March 15, 2025

# Call to Order

Our President,. Wayne Williams, called the March 15, 2025 meeting of the Winchester Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind to order at 10:01 AM.

# NFB Pledge

The chapter membership recited the NFB pledge.

# Meeting Attendance

The following people attended our March 2025 Winchester chapter meeting in person: Mary Green, Janet Lincoln, Gerry O’Malley, Kim DeGroot, Bill Turkel, Rodney Neely,

Gwinn Moran, Chris Walker, Wayne Williams, and Shannon Shea. Daniel Perry,

Page Baggette, and Jacki Brown attended the meeting via zoom.

# Chapter Ice Breaker

We all described what we were looking forward to as spring approaches.

# Museum of the Shenandoah Valley Tour

Our chapter is scheduled to tour the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley on Thursday,

April 3, 2025. The Museum of the Shenandoah is located at 901 Amhurst St. Winchester, VA 22601.

Everyone is responsible for arranging his/her own transportation to the museum. We should plan to meet in the lobby at 11:30 AM. Our tour should begin at 11:30 AM. Our tour should end at approximately 2:00 PM. We will be touring the galleries of the museum. Weather permitting, we might take a short garden tour. Sam Scout from the

Museum of the Shenandoah Valley will be our tour guide. She would like to have a count of how many people plan to go to the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley by

Monday, March 31, 2025. Gerry O’Malley is in charge of obtaining an accurate head count for our tour. Please call Gerry to let him know that you are coming at 540-550-4410.

 Jacki Brown is going to remind people in the low vision group that meets at West Minster Canterbury about this tour. If someone needs a walker or a wheelchair, please let Gerry know this so that Sam Scout can help to make arrangements to insure that this person’s needs will be accommodated.

If you require any accommodations to attend the tour, please let Gerry know about your accommodations.

After the tour, please be sure to provide some guidance to Sam Scout about how effective the tactile exhibit tour was. Later we might be able to take a tour of the gardens of the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. Right now, walking paths are muddy and they still need to be cleared of debris.

VSDB Tour

There is a good possibility that the Winchester chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Virginia might want to tour the campus of the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in Staunton, VA during the fall of 2025. There are approximately 70 students, who attend VSDB-40 deaf students and 30 blind students. They have an expanded program for pre-K and preschoolers with disabilities that is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2025. Superintendent Trice plans to retire in June of 2025.

# Tour of the National Office of the National Federation of the Blind

Our chapter plans to contact Danielle McCann from the national office if we want to arrange a tour of the national office in the fall of 2025.

# National Convention

The 2025 national convention of the National Federation of the Blind will occur from Tuesday, July 8, 2025 through Sunday, July 13, 2025 in New Orleans, Louisianna. The host hotel for the convention will be the New Orleans Marriott. The overflow hotel will be the Sheraton New Orleans. Chris suggested that although most of the events of the 2025 convention will be held at the New Orleans Mariott, one of the major advantages of staying at the Sheraton New Orleans hotel is that it is easier to get an elevator at the Sheraton. Additionally, the exhibit hall for the 2025 NFB convention will be hosted at the Sheraton New Orleans hotel.

There is also an option to register for and to attend the convention virtually. This costs $10 per person. There is a possibility that the national convention might be broadcasted on NFB Radio.

## Jernigan Fund and the McDonald Fund

Two sources of possible financial support to help people to attend the 2025 national convention are the Jernigan fund-which is usually given to first time convention attendees and the McDonald fund. The Jernigan fund is a national NFB fund. The McDonald fund is used to help members of the National Federation of the Blind of Virginia to attend national convention. People who receive funding from the Jernigan fund are not eligible to receive funding from the McDonald fund to help them to attend the national convention. The expected amount of award that our members can receive from either the Jernigan or the McDonald fund is approximately $600.

Both Cris Walker and Page Baggette are on the fence about attending national convention.

Wayne Williams created an estimate of how much it would cost him to attend national convention this year. It would cost approximately $3700 to attend national convention if you wanted to stay by yourself in your own hotel room. If you share a room with other people, the expense would be less.

The cost of the hotel is approximately $856 per room. Your round trip plane ticket will cost approximately $1200. It costs $25 to register to attend the national convention in person. The banquet ticket is $85 per person.

Jacki suggested that we authorize our chapter members to receive $600 towards the cost of attending national convention.

## Motion to Provide Funding for 2025 National Convention

Rodney moved that the chapter provide $600 for each of our members who would like to attend national convention. Mary Green seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

# Winchester Federation of the Blind’s Non-profit Status

We have filed all of the paper work with the SEC that we needed to file to maintain our

non-profit status. Wayne and Jacki worked on this together.

We have also changed our registered agent for the NFB of Winchester to Jacki Brown since our former agent, Jim Walker, passed away almost two years ago.

Both Wayne and Jacki have access to the SEC account. Wayne has access to our state filing in Virginia. Jacki will have access to this account soon.

# Approval of the February 2025 Meeting Minutes and Treasurer’s Report

Chris made a motion to approve both the February 2025 meeting minutes and the treasurer’s report. Gerry seconded the motion. This motion was unanimously approved.

# Accessibility Expo at West Minster Canterbury

Michael ?Baptista from Integrated Technologies Group (ITG) came to West Minster Canterbury in Winchester, VA on Thursday, February 20, 2025. We would like to extend our appreciation to Bill Turkel for organizing this event. People seemed to enjoy seeing all of the video magnifiers and the reading machines that Mr. Baptista brought to the expo.

# Tax Credits

There is a $2000 tax credit that you might be able to get if you purchase assistive technology-like a reading machine or a video magnifier. This tax deduction can also be classified as a health related expense. But you have to spend approximately 7% of your income on health related expenses to qualify for this deduction. Also the tax deduction that can be used if you purchase assistive technology is not available to you unless you itemize your tax deductions.

# NFBV Membership Committee

Jacki Bruce and other members of the membership committee are doing interviews for a member to member profile of our members throughout the state of Virginia. This member profile is sent out each week on the NFBV mailing list.

If you would like to answer the membership profile questions by email, please reach out to Wayne Williams. Wayne has all of the questions that you can answer to enable

Jackie Bruce and the membership committee to create your member to member interview/profile.

## Membership Training about Issues related to Blindness

The membership committee is conducting a training called Journey through Blindness on the second Monday of each month about some particular aspect of blindness.

Chris would like to see some training on conducting outreach to our community. This training could be conducted at our state convention.

Rodney suggested that he might be willing to conduct some training about obtaining information regarding transportation options, which are available, different areas of the state.

## Communication

Wayne told us that there has been a great deal of focus to encourage chapters to communicate with one another. This communication has been started at the presidential level in Virginia.

# Loudoun County Chapter

Right now the Loudoun County chapter has approximately six members. They are trying to grow. They would like to find a central meeting place that is accessible via the metro system.

#  Check from the Shingleton Trust

We received a check for $3210.72 from the Shingleton Trust. This is an annual donation that the Shingleton Trust donates to our chapter.

# Motion to Adjourn

Mary Green motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Daniel Perry seconded the motion. The March 15, 2025 meeting of the Winchester Federation of the Blind of Virginia adjourned at approximately 11:25 AM on Saturday, March 15, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Rodney Neely, Recording Secretary

Winchester Federation of the Blind of Virginia