OAGDU MEETING MINUTES, June 4, 2023

Attendance: LuAnn, Paula, Marianne, Debbie, Deanna, Annette, Asia Diane Shane, and our new member, Denise Canterbury. Denise’s email is angeliacanterbury@gmail.com. She has a Pilot dog named Spirit.

Shane moved and Paula seconded to approve the April 16 minutes as posted. The motion passed. Marianne reported that our April 30 balance was $1717.17. The May 31 balance was $1,997.27. Deanna moved and Shane seconded that the treasurer’s report be approved. The motion passed. Shane and Asia will each receive a PayPal payment of $200.00 to offset convention assistance for National. Shane/Marianne moved and seconded that OAGDU contribute $25.00 per fund for National—SUN, Jernigan, TenBroek and White Cane. The motion passed. Debbie/Shane, moved and seconded that we contribute $50.00 toward the dog relief area for National Convention. The motion passed. After some discussion, we decided to contribute to door prizes for the NFB Ohio convention in November rather than to send door prize money from OAGDU for National.

Gavel: On June 20, Denise will present about guide dogs to her local Lions Club. There was no fundraising report.

Unfinished Business

We again as often in the past, discussed pertinent sections of the Ohio Revised Code. This time we talked about ORC 955.42. Marianne sent an email to division members reminding us of the 2016 update to our Ohio Assistance Animal law. The new update only covers those service animals for those who are blind, hearing impaired or mobility impaired. We also reviewed the Ohio ordinance that covers attacks to service animals, 2921.321, section C. That section is pertinent to harassment of service animals. Section C includes a variety of penalties for attack and harassment, each of which increases according to the severity of injury to the animal. All penalties included in section C of 29.321 are felonies. Code 3344-79 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) is the code for the section of the Ohio law that brings its clauses into compliance with the wording of the Americans with Disabilities Act, (ADA).

New Business

Denise shared a situation in which she was denied entrance to a church and food pantry with her guide dog. We suggested that Denise contact Disability Rights Ohio (DRO) for further information and clarification about the right of nonprofit entities to deny a service animal. Our discussion offered that it is up to individual churches whether or not a service dog is permitted to enter. This is due to the fact that nonprofits do not receive public funding, and therefore have the right to deny. That fact was told to Denise by her local health department in her situation. The Title I “loophole” does not apply to service dog entry. Those OAGDU members who will be attending National Convention said that they would discuss this entire topic of both the clarification of nonprofits’ rights as they pertain to service dog entry and the need for change in and for compliance with ADA verbiage in our Ohio Assistance Animal ordinance. Our OAGDU division has lobbied and advocated for our Ohio law to be in compliance with ADA for five years or more. We also want a criminal penalty in Ohio for denial of service dog entry. Civil suits take entirely too long to resolve and are not often resolved satisfactorily. A brief discussion ensued about the new Ohio law that discusses the allowance of pets on patios in Ohio at the discretion of a restauranteur that governor Mike DeWine signed a couple of years ago. This discussion happened to differentiate for Denise pets on patios from service dogs being allowed in more establishments than pets.

Marianne asked if any member might want to present locally about guide dogs during International Assistance Animal (IAA) week. Or members could travel to larger cities to present in groups rather than attempting to educate locally in a predesigned effort. Marianne, Debbie and Paula will not be available during IAA week because they are teaching in the Ohio BELL program during that same week, August 6-12. Perhaps, if a presentation during that week does not work out for any of our members, we could consider presenting during September which is National Guide Dog month. Asia offered a short YouTube video that she has used for college presentations if we want to refer to it or to use it directly for such education presentations. We decided that the OAGDU executive committee would meet on Sunday, July 9 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss possible presentation efforts for IAA Week or for Guide Dog Month. Debbie will send the meeting minutes of the executive meeting to the OAGDU list.

Marianne/Asia, motion to adjourn. Our next business meeting will be on Sunday, August 13, 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debbie Baker, Secretary