

Bay State Council of the Blind

Board Call, April 13, 2020

Bay State Council of the Blind Officers and Board Members

- Brian Charlson President
- David Kingsbury First Vice President
- Frank Ventura Second Vice President
- Jerry Berrier Secretary
- Rick Morin Treasurer
- Rose Miller board member
- Dianna Leonard board member
- Cheryl Cumings board member
- Mary Haroyan board member

Ex Officio

- Steve Dresser Webmaster
- Bob Hachey BayLines editor
- DeAnn Elliott Legislative committee chair

(Secretary's note: All votes are unanimous unless otherwise noted in the minutes.)

All officers and board members were present, along with Chris Devin, Sharon Strzalkowski and Jessica Barr. Rose Miller arrived late.

Brian called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Mary made, Steve seconded, and the board approved a motion to accept the minutes of our March meeting.

Rick said he will update our Zoom settings to reduce the probability of "Zoom Bombing".

Treasurer's report; Rick

(Written report)

Dear fellow BSCB Board Members,

Attached are the two Year-To-Date financial reports:

- Profit and Loss as of April 13, 2020
- Asset Balances

Financial Highlights:

- Refunds were issued for all but \$270, which was requested by registrants as not requiring refund
- Gerard Boucher donated \$1000 for the convention and also requested that his donation not be refunded and held for a rescheduled event.
- Marriott refunded the full amount for the prepaid hotel rooms for our guest keynote speakers.
- The amount of our deposit with the caterer (\$2250) has not been refunded. The hope is to apply this against future business, should they not go bankrupt or out of business.
- Kenneth Semien is holding a credit with Southwest Airlines in the amount of \$385.96 that we had previously reimbursed him for.
- We had also advanced Kenneth \$172.88 for an additional hotel night that he arranged to secure a lower airfare.
- We also Paid \$317.03 for awards.
- The total of the above convention expense is \$3125.87 which accounts for almost all of our current YTD loss of \$3191.69
- We certified 213 members with ACB National and remitted \$1050 for national dues.
- I reimbursed BSCB for travel expenses that I incurred for Sagebrush.
- I have not yet billed GDUI for their dues. Now that certification is complete and all other chapters have submitted their dues, I have what is needed to calculate the GDUI bill which I will do shortly
- Our current liquid assets total \$38,267.26

(End of written report)

Brian said based on our increased membership we will have nine votes at future ACB conventions.

Rick praised Mary for her hard work as membership chair.

Diana made, jerry seconded, and the board approved a motion to accept the treasurer's report.

[President's report; Brian](#)

(Rose arrived at this point.)

Brian updated us on recent Covid19-related activities at the ACB office.

Cheryl described a very accessible election she was recently involved in with the Massachusetts democratic party. The board congratulated her on being elected.

Spring convention report; Frank

Frank discussed having a one-day in-person fall conference, and then planning for a 2021 conference/convention.

Brian appointed Frank to chair the 2021 conference committee.

The spring conference committee will be renamed to BSCB conference and convention committee.

Jerry said we need to guard against future situations where the convention coordinator incurs unforeseen expenses and is not reimbursed by the organization.

Brian temporarily relinquished the chair and affirmed that neither he nor Rick Morin were ever asked by the convention coordinator to reimburse the coordinator for unexpected convention-related expenses.

Jerry made, Mary seconded, and the board approved a motion that no BSCB member should personally incur BSCB expenses. BSCB expenses must be managed by the board and should not be paid by any individual member.

Jerry made, David seconded, and the board approved a motion to plan to hold a one-day in-person fall conference. Significant time is to be allotted on the next board call and on subsequent calls as needed to plan the structure for our 2021 conference/convention.

[Publications committee report; David](#)

(Written report)

The Awards page of the website has been updated with the descriptions of the 2020 recipients.

The Virtual Hangout on March 28 seems to have been a success. There were around 50 participants. This was very easy to put together. If people can think of some session topics, David would be willing to organize a second Hangout two or three Saturdays from now.

(End of written report)

David offered to assist Steve with getting Council Connections back up and running as a podcast.

Steve will request logo specs and other requirements from LIBSYN. Once he has the specs, he will ask Gretchen Fisher for help with re-sizing our logo to match the Libsyn specs.

Bob is considering producing an additional edition of BayLines during the current Covid19 crisis.

Jerry made, Dianna seconded, and the board approved a motion to fund an additional issue of BayLines.

Bob will reach out to those involved in producing BayLines.

David will organize another BSCB “Hangout” on Sunday April 26.

[Legislative report; DeAnn](#)

(Written report)

On March 25, the ACB held an advocacy call to update members about ACB advocacy initiatives and its response to the Corona virus. “Tuesday Topics” is a new ACB offering on Tuesday nights that includes advocacy topics.

President Brian Charlson added the BSCB to a sign on letter concerning accessible absentee voting. It was sent by the ACB to all members of Congress and included signatures from 75 disability organizations. "Americans with disabilities have fought for decades to secure the same voting rights as all other Americans. Congress must make it clear to states that implementing vote by mail without offering an accessible absentee voting alternative for people with disabilities is not acceptable," said ACB president Dan Spoone.

The BSCB has used its networks to promote a survey that was created by the ACB, NFB, AFB, and a dozen other organizations to understand how sheltering in place is affecting people with vision loss.

Early reports to the legislative chair include concerns about the accessibility of websites, banking, and drive through services.

The B.L.I.N.D. Legislative Action day scheduled for March 31st was cancelled due to the Corona virus. DeAnn and Kim Charlson talked by phone with Greg Donnelly and Dina Rosenbaum to strategize about the “ask” in light of declining state revenues. The Carroll Center begins its advocacy in October and was positioned differently from the BSCB. We agreed to take the needed time to explore conversations with CCB contacts and re-evaluate our position as more is known about the budget, which will be delayed.

April 1 was Census Day. It seems to be largely accessible. Please fill it out.

The ACB will hold its annual national convention online this summer. We’ll wait to see how the resolutions committee will conduct business, since resolutions are voted on in person at the convention. The NFB is also holding its convention online.

A private consultant who presented at an AFB leadership conference a couple of years ago offered a free training on how to hold excellent Zoom meetings. At least four BSCB members participated, with disappointing results. There was no mention of accessibility. In this new work culture, in which guide dogs, wheelchairs, and other symbols of disability are even more hidden from view than when we’re working in person in an office, we will need to be vigilant in

reminding our sighted peers that the requirements of the ADA for accessible meetings do not end when the meetings are held by video conferencing. DeAnn will write a letter to the organizer.

(End of written report)

Membership committee report; Mary

(Written report)

The Membership Committee will be meeting on Tuesday, April 14.

I have been in communication with members of the group in Northampton. We hope to have a phone meeting to replace the in person gathering that had been planned prior to the current situation. Rick has offered the use of the BSCB Zoom account for the call.

(End of written report)

Mary is also planning another call for BSCB members at large.

Social committee report; Rose

(Written report)

Only two things to report is that, I am sorry to announce in February Mary from Worcester has resigned due to other commitments. I thanked her for her service and arranging a great, event at the clock museum May of last year.

Other report on the "social Committee"

An e-mail was sent by Jerry to save the date to invite members to a "social Luncheon", for May or June, 2020.

However, because of health risks for some of our members including me,

Due to Social distancing "reports It seems to me we may not be "getting Social "at this time. I have not discussed this with our whole committee yet, but we may have to cancel

(End of written report)

We briefly discussed potential types of online social gatherings.

Old Business

Brian said Rick has not had time to schedule a meeting to discuss security of our assets. He will do it when he can.

New Business

Brian said money was allocated in our current budget to assist with the ACB auction. We will contribute the amount that was designated in the budget.

Our next meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2020 at 7:30 PM.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully,

Jerry Berrier, Secretary