland. President Grassman asked for members to form a committee to make changes to the constitution. Anyone interested should reach out to her.

The last item on the agenda was an update regarding the fair gates at metro stations. President Grassman reported that WMATA is piloting new sounds at the fair gates at certain metro stations.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie A. McGinnity, Recording Secretary